

A Study on Customer Satisfaction towards Bharat Masala Products in Ganjam District of Odisha

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Abstract

This research investigates customer satisfaction toward Bharat Masala products in Ganjam District, Odisha, with the aim of understanding consumer perceptions related to product quality, price, packaging, and availability. Given the growing competition in the spice market, especially in semi-urban and rural areas, the study focuses on how effectively Bharat Masala meets customer expectations. A descriptive research design was used, and primary data was collected from 150 respondents through structured questionnaires. The analysis revealed that a majority of consumers expressed high satisfaction with the taste, aroma, and packaging of Bharat Masala products. However, price sensitivity was notable, especially in rural areas, where consumers expressed a desire for more affordable pack sizes. The study also found a strong correlation between product quality and brand loyalty. Urban respondents showed slightly higher satisfaction levels, particularly in terms of availability and pricing. The research concludes with actionable recommendations such as introducing value packs, enhancing rural distribution, and strengthening customer engagement through promotional activities and feedback mechanisms. Overall, the study provides valuable insights for Bharat Masala to strengthen its market position and improve customer satisfaction in the region.

Keywords: Bharat Masala, Product, Powder, food, cooking.

1. Introduction

“Bharat Masala” – The Queen of Spices – has become a household name among millions today. Initially engaged in turmeric trading, the brand soon expanded into the domain of pure spice powders such as turmeric, chili, and coriander. This spirit of innovation led Bharat Masala to boldly venture into the broader masala segment. However, the journey was not without its challenges. In earlier days, selling spice blends to traditionally conservative oriental women was a significant hurdle. The concept of “easy cooking” had to be introduced and accepted—an idea that was unfamiliar at the time.

Rather than merely marketing food products, Bharat Masala focused on promoting the ease and convenience of using blended spices. Through determination, persistence, and a deep understanding of consumer needs, the brand gradually found its place in kitchens across the country—and eventually, the world.

Though the success story may seem miraculous, the journey was marked by countless obstacles: metaphorical potholes, bumps, and stormy weather. These hardships were known only to those who toiled behind the scenes. At the heart of this remarkable achievement was a visionary producer, supported steadfastly by a committed business partner—together, they transformed Bharat Masala

into a name synonymous with trust, quality, and tradition.

2. Problem Statement

Although Bharat Masala has established a recognizable presence in Ganjam District and enjoys a degree of consumer acceptance, it currently lacks a structured and data-driven understanding of how customers in the region truly perceive its products. There is no comprehensive empirical analysis available that explores customer satisfaction levels across critical factors such as product quality, packaging, pricing, availability, and overall brand perception.

In a competitive FMCG market where consumer preferences are rapidly evolving and local players are gaining ground, the absence of such insights poses a significant challenge. Without reliable feedback from its target customers, Bharat Masala may struggle to identify changing expectations; address service or quality gaps, or tailor its marketing and distribution strategies effectively. This disconnect can lead to missed opportunities for growth, reduced customer loyalty, and vulnerability to competitors who are more attuned to local consumer needs. Therefore, a systematic study is essential to evaluate customer satisfaction, strengthen brand positioning, and support evidence-based decision-making for long-term success in the Ganjam market.

3. Need of the Study

Most of the companies want to know about the customer satisfaction, because normally they had made a huge amount of investment to make the product known to the customers. In order to know the effectiveness of sales and customer satisfaction can be made through the particular survey.

If the customers are not satisfied they would switch over to the other products it is very difficult to bring back those

customers to make purchase and encourage them to make a word of mouth

3. Objectives of the Study

The primary aim of this study is to comprehensively assess customer satisfaction toward Bharat Masala products in the Ganjam District of Odisha. The specific objectives are outlined as follows:

1. To Evaluate Customer Satisfaction across Key Product Attributes:

This objective focuses on assessing how customers perceive various aspects of Bharat Masala products, including product quality, taste, aroma, freshness, packaging design, pricing, and ease of availability. It aims to determine whether these attributes meet consumer expectations and how they impact overall satisfaction levels.

2. To Identify the Key Factors Influencing Purchase Decisions:

The study seeks to uncover the major factors that drive consumers to choose Bharat Masala over other competing brands. These may include brand reputation, previous experience, word-of-mouth influence, promotional offers, product visibility in retail stores, or convenience in usage. Understanding these drivers will help in aligning marketing efforts with customer priorities.

3. To Measure the Level of Brand Loyalty and Repurchase Intentions:

Another objective is to examine the extent to which customers remain loyal to the brand. This involves analyzing whether customers consistently prefer Bharat Masala over alternatives, their likelihood of repeat purchases, and their willingness to recommend the brand to others. The study also aims to identify the emotional and rational aspects behind brand loyalty.

4. To Recommend Strategic Measures to Improve Customer Satisfaction and Market Share:

Based on the findings, the study will propose actionable strategies to enhance customer experience and strengthen Bharat Masala's market position in the region. These recommendations may involve improvements in product offerings, pricing strategies, promotional campaigns, packaging innovation, and distribution channel expansion, especially in semi-urban and rural segments.

4. Research Methodology

4.1. Research Design

This research which design was adopted for this study is exploratory and descriptive design. This project is designed to identify the factors which influence the customers and the ways through which to choose or to buy Bharat Masala product in GANJAM District.

The objective of descriptive study is to learn that who want, when, where and how of the topic. The study may be simple or complex, it may be done in many setting. The simplest descriptive study concerns an invariant question or hypothesis in which we ask about, or state something about the size, form, distribution, or existence of variable.

Descriptive studies may involve the collection of data and the creation of a distribution of the number of time the researcher observes a single event or characteristics or they may involve relating the interaction of two or more variables. Descriptive studies may or may not have the potential for drawing powerful inferences. The descriptive study is popular in business research because of its versatility across disciplines.

4.2. SAMPLING DESIGN

Sampling

- **Population:** Households using Bharat Masala in Ganjam District.
- **Sample size:** 150 respondents—justified by Cochran's formula (95% confidence, 8% margin).
- **Sampling method:** Quota sampling ensured representation from both Berhampur Municipality and peripheral rural blocks (Chatrapur, Rangeilunda, Digapahandi) of Ganjam District, with approximately 50 households from urban and 100 from rural settings.

4.3 Data Collection

Data was gathered via a structured 25-item questionnaire during May 2025. Trained enumerators visited homes, obtaining consent before administering interviews. The instrument included:

1. **Demographics:** Age, gender, family size, income, education.
2. **Product Usage:** Frequency, variants purchased.
3. **Satisfaction Ratings** (Likert scale 1–5): quality, aroma, taste, freshness, packaging, size options, price, availability, overall satisfaction.
4. **Behavioral Intent:** Likelihood of repurchase, recommendation.
5. **Open Feedback:** Suggestions for improvement.

4.4 Instrument Reliability & Validity

Cronbach's alpha for satisfaction scale was 0.87, indicating high internal consistency. Face and content validity were ensured via expert review by two professors in marketing and two industry professionals.

4.5 Data Analysis

Data was coded and analyzed using SPSS v25. Techniques included:

- Descriptive statistics (means, percentages).
- Correlation analysis (Pearson's r).
- Chi-square tests to detect differences between urban and rural respondents.

- Regression modelling to predict overall satisfaction from key dimensions.

5. Data Analysis & Results:

5.1 Respondent Profile:

Demographic	Details
Gender	Male: 55%
Age	<30: 35%
Family Size	Small (1–3): 25%
Monthly Income	<₹10k: 30%
Education	Secondary: 40%

Source: Own Compilation

5.2 Usage Patterns

- 90% use Bharat Masala weekly.

- Commonly purchased items: Turmeric powder (85%), Chili powder (80%), Garam masala (60%), Coriander powder (55%).

5.3 Satisfaction Scores

Satisfaction Dimension	Mean Score (1–5)	% Satisfied (4–5)
Product Quality	4.3	82%
Aroma & Flavor	4.2	80%
Packaging & Convenience	4.1	78%
Variety of Pack Sizes	3.8	72%
Price Fairness	3.6	65%
Availability	4.2	80%
Overall Satisfaction	4.1	82%

Source: Own Compilation

4.4 Correlation & Regression

- Taste → Overall satisfaction: $r = 0.65$
- Packaging → Overall satisfaction: $r = 0.50$
- Price → Overall satisfaction: $r = 0.55$
- Regression model ($R^2 = 0.70$): 70% of variation in overall satisfaction explained by quality, packaging, price, and availability (quality being the strongest predictor).

4.5 Urban vs. Rural Comparison

- Price satisfaction: Urban (68%), Rural (63%) – $\chi^2 = 3.25$, $p < 0.05$
- Availability: Urban (85%) vs Rural (78%) – $\chi^2 = 2.85$, $p < 0.10$
Consumers from urban areas show slightly higher satisfaction on price and availability.

4.6 Brand Loyalty and Intention

- 76% expressed intent to repurchase; 10% undecided; 14% willing to switch.

- Loyalty linked to flavor consistency (mean = 4.2) and perceived brand reputation (mean = 4.0).

4.7 Qualitative Feedback

Common themes from comment boxes:

- “Please offer 50 g sachets for trial.”
- “Introduce Diwali gift combo packs.”
- “Reduce price of bigger packs (1 kg).”

5. Discussion

5.1 Key Satisfaction Drivers

Product quality (taste, aroma, freshness) emerges as the top satisfaction driver—consistent with previous studies (Sahu, 2019). Regular positive experiences build trust and drive repeat buying, reaffirming Aaker’s brand loyalty theory.

5.2 Packaging & Offering

While packaging satisfaction is high, customers suggest more size options—highlighting the need for tailoring to

diverse income segments and usage needs (Mittal & Kamakura, 2001).

5.3 Price Perceptions

Although price satisfaction is moderate, there's visible sensitivity in rural sectors. Bharat Masala may consider value packs or periodic discounts to enhance rural market penetration.

5.4 Availability Gap

Though generally good, some rural respondents reported sporadic availability. Strengthening distribution—especially in remote blocks—could address this issue.

5.5 Urban-Rural Variations

The statistically significant differences highlight the need to differentiate strategies: cost incentives for rural zones, and wider variant options for urban consumers.

5.6 Repurchase Behavior

High repurchase intention signals strong loyalty; however, the 14% switching interest indicates latent churn risk if expectations on price or size are unmet.

6. Limitations

- Sample limited to select blocks, may not represent the entire district.
- Questionnaire-based responses may have social desirability bias.
- Seasonal or promotional variations (sample collected in May) may influence perceptions.

7. Recommendation

Based on the insights gained from the analysis of customer satisfaction levels in Ganjam District, several strategic and operational recommendations are proposed to help Bharat Masala enhance its market presence, improve customer satisfaction, and foster long-term brand loyalty.

7.1. Introduce Smaller and Affordable Pack Sizes

A significant portion of rural and price-sensitive consumers expressed concerns

over affordability and accessibility. To address this, Bharat Masala should consider launching smaller, low-cost pack sizes (e.g., sachets or mini-pouches) of popular products like turmeric, chili, and coriander. This will make the products more accessible to daily wage earners and lower-income households, thereby increasing sales volume and market penetration.

7.2. Launch Value Bundles and Family Packs

To attract middle-income and larger households, Bharat Masala can introduce combo packs or family-size bundles at discounted rates. Offering value for money through bundled pricing can not only improve perceived affordability but also increase overall sales. Promotional bundles that combine frequently used spices in one package can be especially appealing.

7.3. Strengthen Rural and Semi-Urban Distribution Channels

While availability is generally rated high, some rural areas still face inconsistencies in product access. Expanding and streamlining the distribution network to reach interior villages and weekly markets (haats) will ensure product consistency and enhance brand reliability. Partnering with local retailers, mobile vendors, and regional wholesalers can also help improve last-mile connectivity.

7.4. Implement Localized Promotional Campaigns

Brand awareness campaigns tailored to local languages, festivals, and cultural contexts can greatly enhance consumer engagement. Bharat Masala should consider promotional activities such as cooking contests, recipe-sharing events, and free tasting sessions in rural markets. Collaborations with local influencers or home chefs could also help drive word-of-mouth marketing.

7.5. Invest in Retail Display and Packaging Appeal

Attractive, well-organized retail displays in grocery stores and supermarkets can significantly improve brand visibility. Retailers should be provided with branded shelves, stands, and banners to promote Bharat Masala products prominently. In addition, investing in eye-catching, informative, and tamper-proof packaging can further elevate customer trust and product appeal.

7.6. Enhance Digital Presence and E-Commerce Integration

With the increasing penetration of smartphones, even in semi-urban and rural areas, Bharat Masala should consider strengthening its digital footprint. A simple and mobile-friendly website, presence on e-commerce platforms, and social media advertising can boost online visibility and allow tech-savvy consumers to engage with the brand directly.

7.7. Establish a Customer Feedback and Support Mechanism

Customer satisfaction is not a one-time achievement—it requires continuous effort. Bharat Masala should introduce a structured feedback system through which customers can voice their opinions, suggestions, and complaints. This could include toll-free numbers, WhatsApp support, or feedback forms in stores. Tracking this data can help identify trends and areas of improvement.

7.8. Conduct Regular Market Research and Satisfaction Surveys

To stay aligned with consumer expectations, Bharat Masala should conduct bi-annual or annual customer satisfaction surveys. These should cover variables like taste, packaging, pricing, availability, and overall brand perception. Market data should be analyzed periodically to adapt marketing and product strategies in a timely and efficient manner.

7.9. Focus on Consistency in Product Quality

Although the overall quality perception is strong, any inconsistency in spice texture, flavor, or aroma can affect consumer trust. Implementing stricter quality control at production units and regular audits at packaging centers will ensure that customers receive a consistent experience with every purchase.

7.10. Explore Expansion into Adjacent Product Categories

Given the brand's positive reputation, Bharat Masala may consider expanding into adjacent product categories such as blended spice mixes (e.g., garam masala, pav bhaji masala), ready-to-cook spice kits, or organic spice variants. Diversifying the product line can cater to new customer segments and broaden revenue streams.

By implementing these recommendations, Bharat Masala can not only solidify its brand in Ganjam District but also build a strong foundation for regional and national growth. These initiatives, if executed effectively, will contribute significantly to customer retention, competitive advantage, and sustainable market leadership.

7. Conclusion

This study provides an in-depth and structured analysis of customer satisfaction towards Bharat Masala products in Ganjam District, a region characterized by diverse consumer behavior and a growing market for FMCG goods. By focusing on key satisfaction dimensions such as product quality, aroma, taste, packaging, pricing, and availability, the research reveals critical insights into how consumers perceive and interact with the brand. The findings indicate that Bharat Masala enjoys a strong reputation for its quality and flavor consistency—attributes that are central to consumer expectations in the spice category. The packaging was also found to be appealing and convenient, contributing positively to overall satisfaction. Moreover, the widespread

availability of Bharat Masala products across urban and semi-urban areas has enhanced customer access and trust in the brand. However, the study also brings to light certain areas of concern, particularly regarding price sensitivity among rural consumers. While the majority of customers reported satisfaction with the product's quality, a significant portion expressed reservations about pricing and pack size flexibility. This gap presents both a challenge and an opportunity for Bharat Masala to recalibrate its pricing and distribution strategies, especially in price-sensitive markets. Another key outcome of the study is the evident link between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty. Consumers who perceive consistent flavor, freshness, and product reliability are more likely to engage in repeat purchases and recommend the brand to others. This loyalty, if nurtured properly, can translate into long-term brand equity and market resilience.

To capitalize on these insights, Bharat Masala should consider a range of targeted interventions—such as introducing smaller, affordable pack sizes, launching value bundles, enhancing rural distribution networks, and conducting localized promotional campaigns. Equally important is the need to establish regular mechanisms for collecting customer feedback, such as bi-annual satisfaction surveys, digital review channels, and customer service hotlines.

In conclusion, while Bharat Masala has made commendable progress in capturing consumer attention and achieving product satisfaction in Ganjam, its future growth will depend on how well it adapts to evolving consumer expectations. A customer-centric approach, grounded in continuous feedback, innovation, and market responsiveness, will be essential for sustaining and expanding its market presence not only in Ganjam District but also in other emerging regional markets.

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