



Analyzing the influence of marketing strategies on the Growth and Sustainability of Women-Led Food Enterprises in Ernakulam District

Joshy P L ^{1 *}, Dr. Rustam Bora ²

1. Research Scholar, University of Technology, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

joshy_trop@rediffmail.com ,

2. Professor, Department of Management, University of Technology, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

Abstract: Examining the impact of marketing strategies on the growth and sustainability of food enterprises owned by women in the Ernakulam District. Marketing strategy helps the firm by coming up with plans to choose the proper customers, establish trustworthy connections with them, and generate growth.

Keywords: strategies, customer, build, relationships, trust

----- X -----

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, India's food processing industry has grown substantially, becoming a major participant on the international stage. This sector is not only having a major effect on the economy, but it also offers great opportunities for new business owners. There has been general improvement, but women still face unique obstacles due to the gender gap in the business scene.

This research aims to provide a better understanding of the critical factor that empowers female entrepreneurs in India's food processing business. Women, who constitute a sizable portion of the population, play an essential role when it comes to domestic food preferences and culinary traditions. Still, women encounter a significant lack of representation in the food processing industry's entrepreneurial sphere.

To empower women is to provide them the autonomy to choose their own way of life, educational trajectory, job, and career opportunities so that they may reach economic, social, and political parity with men. For a nation's overall progress, it is crucial. Women gain self-assurance when they are able to make their own choices. As to the Global Gender Gap Report from the World Economic Forum 2022, out of 146 countries, India is placed 135th. India is ranked the same by the Female Entrepreneurship Index, which ranks 77 nations. In the worldview, Indian women are seen in a dismal light. Harassment, psychological and verbal abuse, rape, workplace discrimination, and other types of violence against women are prevalent in our society.

This is why empowering women is a potent weapon in the fight for a progressive and sustainable society. Employment has become more casual over the years. As a whole, 96% of women and 91% of men work in the informal economy. This suggests that informal employment is more common among women than males.

Approximately 65–70% of urban women who work in informal industries are poor. Instruction and skill development are necessary for about half of them.

Younger women have to be strong to do manual labor on the job. Older women often struggle to manage the physical demands of manual jobs. When it comes to doing manual work, women are seen to be at the bottom of society. The bulk of them have been in the workforce for over three years, and their working conditions are defined by the nature of their employment: permanent, temporary, or seasonal. Low educational attainment is the main reason why choosing different occupations is difficult. They need to put in between eight and twelve hours per day.

LITERATURE AND REVIEW

Olwande (2014) performed research on the efficiency of Kenyan pharmaceutical wholesalers by using Porter's generic market tactics. Companies that adhere to Porter's recommended unified business strategy outperform those who are "stuck in the middle," suggesting that a more focused approach yields better results.

Janet Nanyangwe et al (2021) The research examined the link between Porter's generic strategies and the attainment of certain success metrics (KPIs), and it found the main obstacles in the presently used marketing strategies. With 40 participants and a 95% response rate, we ran a quantitative study using self-completion questionnaires. Qualitative and quantitative methods were used in the investigation. We used IBM SPSS to do a correlation research and find out how closely related the variables were. A Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.01 and 0.000 at sig. (2-tailed) < 0.01 established a statistically significant link between cost strategy and revenue and market share growth at a 1% level of significance. Pearson correlation coefficients of 0.000 at sig. (2-tailed) < 0.01 showed that there was a statistically significant link between the differentiation technique and the increase of both revenue and market share. Still, the results showed that there was a weak Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.015 and 0.036 at sig. (2-tailed) < 0.05 between the focus strategy and the rise in revenue and market share, which was not considered significant. The study hypothesis testing showed that the cost strategy and the differentiation strategy were the most effective in achieving profitable and sustainable market development were the most important and promising approaches.

Pillai's (2019) According to the research, women-owned enterprises in Kerala are a driving force behind the sustainable development goals (SDGs). The research delves into the ways in which female entrepreneurs tackle social and environmental issues by integrating SDGs into their business operations. This study uses quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to look at how these business owners help achieve certain SDGs including ending poverty, promoting gender equality, and protecting the environment. This study's results show how important it is for women-owned companies to promote sustainability in the area. Incorporating SDGs into their business practices allows these entrepreneurs in want to have a beneficial influence on both people and the planet while simultaneously boosting the economy. The study's findings may help shape policies and initiatives that specifically target women entrepreneurs in Kerala, making the state's economic climate more inclusive and resilient.

Gupta's (2020) The International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship published research that looked at

how family support affected the performance of female entrepreneurs in Kerala. Findings from qualitative interviews with female entrepreneurs highlight the importance of family backing for their endeavors. Important elements that have contributed to their success include support, resources, and the ability to balance work and family obligations. Women are able to succeed as entrepreneurs because of the supportive dynamics in their families, which help them overcome social obstacles. In order to promote gender equality and create an atmosphere where female entrepreneurs may thrive; the research stresses the need of acknowledging and cultivating family support networks. Insights like this may help policymakers in Kerala build equitable and sustainable economic development by facilitating the launch of women-led companies.

Rajan's (2020) *Journal of Entrepreneurship and Public Policy* article analyzes how policies in Kerala have affected female entrepreneurs. To determine how well current programs and policies assist women-led enterprises, this study examines a variety of sources. In order to promote gender equality and support women entrepreneurs, the findings highlight the need of government measures. Rajan offers suggestions based on research to improve support systems and make their success more likely. Creating an entrepreneurial environment in Kerala that is welcoming to women and men requires an understanding of the role of government policy. This research adds to what is already known about the relationship between public policy and entrepreneurship, and it may help state legislators realize the full potential of women business owners so that the state's economy can expand and prosper for everybody.

METHODOLOGY

The study used a descriptive research approach. Because it adequately described the topic at hand—the effect of advertising methods on the growth and survival of women-owned food enterprises in the Ernakulam area—this research methodology was approved. The use of a systematic random sampling method allowed for the inclusion of 52 Enterprises in the study's sample. Percentages, average scores, and the standard deviation are examples of descriptive statistics that were used to analyse the data.

DATA ANALYSIS

1. Response Rate

In comparison to the planned sample size, the number of persons who actually filled out the surveys is known as the response rate. A whopping 96% of the people who were polled agreed.

Table 1: Ratio of Responses

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Response	50	96%
Non-response	2	4%
Total	52	100%

Because the researcher was able to collect information from a sufficient number of the intended sample (the

managing directors), this is very commendable. A 50% response rate is sufficient for reporting and analysis, according to Mugenda & Mugenda (1999). You can see the response rate in Table 1. It was possible to have such a high response rate because respondents were given sufficient time to complete the surveys.

2. Demographic Information of the Respondents

To better understand the target group, it is helpful to have access to demographic information that details its demographic features. Commonly referred to as "general reference sources," they provide introductory information and data that may be built upon.

Position of the Respondent

Table 1 shows that of the total responders, 85% were knowledgeable managers, whereas 15% were office administrators.

Table 2: Membership in the group

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Managers	44	85%
Office Administrators	8	15%
Total	50	100%

What this implies is that they are qualified to provide you information on the impact of marketing strategies on the growth of SMEs that is both accurate and current.

Experience

People who took the survey were asked to describe their time spent working at each company. Table 2 displays the outcomes.

Table 3: Work history

Experience of Staff	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 5 years	11	21%
5 – 10 years	15	29%
11 – 15 years	13	25%
16 – 20 years	8	15%
Over 20 years	5	10%
Total	50	100

According to the data in Table 3, 29% of the workers had 5 to 10 years of work experience, 25% had 11 to 15 years, 21% had less than 5 years, and 15% and 11% had 16 to 20 years and above 20 years of experience, respectively.

Years of Operation of the Organization

The researcher asked each respondent to specify the number of years their business had been in existence. Table 4 displays the outcomes.

Table 4: How long the company has been in business

Years of operation	Frequency	Percentage
0-10 years	7	13
11-20 years	5	10
21-30 years	16	31
31-40 years	13	25
41-50 years	10	19
Above 50 years	1	2
Total	50	100

Thirteen percent of these companies have been in operation for 21–30 years, 25% for 31–40 years, 19% for 41–50 years, 13% for 0–10 years, and 2% for more than 50 years.

3. Marketing Strategies

Any marketing plan must begin with a marketing strategy. The marketing methods used by the respondents' travel enterprise were assessed using a five-point Likert Scale. The results are detailed in the sections that follow.

Quality of Product Strategy

Strategies used to guarantee the expansion of small and medium-sized businesses are evaluated here based on the quality of the products they provide. Table 5 contains the results.

Table 5: Quality of Product Strategy

Statements on quality of product strategy	Mean	Percentage Rating	Standard Deviation
The enterprise agency offers high product quality.	4.56	90.2%	0.0125
The product provides by this enterprise is reliable.	4.25	85%	0.8741
Can rely on this enterprise to provide good product	4.01	80.4%	0.0184
Overall Mean Rating	4.27	83.4%	0.3017

An average score of 83.4% was given to the Quality of Product Strategy in the study. The score for Quality of Product Strategy was very high, coming in at 23.4% higher than the threshold of 60%. With a score of 90.2%, the enterprise's "provision of high product quality" was the primary component that most affected its grade. Customers of enterprise gave the product a good dependability rating (above 80%), which was one of the other contributing reasons. This means that the people who took the survey believe that the products on sale contribute to the expansion of the market.

Pricing Strategy

When developing a pricing strategy, it is important to consider a wide range of factors, such as target audience, disposable income, market circumstances, competitive moves, trade margins, and input costs. It was necessary for the participants to specify the pricing tactics they use. The results may be seen in Table 6.

Table 6: Approach to Pricing

Statements on Pricing Strategy	Mean	Percentage Rating	Standard Deviation
The small and medium businesses in enterprise product are reasonably priced.	4.42	88.4%	0.0211
This small and medium business in enterprise offers satisfactory value for what it prices	4.56	91.2%	0.0214
This small and medium business in enterprise provides a good product for the price.	4.21	84.2%	0.3642
pricing decisions or factors in the environment influence growth of small and mediumbusiness in enterprise	4.32	86.4%	0.1245
Overall Mean Rating	4.38	87.6%	0.1328

The Pricing Strategy was rated an average of 87.6 out of 100, as shown in Table 6. As for Pricing Strategy, it got an A+. as it was 27.6% higher than the cutoff criterion of 60%. The enterprise's "satisfactory value of price" was the primary aspect that most heavily influenced this evaluation, ranking at 91.2%. Reasonable price, nice quality, and atmosphere were all important considerations, since they were scored highly (over 80%) by the agents' clients. Based on the numbers, it seems like the business is making a fair profit when it charges rates that cover its production expenses.

People Strategy

Groups of individuals that share a shared history, customs, or familial ties, as well as a common language, set of institutions, and set of beliefs—and who often form politically organized groups—that exert influence on businesses fall under this category. In Table 7 you can see the outcomes.

Table 7: Personnel Management

Statement on People Strategy	Mean	Percentage Rating	Standard Deviation
I receive prompt attention from enterprise's employees.	4.25	85%	0.0254
Employees of enterprise are always willing to help me.	4.18	83.5%	0.8742
I feel safe in my transactions with enterprise's employees.	3.82	76.4%	0.0254
Overall Mean Rating	4.08	81.6%	0.3083

The People Strategy was rated at 81.6% on average, according to Table 7. People Strategy had a relatively good grade as this was 21.6% higher than the cutoff criterion of 60%. The 85% rating for the enterprise's "prompt attention to customers" was the primary component that most affected this grade. "Safety in transactions" was ranked last by the enterprise with a score of 76.4%.

Approach to Execution

A process is a series of interdependent steps that culminate in the customer receiving the final result. Another A business process may be defined as a sequence of actions that, when executed sequentially, will result in the accomplishment of a goal. Tabulated in Table 8 is the Process Strategy analysis.

Table 8: Plan for the Process

Statements on Process Strategy	Mean	Percentage Rating	Standard Deviation
The manager handles customer complaints very well	3.87	77.4%	0.1252
The manager handle order is very fast.	3.88	77.6%	0.2154
The manager listens to the customer's problem is very earnest.	4.25	85%	0.2518
Qualified and Competent workers	4.10	82%	0.2514
Using efficient processes	4.25	85%	0.2851
Simple registration/admission procedures	3.91	79.2%	0.4123
Empathy to clients	3.81	76.2%	0.2151
Overall Mean Rating	4.01	80.2%	0.2509

The Process Strategy was rated 80.2% overall, according to Table 8. Process Strategy had a relatively

good grade as this was 20.2% higher than the cutoff criterion of 60%. The 85% score for "customer relations" by the manager was the primary component of this evaluation. "Handling of customers' complaints" was the element that the manager's customers ranked the lowest, at 77.4 percent. The findings suggest that in order to reach peak performance in consumer product delivery, the company's personnel should collaborate.

4. Objectives in Operations and Their Significance

In this part, we will talk about how operational goals affect the growth of SMEs. Respondents' results are shown in Table 9.

Table 9: The Value of Objectives in Operations

Factors to consider	Mean	Percentage Rating	Standard Deviation
Survival in Market	3.52	70.4%	0.0215
Growth (Gain Market share)	4.52	85.4%	0.8745
Profitability	4.22	84.4%	0.2547
Product and Market differentiation	3.92	79.4%	0.4521
Market development	3.75	75%	0.8792
Diversification	3.21	64.2%	0.1788
Overall Mean Rating	3.86	77.2%	0.4435

Table 9 shows that the average rating for Objectives and Processes was 77.2%. The goal setting grade was moderate since it was 17.2% higher than the cutoff value of 60%. The enterprise's "growth" was the primary aspect that most heavily influenced its grade, which was 85%. "Survival in the market" was ranked seventy-four percent by the company's upper-level executives and directors, making it the lowest rated factor. This suggests that the travel enterprise is growing at a faster pace than it can stay in business.

CONCLUSION

Our understanding of how marketing tactics affect the development and longevity of food businesses run by women in the Ernakulam district has been enhanced by this research. The results showed that the growth of air travel agencies is influenced by service strategy, pricing, promotion, place, process, and people. Additionally, there is a significant relationship between the profitability of air travel agencies and the usage of direct distribution channels.

References

1. Olwande. P. (2014). The Application of Porter's Generic Business Strategies and Performance of Pharmaceutical Wholesalers in Kenya. Thesis, Nairobi: School of business, University of Nairobi.
2. Nanyangwe, J. and Phiri, J. (2021) The Influence of Marketing Strategies on Growth and Sustainability

in the Original Equipment Manufacturing Industry. *Open Journal of Business and Management*, 9, 1446-1461. doi: 10.4236/ojbm.2021.93077.

3. Pillai, R. (2019). Women-Owned Businesses and Sustainable Development Goals in Kerala. *International Journal of Sustainable Development*, 4(3), 183-200.
4. Gupta, S. (2020). The Role of Family Support in Women's Entrepreneurial Success in Kerala. *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship*, 3(2), 45-63. 3)
5. Rajan, R. (2020). Impact of Government Policies on Women Entrepreneurship in Kerala. *Journal of Entrepreneurship and Public Policy*, 6(4), 78-95.
6. Morris, M., Kuratko, D., & Covin, J. (2010). *Corporate entrepreneurship & innovation*. Cengage Learning: South Western.
7. Mulunga A. (2010) Factors Affecting the Growth of Microfinance Institutions in Namibia, Master in Development Finance thesis. University of Stellenbosch
8. Njeru W. (2013) Market Orientation, Marketing Practices, Firm Characteristics, External Environment and Performance of Tour Firms in Kenya, Doctor of Philosophy in Business Administration, School of Business, University of Nairobi
9. O'Farrell, P.N. & Hitchens, D.M.W.N. (1988), 'Alternative theories of small-firm growth: a critical review', *Environment and Planning A*, vol. 20, no. 2, pp. 1365- 1383.
10. Obonyo O. (2013), Marketing strategies adopted by supermarkets for competitive edge, A case of Kisii Town Supermarkets, *Interdisciplinary journal of contemporary research in business*, Vol 4, No 12