

ETHICAL DILEMMA AND MARKETING DECISIONS: A CASE ANALYSIS OF FOOD PRODUCTS

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Abstract *This paper attempts to examine the ethical dilemmas faced by the managers in making decisions in the marketing of food products. In the prevailing business environment, most of the organisations primarily aim to optimize profits in the long term survival what has emerged critical for feel-factor among the existing and prospective consumers and commitment among employees. A decade ago concept of ethical marketing was restricted to few known companies or selected brands but as a general marketing phenomenon it is only in the recent times that it has come to be accepted as critical to sustaining long term growth of the business across the global marketing spectrum. The dictates of the intense competition and global access to the goods and services have made 'social responsibility' as the cardinal mantra for transacting business. In the emerging market scenario, business practices and transparency in the market are not only found to be essential but have also become a basic requirement under the existing laws of the land and as such the role of marketers in decision making functions has changed under emerging new realities.*

Keywords *Ethical Challenges, Marketing Decisions, Food Products, Legal Issues, Exploitation.*

PROLOGUE

Till recent past concept of ethical marketing was restricted to few well-known companies or selected brands but as a practicing marketing code across the world more so in Indian context it was hardly being adhered to. However in the recent times growing public debate and stringent legislative measures adopted in different part of the world fair trade practices for the benefit of the consumers has become mandatory in conduct of business. Ethical and fair practices in marketing are now a cardinal mantra and are being accepted as critical for sustaining long term growth of the business across the global marketing spectrum. The pressure of intense competition and global access to the goods and services has made 'social responsibility' core value for transacting business. In the emerging market scenario, business practices and transparency in the market are not only found to be essential but have also become basic requirement under the existing laws of the land.

Ethical marketing is an honest and factual representation of a product, delivered in a framework of cultural and social values for the consumer. Fair trade is the trust and the faith which a company is able to generate among the consumers, which goes a long way to establish brand loyalty. Consumers perceive that what they pay is just a price for the purchases being made by them and meets the qualitative requirements of the product as claimed by the seller. Factor inputs used to manufacture goods and services and as a consequence the environmental benefits which accrue for ensuring a healthy

balance between business and ecology which is perceived to be ethically sound.

In today's life parameters across the global frontiers, ethical practices are mandated by a universal charter to protect the gullible humans from exploitation of profit-seekers. As a consequence business ethics form an important component in making goods and services available to the consumers who otherwise would not be aware about the intended malpractices of sellers aiming to make a quick profit thereby adversely impacting healthy balance between the growth of the business and well being of the society. Prevalence of unethical marketing practices often impregnate the entire social fabric with mistrust, deceit and the acrimony which may undo the efforts made by government and business sector to enhance the value of delivered products or services to the end customer. To arrest the deteriorating state of social psyche which is detrimental to all forces of growth and development, it becomes imperative for people and government to stop or even penalize all those who violate the basic ethical norm of "greatest good to greatest number". The unethical practices adopted by some manufacturers and marketers of goods and services cannot be controlled by government or legislative measures alone but have to be countered by awakened public consciousness and awareness of the rights and privileges of consumers. It would bind them together as unified force to prevent exploitation practices of unscrupulous traders. The protection of consumer rights is now a constitutional propriety for which there is provision for legal and compensation remedy.

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REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The foundation of business success lies in the relationship between the marketers and customers as both are reliant on each other. In the changing business scenario where consumers are well informed and conscious in making buying decisions, it has become intricate for the marketers to deceive consumers for long to earn hefty profits. It indeed has forced the marketers to abide by all the prescribed ethical and legal norms to create an environment of trust, harmony, and reciprocity with consumers. The changing industry developments have created a great challenge for the marketers of the food products to create affirmative image to win market share. The focus of this review was on the ethical marketing research that has been published from 1978 through 2012. Despite lot of challenges, ethical marketing continued to grow as a specific sub-discipline within marketing (Fern and Brown's, 1984). In the 1970s significant research was conducted to describe the beliefs of managers about marketing ethics where they found young managers went along with their supervisors to show loyalty in dealing with matters related to judgments on morality (Bowman, 1976; Carroll, 1975). Another study providing insights into organisational relationships that influence marketing managers' ethical beliefs and behaviour indicated that respondents perceived the ethical standards of their peers and top management lower than their own standards (Ferrell and Weaver, 1978). Empirical research in the 1970s set the stage for framework that described ethical decision making within the context of a marketing organisation. Further, "A Contingency Framework for Understanding Ethical Decision Making in Marketing" emphasised the interaction of the individual and organisation, including organisation culture, co-workers, and opportunity to explain how ethical decisions are made (Ferrell and Gresham, 1985). Most of the propositions in this model had been tested to provide a grounded understanding of ethical decision making. "A General Theory of Marketing Ethics" which has wider acceptance provides us an empirically grounded model to illustrate how ethical decision making occurs in an organisation (Hunt and Vitell, 1986). Research followed in both marketing and management literature had helped to test the Ferrell and Gresham, and Hunt and Vitell models (Hunt and Vitell, 2005). The research by Murphy built a normative framework for relational marketing exchanges based on the ethical exchange dimensions of trust, equality, responsibility, and commitment (Gundlach and Murphy, 1993). They developed a foundational understanding of the interrelationship of ethics and law in marketing exchange. This was a significant contribution because some observers attained the viewpoint that the legal and ethical dimensions of exchange are independent. The findings concluded that ethical marketing exchanges require a managerial emphasis on ethical corporate culture, ethics training

programs, and ethical audits. Integrative Social Contract Theory (ISCT) linked the decision-making process, multiple communities, hyper norms, and ethical judgments based on the dominant legitimate norms. The framework developed can be used for resolving ethical issues that arise among different stakeholders because marketers frequently engage them self in boundary-spanning relationships and cross-cultural activities. This normative framework was significant to marketing as it emphasized on the symbiotic relationship between the firm and its stakeholders, including the right to exist and even prosper in society. This theory can be used to bridge normative and descriptive research in marketing ethics (Dunfee, Smith and Ross, 1999). Further a study revealed that there are seven types of marketing practices which are used by the marketers and their practitioners consider none of them unethical as all of them are successful. These marketing practices are treated as creative devices by smaller and regional focused businesses to improve the sale of goods and services (Withey, 2011).

NEED OF THE STUDY

The present study is an exploratory initiative to formulate a holistic mechanism whereby it could be possible to suggest policy initiatives both at the governmental and non-governmental level to arrest unethical practices in business. This study has attempted to identify measures which should help to create an environment of trust, harmony and reciprocity between the consumers and marketers as official reports and published evidences has confirmed about massive adulteration and price manipulation in food products in the rural markets of J&K state and at country level. The study was conducted in two districts of Jammu province i.e., district Jammu and district Doda for undertaking field survey among the sample respondents in context of select food products. The study has made an in depth analysis of the problems of ethical issues in all its dimensions of marketing and distribution of goods and services. An attempt has been made to identify means which could check the economic exploitation of the innocent consumers which in certain cases has proved to be life threatening. The canvass of suggestions in the study covers both the legislative and social measures to prescribe commensurate punishment to violators. There is dearth of literature on ethical marketing practices particularly in Indian context. On the basis of research gap emerged from the review of literature, the present study examines the perceptions of marketers about marketing ethics especially in three types of food products viz. Edible Oils, Food Grains and Milk and Milk products.

OBJECTIVES

1. To make an in-depth analysis of marketing practices followed by the marketers of food products.

Table 1: Demographic Analysis of Marketers

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
Between 20-30	12	6.15
31-40	76	38.97
41-50	59	30.26
51- Above	48	24.62
Gender		
Male	195	100
Female	-	-
Qualification		
10 th	3	1.54
12 th	23	11.79
Graduation	133	68.21
PG & Above	36	18.46
Number of Employees		
0-10	40	20.51
11-20	56	28.72
21-30	56	28.72
31-Above	43	22.05
Experience		
0-5	18	9.23
6-10	37	18.97
11-15	74	37.95
16-above	66	33.85
Monthly Sales		
0 - 25 Lacs	49	25.13
25 - 50 Lacs	62	31.79
50-75 Lacs	34	17.44
75- Above	50	25.64
Member of Association		
Yes	195	100
Code of Ethics		
No	4.00	2.05
Yes	191.00	97.95
Do Govt. Agencies Visits		
No	4	2.05
Yes	191	97.95

2. To conduct gap analysis in terms of compliance and violations of the ethical standard practices.
3. To study the impact of ethical practices on marketing decisions.
4. To suggest suitable measures to strengthen compliance to fair business practices.

HYPOTHESES

- H1** *Marketers do not follow ethical norms in the distribution of food products.*
- H2** *There is a gap in terms of prescribed and practiced legal and ethical norms.*

H3 *There is a positive relationship between ethical practices and marketing decisions.*

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The logical steps in research process after the formulation of research objectives, identification of research hypotheses and generation of scale items, have been designed in such a manner that the requisite data collected can be analysed in conformity with the laid down objectives and hypotheses. The present research study being exploratory in nature, based upon both secondary and primary data. The secondary data have been taken from books, journals, magazines, and the Internet. The primary data have been collected by using a specifically developed questionnaire based upon five points Likert Scale from marketers selected through census method.

Questionnaire Design and Development

The final draft questionnaire was adapted from the scale used by Vitell, Rallapalli, and Singhapakdi (1993) by making needed changes in the dimensions formulated using the same scale consisting of items covering six dimensions viz. Pricing Norms, Information Norms, Product Quality and Promotion Norms, Legal/Awareness and Obligation Norms, General Honesty and Integrity Norms and Product Quality and Packaging Norms. The questionnaire was based on demographic items and other items based upon five point Likert scale ranging from 5 to 1 (5<.....>1) where 5 means strongly agree and 1 means strongly disagree.

Data Collection

Present research is an in-depth study about the ethical practices followed by the marketers in the marketing of goods to the consumers. The study also examines the extent of compliance to the established legal and ethical norms by the marketers. For this purpose 195 marketers were contacted dealing with the marketing of food products viz. Edible Oils, Food Grains and Milk and Milk products. The marketers were contacted by using census method in two districts of Jammu province i.e., district Jammu and district Doda.

STATISTICAL TOOLS USED

For analysing data and testing the hypothesis, various statistical tools and tests such as mean, standard deviation, exploratory factor analysis, correlation, ANOVA, one Sample t-test and independent t-test were used. The exploratory factor analysis was used for data reduction and data purification. It was carried out by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, 17.0 Version) with principal component analysis along with varimax rotation for summerisation of total data of six dimensions into minimum factors. The statements having factor loadings less than 0.5 and Eigen value less than 1 were ignored for further analysis.

RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

To check the internal consistency in the data collected the reliability tests viz. Cronbach's Alpha and Split half values

Table 2: ANOVA Analysis

Dimensions		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Age	Between Groups	1.573	3	0.524	14.593	<0.05
	Within Groups	6.863	191	0.036		
	Total	8.436	194			
Education	Between Groups	0.374	3	0.125	2.952	<0.05
	Within Groups	8.062	191	0.042		
	Total	8.436	194			
No. of Employees	Between Groups	0.216	3	0.072	1.677	>0.05
	Within Groups	8.219	191	0.043		
	Total	8.436	194			
Experience	Between Groups	1.248	3	0.416	11.056	<0.05
	Within Groups	7.188	191	0.038		
	Total	8.436	194			
Monthly Sales	Between Groups	0.453	3	0.151	3.615	<0.05
	Within Groups	7.983	191	0.042		
	Total	8.436	194			

have been worked out. The split half analysis has been examined by dividing the data of respondents into two equal halves. The value of Cronbach's Alpha came to be above .7 which also proves reliability of the data. The content validity has been established by evaluating the relevance of test items individually and as a whole by consulting the literature on the subject and discussions with the experts.

RESPONDENTS' PROFILE

Marketers: The survey was conducted on one hundred and ninety-five (195) marketers selected as respondents through census method. All the respondents were male whereas sixty eight percent of them were graduates (68%). Almost all the marketers (97%) think that they follow code of ethics while dealing with consumers and most of them responded that govt. agencies regularly visit their premises.

ANOVA ANALYSIS

For finding the significant mean differences in various demographic variables viz. age, education, number of employees, experience and monthly sales, ANOVA has been applied on all the dimensions viz. price and distribution norms, information and contract norms, product and promotion norms, legal and obligation norms, general honesty and integrity norms, and product quantity and packaging norms. The following table exhibits the overall analysis for marketers.

FACTOR ANALYSIS

Analysis of marketers' perception about the ethical practices being followed by them in the select food product category viz. milk and milk products was carried out by considering all the six dimensions separately. Factor analysis was carried out on different norms such as: pricing, information, product quality and promotion, legal awareness and obligation, general honesty and integrity, product quantity and packaging. Step by step, process of data purification was carried out for each dimension. After factor analysis, fourteen factors were tested for empirical analysis which included distribution, pricing, code of ethics, promotion, product policy, customer response, adulteration and deception, obligation, legal awareness, ethical products, social-honesty, quantity and packaging.

Pricing and Distribution Norms

This dimension covered two factors namely Distribution Policy and Pricing Practices

Factor 1) - Distribution Policy: This factor included five items viz. "Manipulating the availability for Exploitation",

"Use pressure in Selling", "Undue Influence", "Predatory Pricing", and "Price Discrimination". Factor Loading of this factor ranges from 0.73 to 0.88. About 80% of the marketers confirmed that they didn't manipulate the availability of products to exploit consumers (M= 2.19) and 60% of them declined about using any pressure in selling (2.63). About 66% of the marketers denied about using any influence over the channel members (2.42) whereas half of the respondents believed that they didn't indulge in price discrimination (2.61).

Factor 2) - Pricing Practices: This factor took in "Charge fair Price" and "Charge hidden Costs". Majority of the marketers (90%) opined that they charged fair price (3.91) but 68% of them confessed that they charged hidden costs (3.68).

Information and Contract Norms

This dimension covered one factor viz. "Code of Ethics".

Factor 1) Code of Ethics: This factor encompassed six items viz. "Information regarding risk associated with Product", "Provide accurate Information", "Practice professional Code of Ethics", "Issue Bills", "Meet obligations mentioned on the Bills", and "Access to all varieties of Products". Almost all the marketers acknowledged that they provided all the information regarding risks associated with the products (4.52) and 90% of the respondents believed that they provided accurate information to the consumers and channel members (4.36). Every marketer claimed that they practiced a professional code of ethics in carrying out their business activities (4.36) and 90% of them believed that they issued bills for every sale (4.22). Most of the marketers admitted that they provided access to all the varieties of the products available with them (4.38).

Product Quality and Promotion Norms

This dimension covered four factors viz. "Promotion Policy", "Product Quality", "Customer Reaction", and "Adulteration and Deception".

Factor 1 - Promotion Policy: Promotional activities define the very success of a company and it depends on how effectively they choose promotional strategies to communicate with the consumers and project an affirmative image of the company and its products on the consciousness of the consumers. This factor has covered five statements viz. "Adulteration for Profits", "Conform to prescribed Standards", "Misleading Advertisements", "High pressure sales tactics", and "Sales promotions using deception must be avoided". Majority of the marketers (90%) assumed that they avoided adulteration for profits (4.14) and 95% of them deemed that they abided by the prescribed standards (4.30). Almost all the marketers

believed that misleading advertising should be avoided as this hampers the confidence of consumers in products and brings hesitation in shopping (4.31); 95% considered that high pressure sales tactics should be avoided (4.30).

Factor 2 – Product Quality: Earlier market was flooded with adulterated and counterfeit products so that uninformed consumers got cheated by the marketers especially in rural areas. But changing scenario in the urban markets is posing a tough challenge for the marketers to stay in business. This factor covers two items viz. “Safe Products” and “Offer quality products”. Almost all the marketers admitted that they offered safe products to the consumers (4.52) and many of them firmly accepted that offering quality products to the consumers are now mandatory to stay in business (4.51).

Factor 3 - Customer Reaction: Well-informed customers are very fastidious in making buying decisions which creates a challenging proposition for the marketers to win their market-share and earn profits. This factor has covered two items viz. “Loyalty to quality brands than others” and “Stop buying products produced unethically”. Most of the marketers confirmed that customers are loyal to quality brands and it is very difficult to persuade them for other/local brands (4.33); about three-fourths of them disclosed that customers stop buying products when they come to know that they are produced in an unethical manner (3.75).

Factor 4 –Adulteration and Deception: Due to precipitous increase in market demand for food products, opportunities for sellers has increased manifold to sell counterfeit products in the market. This factor encompasses two items viz. “Adulteration to meet Market Demand” and “Deceptive Communication to persuade Customers”. When asked about adulteration of products to meet the market demand, 63% of the marketers out-rightly replied no (2.51), whereas half of them denied using deceptive communication to persuade customers (2.99).

Legal and Obligation Norms

This dimension covered three factors viz. “Obligation”, “Legal Awareness” and “Ethical Products”.

Factor 1 – Obligation: This factor covered five items viz. “Consider Complaints”, “Obligation towards Consumers”, “Maintain hygienic Conditions”, “Always adhere to applicable Laws”, and “Sell adulterated products due to consumers Ignorance”. Most of the marketers (95%) agreed that they took care of customer complaints (4.56) and 97% of them claimed that they understood their obligation towards the channel members and consumers (4.44). Almost all the marketers admitted that they followed all the applicable laws and regulations (4.59) and three-fourths of them thought that they had succeeded in selling adulterated products due to customers’ ignorance (4.07).

Factor 2 - Legal Awareness: This factor comprised of four items namely “Knowledge about Consumer Protection Act.”, “Consumers confront for unethical Practices”, “Legal action for unethical Practices”, and “Respect social and cultural Values”. Three-fourths of the respondents accepted that they had knowledge of Consumer Protection Act (3.89) and 70% of them agreed that consumers confronted with them for following unethical practices (3.67). About 90% of the marketers deemed that govt. authorities took action if they followed unethical practices (3.99); but most of them admitted that they respected their social and cultural values (4.26).

Factor 3 - Ethical Products: This factor included two items namely “Consumers are willing to pay more for ethical products” and “Ethically produced products have better acceptance”. About 90% of the marketers sensed that consumers were willing to pay more for ethically produced products (3.25) and 80% believed that ethically produced food products had better acceptance (4.11) than others.

General Honesty and Integrity Norms

This dimension has covered two factors viz. “Social Values”, and “Honesty”.

Factor 1 - Social Values: This factor covered five items viz. “Honest in serving your Consumers”, “Always give priorities to customer Needs”, “Offer products which are good for Health”, “Sell products well before the expiry date”, and “Offer products having nutritive value”. Most of the marketers accepted that they were honest in serving the consumers (4.36) and always gave priority to customer’s needs (4.40). Almost all the marketers (95%) confessed that they offered products which were good for the consumer’s health (4.38) and sold products well before the expiring date (4.49).

Factor 2 - Honesty: This factor encompassed two items namely “Treat all customers equally” and “Honest in serving Distributors and Consumers”. Most of the marketers accepted that they treated all the customers equally (4.30) and believed that they were honest in serving channel members (4.49).

Product Quantity and Packaging Norms

This dimension covered two factors viz. “Quantity” and “Packaging Policy”.

Factor 1 - Quantity: This factor considered three items namely “Maintain adequate quantity of Product”, “Offer the same quantity as Mentioned”, and “Accurate information on the Package”. Almost all the marketers confirmed that they provided accurate information on the package (4.42)

and provided exactly the same quantity as mentioned on the package (4.31).

Factor 2 - Packaging Policy: This factor encompassed three items viz. “Avoid deceptive Packaging”, “Avoid deceptive labeling” and “Underweighting the products”. About 90% of the marketers declared that they avoided deceptive packaging and leveling (4.34) and denied underweighting the products (1.89).

HYPOTHESES TESTING

Objective1: To make an in-depth analysis of marketing practices followed by the marketers of food products.

H1 *Manufacturers and marketers do not follow ethical norms in the distribution of goods and services.*

For testing **H1** hypothesis, one sample t-test was applied. The results of t-test reveal significant difference (0.92) between the test value (3) and the actual mean (3.92). The

Table 3: Factor Analysis

Dimension	Factors	Mean	Std. Dev.	Factor Lo.	Comn.	E.V.	% of V. Ex.	
Price and Distribution Norms	Factor 1 Distribution Policy	2.54				3.30	47.25	
	Manipulation of availability for exploitation	2.19	0.87	0.81	0.70			
	Use pressure in selling	2.64	1.07	0.77	0.67			
	Undue Influence	2.43	0.96	0.88	0.80			
	Use predatory pricing	2.82	1.09	0.73	0.63			
	Price discrimination	2.62	1.08	0.80	0.64			
		Factor 2 Pricing Practices	3.64				1.43	20.49
		Charge fair Price	3.92	0.62	0.74	0.61		
		Charge hidden Costs	3.36	1.04	0.80	0.70		
		Overall Mean and Variance Explained	3.09					67.74
Information and Contract Norms	Factor 1 Code of Ethics	4.38				4.69	66.94	
	Information regarding risk associated with product	4.52	0.50	0.80	0.63			
	Provide accurate information	4.36	0.48	0.94	0.89			
	Practice professional code of ethics	4.36	0.48	0.94	0.89			
	Issue bills	4.23	0.73	0.74	0.54			
	Meet obligations mentioned on the bills	4.42	0.49	0.89	0.79			
	Access to all varieties of products	4.39	0.54	0.87	0.76			
	Overall Mean and Variance Explained	4.38					66.94	
Product and Promotion Norms	Factor 1 Promotion Policy	4.25				3.89	30.38	
	Adulteration is common for profits	4.14	0.58	0.65	0.63			
	Always conform to prescribed standards	4.30	0.53	0.69	0.55			
	Misleading advertisements	4.31	0.46	0.91	0.89			
	High pressure sales tactics	4.30	0.46	0.91	0.89			
	Sales promotions using deception must be avoided	4.22	0.67	0.83	0.74			
		Factor 2 Product Quality	4.51				1.90	16.21
		Offer safe products	4.52	0.50	0.93	0.88		
		Offer quality products	4.51	0.50	0.75	0.82		
		Factor 3 Customer Reaction	4.04				1.36	15.36
		Loyalty to quality brands than others	4.33	0.68	0.81	0.75		
		Stop buying products produced unethically	3.75	1.04	0.85	0.76		
		Factor 4 Adulteration and Deception	2.75				1.09	13.05
		Adulterate products to meet market demand	2.51	1.11	0.79	0.71		
		Use deceptive communication	2.99	1.31	0.77	0.63		
	Overall Mean and Variance Explained	3.89					75.00	

Legal and Obligation Norms	Factor 1 Obligation Norms	4.42				4.47	35.56
	Consider Complaints	4.56	0.55	0.90	0.83		
	Obligation towards consumers	4.44	0.55	0.94	0.92		
	Maintain hygienic conditions	4.44	0.55	0.91	0.89		
	Always adhere to applicable Laws	4.59	0.54	0.86	0.74		
	Sells adulterated products due to consumers ignorance	4.07	0.79	0.59	0.54	2.22	22.41
	Factor 2 Legal Awareness	3.95					
	Knowledge about Consumer Protection Act.	3.89	0.64	0.61	0.42		
	Consumers confront for unethical Practices	3.67	0.86	0.82	0.77		
	Legal action for unethical Practices	3.99	0.45	0.80	0.67		
	Respect social and cultural values	4.26	0.44	0.70	0.53	1.12	13.08
	Factor 3 Ethical Products	3.68					
	Consumers willing to pay more for ethical products	3.25	1.10	0.89	0.82		
	Ethically produced products has better acceptance	4.11	0.69	0.55	0.67		
Overall Mean and Variance Explained	4.02					71.05	
General Honesty and Integrity Norms	Factor 1 Social Norms	4.41				4.63	54.24
	Honest in serving your consumers	4.36	0.48	0.82	0.82		
	Always give priorities to customer needs	4.40	0.49	0.87	0.91		
	Offer products which are good for health	4.38	0.58	0.80	0.65		
	Sell products well before the expiry date	4.49	0.50	0.89	0.81		
	Offer products having nutritive value	4.43	0.50	0.87	0.81	1.04	26.80
	Factor 2 Honesty Norms	4.40					
	Treat all customers equally	4.30	0.72	0.93	0.88		
	Honest in serving distributors and consumers	4.49	0.50	0.78	0.79		
	Overall Mean and Variance Explained	4.41					81.04
Product Quantity and Packaging Norms	Factor 1 Quantity	4.32				3.23	46.22
	Maintain adequate quantity of product	4.23	0.53	0.90	0.86		
	Offer the same quantity as mentioned	4.31	0.46	0.92	0.89		
	Accurate information on the package	4.42	0.49	0.91	0.83		
	Factor 2 Packaging Policy	3.48				1.20	27.74
	Avoid deceptive packaging	4.34	0.66	0.66	0.68		
	Avoid deceptive labeling	4.22	0.90	0.78	0.66		
	Underweight the products	1.89	0.80	0.72	0.52		
	Overall Mean and Variance Explained	3.90					73.96

Table 4: One sample t test of Ethical Norms for Managers

Managers	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Ethical Norms	195	3.92	.21	62.266	194	<0.05	.9298

value of t is 62.266 with significance < 0.05 which validates the hypothesis for its acceptance that manufacturers and marketers do not follow ethical norms.

Objective 2: To conduct gap analysis in terms of compliance and violations of the ethical standard practices.

H2 *There is a gap in terms of prescribed and practiced legal and ethical norms.*

For testing **H2** hypothesis, independent t-test has been applied. The results of t-test depict significant difference ($t=11.57$, Sig. < 0.05) between prescribed and practiced ethical and legal norms which validates that the hypothesis is accepted and there is a significant gap in terms of prescribed and practiced ethical norms.

Table 5: Independent Sample T-Test for Gap Analysis in Terms of Prescribed and Practiced Ethical Norms

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	T	Sig.(2- tailed)	Mean Difference
Prescribed Norms	195	4.25	0.36	11.57	< 0.05	0.35
Practiced Norms	195	3.90	0.22			

Table 6: Correlation between Ethical Practices and Marketing Decisions

		Ethical Practices	Marketing Decisions
Ethical Practices	Pearson Correlation	1	0.446
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	< 0.05
	N	195	195
Marketing Decisions	Pearson Correlation	0.446	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	< 0.05	.
	N	195	195

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Objective 3: To study the impact of ethical practices and marketing decisions.

H3: *There is a positive relationship between ethical practices and marketing decisions.*

To examine the association between ethical practices and marketing decisions, Pearson Correlation has been applied. The results indicate positive association between ethical practices and marketing decisions ($r = 0.446$, Sig. < 0.05) which validate the hypothesis that there is a positive relationship between ethical practices and marketing decisions.

CONCLUSION

This research has sought to take a fresh look at the ethical challenges faced by the marketers in decision making in the marketing of food products. The study reveals that most of the marketers' follow deceptive marketing practices and conceal the limitations of products due to consumers' ignorance. Thus, there is a need to have a regular and effective vigilance over the marketers' practices to check the unethical marketing practices and those who indulge into it should be prosecuted under the existing laws of the land. The appropriate public and legal authorities need to play their role by creating awareness among the consumers about their rights and how to lodge a complaint and seek compensation in case they become victims of unethical practices. State government must evolve a comprehensive public awareness campaign for informing general public about the redressal mechanism and institutions available at district or state level which address to the unethical trade practices.

To uphold consumer goodwill, loyalty and the resultant captive market share, marketing practices have to conform to the ethical norms and standards operative in local and global environment. However, the moral and ethical compassion can be developed among the marketers by developing the code of conduct for them so that they can avoid legal and punitive action and can create credible public image and goodwill in the market.

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