MARKETING STRATEGIES OF GLOBAL BRANDS IN INDIAN MARKET

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ABSTRACT

Many foreign businesses are expanding into India, one of the world's fastest-growing and most competitive marketplaces, as a result of rising globalization and international commerce. A few international companies have been successful in positioning their brands in the Indian market despite the fact that the majority of them failed to comprehend the needs of Indian consumers as well as the market's characteristics. This is because they made an effort to thoroughly understand the needs of the target group before introducing a brand into the market. Even some of the most popular companies in the present day made a number of errors when they first entered the Indian market. For instance, global brands like Kellogg's, McDonald's, LG, Reebok, and Coca-Cola initially introduced standard products by employing standard global strategies, but later realized their errors and modified their products or services to better suit Indian consumers' needs. As a result, they were successful. This study aims to find out why certain multinational businesses that are popular elsewhere struggle to get a significant market share in India.

Keywords: *Globalization, Global brands, Indian market, International marketing.*

INTRODUCTION:

The majority of international brands began entering the Indian markets when they were made available to the rest of the world following the complete rewrite of the policies relating to the entry of Multinational Corporations (MNCs) in India. India, along with China, which together make up 37 percent of the world's population, is one of the world's largest markets in terms of sheer size . India is one of the most promising and rapidly expanding economies in the world, with a lot of promise. China comes in second, with a big customer base supported by enormous populations with significant amounts of purchasing power. Though many international brands have entered the Indian market, not all have been able to figure out the secret to success in this mysterious, complex, and diversified market, where consumers' tastes and preferences can diverge after just a few kilometers on either side. Because there are so many different cultures, religions, and income levels in India, the market there is extremely complicated. A significant gap between the rural and urban areas also presents a problem for businesses trying to build an efficient distribution system. In order to draw customers to their brands, global businesses must adapt to local market conditions given the enormous diversity of people and distribution challenges.

Numerous MNCs have a great deal of potential, but they haven't always been able to achieve the levels of success they've either had in their home markets or in other markets around the world. The most effective strategies employed by these international brands when they first entered the Indian markets failed in the Indian market, causing these

MNCs to occasionally suffer significant losses. Choudhary et al. (2012) state that MNCs can try and use a three-step strategy to be successful in the Indian market: (a) organize their business structures for the Indian market; (b) tailor their products for Indian markets; and (c) partner with Indian businesses [2]. In this paper, the cases of a few carefully chosen global brands that initially failed to grasp the nuances of the Indian market and the needs of consumers and suffered severe losses are discussed. Only after successfully adapting to the demands of the local market did they reposition their brands.

METHODOLOGY:

This study report aims to investigate how certain international firms have been winning over Indian customers despite making some early mistakes. In order to comprehend the marketing strategies used by a select group of international brands in India, including Kellogg's, McDonald's, LG, Reebok, and Coca-Cola, pertinent information using secondary data is gathered from a variety of sources, including websites, case studies, newspapers, academic journals, and business magazines. The marketing techniques of these international firms have been examined closely to show how they overcame early setbacks and the many difficulties posed by the variety of the Indian marketplace.

CASES OF SELECTED GLOBAL BRANDS IN INDIA:

KELLOGG'S: FROM TASTELESS TO TASTEFUL:

One of the most popular international brands from the United States, which was the top manufacturer of cereal and convenience foods, is Kellogg's. With sales of over $9 billion and distribution to 160 countries, it is a very well-known brand of morning cereal. It utilized a similar marketing mix when it first entered the Indian market as it has in other global areas . When Kellogg's first entered India in 1994, it significantly banked on changing the country's morning cereal business by getting Indian customers, who were accustomed to hot breakfast dishes, to change their daily routines. The company wanted Indian consumers to break their traditional breakfast habits of eating either Idli Dosas or Paranthas, which varied from region to region with the northern region favoring Paranthas and the southern region favoring Idlis, Vadas, etc., while the western region preferred alternatives like Poha. It was quite difficult for the corporation to get people to immediately change their own conventional eating patterns in favor of the healthier morning cereals. India turned out to be a particularly difficult market for Kellogg's since it required changing the deeply entrenched eating patterns of customers. Before it rose to the top of India's morning cereal market, it went through many challenging but necessary life stages. Currently, Kellogg's is said to control between 60 and 65 percent of India's $400 billion morning cereal industry. It was difficult for Kellogg's to build a foreign brand in the Indian market while launching a new product category since people's eating habits shift after a short distance. The following section provides a concise overview of Kellogg's path from failure to success:

INITIAL BLUNDERS:

It wounded the feelings of the average Indian women who had been providing traditional breakfast to their family for years when Kellogg's first advertising revealed that what the Indian population was eating for breakfast was not at all nutritious. The advertising had a negative impact on the primary initiator and influencer groups in Indian households. Additionally, the kind of meal that Indians were eating was more widely accessible and less expensive than Kellogg's contemporary breakfast of corn flakes. It was quite challenging for the corporation to persuade people to switch from their regular cuisine or breakfast selections to cereals. Additionally, the corporation found it difficult to comprehend another cultural difference between Indian customers and the preference for cold milk while consuming corn flakes (a kind of cereal). Even after eating it, they discovered that the flakes' crispiness entirely disappeared the moment they were dipped into the warm milk, negating the promise made by the points of placement that the flakes would stay crisp after consumption. Due to all of the issues Kellogg's was facing, its sales in April 1995 decreased by 25% when compared to the sales of the prior month, March 1995.

INDIA SPECIFIC STRATEGIES: A TURNAROUND:

Kellogg's entirely redesigned its marketing activities and brand-building programs and tailored them to India after learning from its original missteps. First off, it introduced a small-sized pack for Rs. 10 exclusively for the Indian market in order to combat the price sensitivity of Indian customers. Then they made the decision to capitalize on the passion of Hollywood icons among Indian consumers by releasing a limited-edition Kellogg's Chocos Spider Man 2 "web-designed cereal." In the debut of new versions, the addition of a few distinct Hindi terms, such as Corn Flakes with Iron Shakti and Calcium Shakti, gave it a local flavor. This was a smart move by the management. Although there were only a few of its rivals, the brand was able to stand out from them on the shelf thanks to the use of packaging as an efficient medium for brand communication with customers. By promoting itself as a socially responsible citizen, it also initiated various additional brand-building efforts.

For example, it started recycling and reusing materials and enhancing local communities' access to health and human services. These actions have shown that the brand was specially adapted for the Indian market, and new varieties were released for Indian customers. Indians desired food that had a pleasant flavor, therefore it also introduced the sugar-coated Frooties. Additionally, it introduced chocolate-coated Wheat Loops to increase the variety of products. By localizing all of its raw material and packaging material needs, the business was able to lower its costs and make its services more accessible to Indian clients who have high levels of price sensitivity. In order to expand its footprint in the Indian market, the corporation has made the decision to appeal to the bigger masses. To cut down on total shipping expenses, it established its production facilities in Taloja, close to Mumbai, and made numerous additional measures to be able to compete in the Indian market. Lara Dutta, a well-known Bollywood actress, was chosen as the brand ambassador for this variation of Kellogg's Special K so that female customers could relate with her and want to be as fit as her. This was done in an effort to increase brand acceptance among female consumers.

With the aid of all these activities, Kellogg's was able to win between 60 and 65 percent of the morning cereal market share and establish itself as the industry leader. The firm has made the decision to advertise the brand as an evening snack in order to grow its business.

MCDONALD'S:

As soon as the Indian government opened up its market to the global brands, McDonald's entered the Indian market at an ideal moment. It entered the Indian market in 1996 by establishing two 50:50 joint ventures, the first of which opened in Mumbai and included Hardcastle Restaurants Private Ltd. in Western India and Connaught Plaza Restaurants Private Ltd. in Northern India. Although McDonald's received approval from the Foreign Investment Promotions Board1 (FIPB) in 1991, the firm didn't make its final market debut until 1996, which shows that it didn't want to be taken off guard. Studying a market that is so diversified in terms of regional make-up, consumer diversity, and the range of culinary options available to Indians takes a lot of effort.

INITIAL BLUNDERS:

In order to succeed in such a diversified market, McDonald's had to overcome a number of obstacles when it entered the Indian market. They entered the market with prices that were unaffordable for Indian customers. Other difficulties included the fact that (a) the majority of Indians were vegetarians and (b) even among non-vegetarians, beef consumption was low despite it being a key ingredient in McDonald's menus globally. (b) Due to the fact that beef is used in the manufacturing of the French fries the firm sells in the US market, it has encountered a great deal of opposition in the Indian market from political groups like the Shiv Sena (an independent political party in India). However, McDonald's cleared the matter by stating the actual facts, namely that although beef was utilized in the manufacturing of French fries for the American market, it was never used to produce French fries for the Indian market. In addition to all of this, McDonald's also had to contend with competition from several neighborhood food stores that had been there for a while and had an advantage over McDonald's in terms of pricing and familiarity with regional preferences .

INDIA SPECIFIC STRATEGIES: A NEED OF THE HOUR:

It initially added the Value Meal to its menu, making it affordable for the majority of Indians [7] in order to address all of the aforementioned difficulties as well as the price sensitivity of Indian customers. The firm used the strategy of becoming a "Glocal brand" in order to flourish in the Indian market. This method divided the cooking spaces and chefs among those who prepared vegetarian and non-vegetarian meals since some Indians did not even want to eat vegetarian cuisine if it had been touched by a non-vegetarian food item. By adding Aloo Tikki, McSpicy, and special range Cheese burgers, they added Indian cuisine to their menu. They introduced the happy price menu, which in addition to having reasonable costs, concentrated on the family fun aspect in order to appeal to people who were price conscious. McDonald's adopted a value-based pricing approach, with price points even at the basic level rising to Rs. 20. With the tagline "Aap Ke Zamaane Mein Baap Ke Zamaane Ke Daam," the advertising campaign very effectively made this point. They also used an open kitchen system, which was uncommon among the neighborhood eateries with whom it competed and allowed guests to see firsthand the levels of hygienic and safe conditions in the kitchen during the production of food and other things being supplied. In the Indian market, it persisted with the QSCV (Quality, Service, Cleanliness, and Value) concept. [8]. The business has had great success in the Indian market by making sure it responded to local tastes and preferences by altering its marketing mix for Indian customers. It is now getting ready to open 50 additional outlets with an investment of Rs. 150 crore by 2013 . as part of its development strategy.

LG IN INDIA: A JOURNEY FROM HAVING NO LIFE TO LIFE'S GOOD:

LGEIL is a completely owned subsidiary of the parent corporation, which is situated in Seoul. The firm has been laser-focused on expanding in the Indian market, which has allowed it to gain the market share (by volume) comparable to 29.4% in refrigerators, 26.54% in color TVs, 35.8% in washing machines, and a crushing 38 percent in microwave ovens. The market share of GSM phones sold by LG in India is now 6% and growing . According to LG's Managing Director, Indian customers are complicated, thus in order to forge long-term connections with them, businesses must make long-term commitments and investments to comprehend them.

REASONS OF INITIAL FAILURE:

Due to issues primarily dealing with local importers, LG's first effort to enter India during the early 1990s failed. When it first started, it was known as "Lucky Goldstar," and its activities in the Indian market were discontinued as a result of joint venture failures and the de-licensing of the consumer electronics sector. The company's main mistake, according to Lucky Goldstar, was that it replicated the practices of other white goods firms in the 1990s, including sporadic advertising and only pushing items when customers visited the shop . After receiving approval from the Indian government to build a cutting-edge white goods facility in Greater Noida, it reentered the market in January 1997 under the name LG Electronics India Private Ltd., a wholly owned subsidiary of a Korean chaebol. The Japanese firms dominated the Indian consumer electronics industry at the time, and there was a lot of rivalry in the Indian marketplaces.

Another issue LG faced in India was low brand recognition among customers. It was one of the last multinational corporations (MNCs) to join the Indian consumer electronics sector, giving its rivals a two-year head start. Second, it had to consider the high import duties, the fierce rivalry from MNCs and local businesses, and the sensitivity of Indian customers to price concerns.

STRATEGIES THAT MADE LG'S LIFE GOOD IN INDIA:

The business surmounted these obstacles by using cutting-edge marketing techniques designed exclusively for Indian markets and by introducing cutting-edge technology in the consumer electronics and home appliance sectors. It began a close partnership with cricket in order to establish a stronger connection with the Indian audience. This partnership included the recruitment of top Indian cricketers and the introduction of cricket games on its television platforms . By sponsoring the World Cups in 1999 and 2003, it became known as the first major MNC to establish extremely strong ties with cricket. It concentrated on releasing items that exclusively looked out for the health of Indian customers, such as the "Golden Eye" color television, air conditioners that utilized the "Health Air System," microwave ovens that used the "Health Wave System," etc. It relocated the manufacturing base for several of its goods, including PC monitors and refrigerators, and adopted the method of contract manufacturing for the manufacture of color televisions in order to avoid the factors that contributed to its failure when it originally entered the Indian market (CTVs). Additionally, this enabled the business to lower expenses. They also developed locally adapted goods, such as CTVs with menus in Hindi and other regional languages. It launched the low cost "Cineplus" and

"Sampoorna" series for the rural markets for the budget-conscious consumers .

It had a network of distributors who collaborated with the business directly. This demonstrates how LG was able to correct its course and become a globally recognized brand in the Indian market after making errors the first time around.

INITIAL BLUNDERS:

It made several assumptions when it first arrived in India that turned out to be completely false, including assuming that every automobile owner in India must possess a pair of Reebok sneakers. This concept, which may have held true in other markets, was completely false in India since there, automobile owners either paid for their vehicles in installments or received cars that belonged to their companies rather than their own. When it engaged a company to estimate the market potential for Indian markets, it encountered one issue in addition to another one connected to their study that yielded inaccurate findings. The agency suggested that the company divide the market into segments based on postal codes, which on paper seemed like a good idea, but the company later realized that this would also not work because some areas, like Greater Kailash Post Office in New Delhi, are high profile localities with a number of middle class families close by locality of Zamroodpur under it. To choose where to open the businesses in the selected locations, this procedure was improperly used.

STRATEGIES FOR BECOMING LEADER IN INDIA'S FOOTWEAR MARKET:

Despite all of these obstacles, the firm ultimately prospered in the Indian market, capturing a market share of 53% of the branded sportswear sector, with an estimated value of Rs. 3500 crore annually. Reebok is a well-known brand in the Indian market, and the fact that it is offered at the lowest price point, beginning at Rs. 990 a pair, has contributed to the brand's development as a mass-market brand in the country. To serve the lower end of the market, the brand has more than 300 outlets and offers around 80 SKUs for less Rs. 2590. To reduce manufacturing costs, 80% of the brand's production is carried out in India. The company expanded its product lines and SKUs for adults, children, teenagers, and even females in order to expand its market as much as possible. Additionally, in order to make sure that the brand can meet the needs of its customers, it introduces about 42 new units each month to the Indian market. It has introduced many subbrands, including Easytone, Fish Fry, and special lines for women, children, and elderly people in the Indian market while taking into account their various needs .

To reach a wider market, it decided to concentrate on Tier II cities in Indian markets. To grow even more and draw in more customers there, the brand made the decision to sign top cricketers from the Indian cricket team. To appeal to the general public, it also sponsored the KKR team in the IPL. Reebok made a concerted effort to establish a strong connection with cricket while positioning itself as a fitness brand and understanding the value of localizing its brand. Reebok's marketing strategy, which avoided relying on the aura of famous international athletes to promote its products as Nike, Adidas, and Puma attempted to do unsuccessfully in India, involved associating itself with the cricket-crazed Indians. Reebok has complete brand recall and stickiness in the minds of customers as a result of its link with cricket. The brand is already reaping significant benefits as a result of its affiliation with the 2011 ICC Cricket World Cup and endorsement deals with Indian cricket team members M. S. Dhoni and Yuvraj Singh, among others. Same-store sales at Reebok increased by 20% in April 2011 compared to April 2010. Following India's World Cup triumph, item sales across its 1,000+ franchisee locations also skyrocketed . Additionally, it engaged into a marketing partnership with UTV Motion Pictures for the purpose of providing Bipasha Basu and John Abraham's (renowned Bollywood actors) clothes for the soccer-themed film "Goal." Utilizing the aforementioned strategies, Reebok quickly overtook its formidable competitors Adidas and Nike in the Indian sports goods market .

COCA-COLA INDIA:

With a 60% dominance in the carbonated soft drink category, a 36% share in the fruit drink segment, and a 33% share in bottled water, Coca-Cola dominates the Indian beverage market .

INITIAL BLUNDERS AND SUFFERINGS:

Coca-Cola The corporation first entered the Indian market in the late 1970s, but was compelled to withdraw due to a government decree. 1993 saw the corporation re-enter the Indian market as the government chose to liberalize it once again. This time, the company's entrance into the market was more spectacular since it acquired all the top soft drink brands in India, including Thums-up, Limca, and Gold Spot. As a result, it was accused of stifling competition with its financial might. However, after years of operating in the Indian market, the firm was unable to turn a profit due to its very aggressive pricing and advertising techniques designed to outperform the competition. The pesticides scandal that occurred in 2003, which led to an 11 percent reduction in sales during that period, also hurt it in the Indian market. In the eyes of Indian consumers, it had a highly unfavorable effect on Coca-brand Cola's image.

STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME CHALLENGES:

The business opted to spend more than $1 billion to establish the necessary infrastructure for success in India in order to be successful. In India, the business invested in the construction of 25 totally owned bottling factories. With the help of all these measures, the corporation was able to achieve a greater degree of market penetration in India, especially in the rural regions. 2008; Mukerjee et al. The Coca-Cola brand was relaunched in India using exclusively global communications, but the business immediately recognized this was a mistake and swiftly modified its messaging to guarantee adequate appeal to Indian customers. The business relied on Bollywood and cricket, two of the strongest foundations a brand in India's advertising and communications sector can rely on to prosper. In order to boost its brand in the Indian market, it signed a number of film stars and cricket players. The brand was able to achieve widespread acceptance in the market because to its advertising campaign with the slogan "Thanda matlab Coca-Cola." Indians used to call everything that was cooled "Thanda," therefore this ad was really well thought out. Aamir Khan, a well-known Bollywood actor who contributed to the acceptance of cold drinks in rural regions, was hired by Coca-Cola to assist position the company's brand for customers in such areas. The firm has decreased the entry level price point to Rs. 5 just in order to boost market penetration in rural areas .

The corporation was also able to triumph over the pesticide dispute, which was one of its main problems in 2003. To ensure that consumers maintained their faith in the market, they hired Aamir Khan and Smriti Irani, two very well-known TV actors at the time. They aired a commercial in which Aamir is given a tour of the Coca-Cola factory and is informed about the 400 quality control tests that are a necessary part of the production process. This was done to reassure consumers that the brand they are consuming is completely safe for them. After overcoming all of these obstacles, Coca-Cola was once more determined to grow the Indian market, moving it up the global market ranking from seventh to fifth . To accomplish this goal, the company has set aside US$ 5 billion to ensure that it maintains its focus on successfully expanding the Indian market.

CONCLUSION:

After looking over several individual brand situations, we can say that the major reason why global companies originally failed was that they didn't grasp the dynamics of Indian customers as well as the markets they were intending to target. In order to approach the market with a whole new attitude in line with market realities, they had to rethink their tactics. This mostly occurred because what they had done for them had been influenced by either their original markets or the markets throughout the globe where they had found success. Due to the intricately structured Indian marketplaces and the diverse population of the nation, whose preferences and needs are always shifting, this motto has never proven effective in India.

In the current environment, corporations must change their attention from developing global plans for the total market to strategies that adapt to the local market circumstances in India if they want any worldwide brand to prosper in Indian markets. The multinational corporations doing business in India must make an effort to be as regional as possible by becoming Glocal brands, or multinational corporations at heart. The businesses can accomplish these goals by using local manufacturing, creating Indianized versions of their products to cater to local consumers' tastes, using local celebrities as brand ambassadors, and addressing the issue of price sensitivity of the Indian consumers by launching value-for-money products that are affordable for the masses and forming long-term relationships with market intermediaries and instilling in them a sense of confidence that the products are of high quality.

The phrase "exclusively for India has become an intrinsic component of their entire product development strategy" was used in the wonderfully written piece "Made In India, Only For India" that was just published in "The Strategist". In order for MNCs to succeed, it is hoped to demonstrate via this article that they must bring goods or services that are appropriate for Indian markets. For instance, Honda Motorcycles just introduced the "Dream Yuga" bike to compete with its rival and former joint venture partner "Hero Moto Corps," which dominates the entry-level market. Similar to this, GE Healthcare introduced an electrocardiogram (ECG) machine designed specifically for use in rural areas where clinics lack the space to run more complex ECG machines. This machine also runs on batteries to get around the electricity issue brought on by the frequent power outages in rural areas of India. After conducting research that showed them a slight shift in Indian consumers' preferences—they now valued mileage, price, styling, space, and interiors when purchasing a car, as opposed to earlier when they valued mileage, price, styling, and interior space—the Korean automaker Hyundai launched the Eon in the Indian market. Hyundai Eon was only introduced in the Indian markets based on this research. Therefore, most MNCs are using this new maxim of behaving locally while thinking globally to win in the Indian market. Most international companies are now focusing on local promotions, local products, pricing strategies as per local requirements, and local distribution for Indian markets instead of using their global marketing communications mix to attract customers. This is because the MNCs' and their brands that are successful in Indian markets are switching to this strategy of presenting themselves as a local company so that people can identify themselves with these firms as their own. According to how they are entering the markets by providing more and more regional flavors and tastes, which are driving these brands ahead, the growth for these brands in the Indian marketplaces has been expanding over time.

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