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“CULT BRAND” WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ROYAL ENFIELD BIKES

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ABSTRACT

A **CULT** is group of people defined by a "religious" devotion to something — often a self-appointed leader. Most people view cults as strange and frightening because cults have, over the years, done some strange and frightening things, including murders and mass suicides. Sometimes, too, you'll see *cult* used as an adjective to describe something or someone with a small, devoted fan-base. John Water's movies are cult favorites, adored by a select group of film lovers but not by the public at large. An type of huge emotional attachment towards something or someone is termed as Cult. In the United States there are cult groups especially for products and services. Apple and Harley Davidson are some of the examples. Here in India Royal Enfield Bikes have captured the hearts of the people especially the youth. Many boys as well as girls have bought the Royal Enfield bullet. Royal enfield bikes have become a sensation and a devotion like thing for the people who have it. Therefore the researcher has attempted to study on Cult Branding especially on Royal Enfield Bikes.

Key Words – Cult, Brand, Royal Enfield

INTRODUCTION

Marketing is the action or business of promoting and selling products or services, including market research and advertising. A product can be either tangible or intangible service that fulfils a need of consumers. Whether you sell custom pallets and wood products or provide luxury accommodations, it's imperative that you have a clear grasp of what exactly what your product is and what makes it unique before you can successfully market it. Once a concrete understanding of the product offering is established, we can start making some pricing decisions. Price determinations will impact profit margins, supply, demand and marketing strategies. Similar (in concept) products and brands may need to be positioned differently based on varying price points, while price elasticity considerations may influence our next two Ps.

Promotion looks at many ways marketing agencies disseminate relevant product information to consumers and differentiate a particular product or service. Promotion includes elements like: advertising, public relations, social media marketing, email marketing, search engine marketing, video marketing and more. Each touch point must be supported by a well-positioned brand to truly maximise return on investment. Place or physical distribution deals with the transfer of ownership of the product from the manufacturer to the customer. The margin of your profit depends on how quickly you can turn over the goods. The more swiftly the products reach the point of sale, the more likely are the chances of satisfying the customers and increase brand loyalty. Hence the place factor is crucial in ensuring your product's competitiveness in the market.

Branding is a process involved in creating a unique name and image for a product in the consumers' mind, mainly through advertising campaigns with a consistent theme. Branding aims to establish a significant and differentiated presence in the market that attracts and retains loyal customers. "A brand is a name, term, design, symbol or any other feature that identifies one seller's goods or service as distinct from those of other sellers".

A cult brand refers to a product or service that has a loyal customer base that approaches fanaticism. A cult brand, unlike regular brands, has customers who feel a sense of ownership or vested interest in the brand's popularity and success.

Statement of Problem:

We are living in a branded era. Many people go after brands and buy them irrespective of the cost of the product. It is found that youngsters are more addicted towards these brands. Customers have changed from a mere product to branded product and it becomes a part of their status and prestige. Customers feel a sense of ownership, love and madness towards some particular brands. Many people carry their Brands in their heart. They are highly loyal and dedicated towards the product. Cult means any type of madness, love, addiction and being loyal. In this context the study is about Cult branding with special reference to Royal Enfield among the students of Christ College, Irinjalakuda.

Significance of Study:

This study is conducted to study the factors which leads to prefer a particular brand among customers. Influence of the brand Royal Enfield among bullet holders. Why people are crazy about a particular brand and how do they take it to their heart.

Objectives:

1. To know the concept of Cult Branding.
2. To understand the factors why consumers, are Cult on Royal Enfield Bikes.
3. To find out the level of satisfaction of consumers.

Research Methodology:

The study is a descriptive research. Where the researcher has used a new term and have tried to bring out something new.

Sources of Data:

Primary Source:

Questionnaire is the primary source of data used in this study.

Secondary Source:

Secondary data is collected from internet, Books, Journals, Magazines and etc.

Research Design

Sample Population

The sample population are the students of Christ College Irinjalakuda.

Sample Technique:

Sample technique used in the study is snowball method.

Sample Size:

In this study I have circulated around 64 questionnaires and 50 respondents have given me the questionnaires back, therefore I have fixed 50 as my sample size.

Tools for Analysis:

The data selected for the study has been tabulated, analysed and presented with the help of appropriate tools. In this study percentage analysis is used show the data. Pie chart is used for the purpose of representing the collected data graphically.

Scope of the Study

The study is confined to the students of Christ College, Irinjalakuda.

Hypothesis:

1. H1: There is significant association between riders considering royal Enfield as part of their life and boost it provides to the prestige and image of the rider.
2. H1: There is significant relation between love for long rides and more preference to Royal Enfield models as riders consider it as one causing lesser back pain.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. *Bhave and Ashish (2002)* have found out that the opinion that customer's perception towards service and quality of a product determines the success of that product or service in the market.
2. *Reshma Parma (2015)* have found out that there is a direct relationship between income and purchasing power, higher the income, higher the purchasing power. Mobile service is today's need and demand of every customer.

3. **Prakash Kumar Sarangi (2006)** have said that a customer always has an expectation on deriving certain value from a product. He is delighted when he gets that. Those companies who deliver these win the customer and do good business.
4. **A Praveen Kumar (2016)** have concluded that there is a significant relationship between interactive marketing communication and brand resonance and also there is influence of interactive marketing communication on brand resonance. It is found that there is an influence of brand awareness, brand association, brand equity, perceived quality brand trust and customer satisfaction on brand resonance.
5. **Himanshu Vasant Vaidya (2016)** have concluded found out that taste, price, availability, brand campaign constituents, brand aesthetics, chief brand associations and brand loyalty are the main factors which influence brand preference. Brand loyalty is influenced by two main factors they are brand personality and self-image- brand image congruence.
6. **Ankita Bakre (2014)** have said that intellectual experiences do not impact brand resonance. They have also said that luxury brands are bought primarily for their emotional or social value and image evoked rather than the utility value hence cannot be rationalised on the basis of cost versus the functional benefits derived by the consumers and do not trigger any intellectual experiences in the minds of consumers.
7. **Gincy Jiju Mathew (2018)** have found out that there is strong positive association between all demographic variables and presence of celebrity leading to brand building except in the case of no of income earners in the family, wherein there is no differential impact on brand building due to the presence of celebrity.
8. **Rajesh Sharma (2011)** says that perceived quality, brand awareness, brand loyalty and brand associations are the main factors which influence brand equity. These factors are positively associated to brand equity.
9. **Dipti .T. Arora (2015)** have said that brand choice behaviour is influenced by five consumption values such as functional, social, emotional, conditional and epistemic values. It is identified that consumers consider resale value, safety measure, well-engineered automobile, adequate luggage capacity and reasonable price in functional value construct.

A **CULT BRAND** refers to a product or service that has a loyal customer base that approaches fanaticism. A **cult brand**, unlike regular **brands**, has customers who feel a sense of ownership or vested interest in the **brand's** popularity and success.

A cult brand refers to a product or service that has a loyal customer base that approaches fanaticism. A cult brand, unlike regular brands, has customers who feel a sense of ownership or vested interest in the brand's popularity and success. Cult brands have achieved a unique connection with customers, and are able to create a consumer culture that people want to be a part of. Examples of modern cult brands include the Mini Cooper, Harley-Davidson, Vespa, Zappos and Apple.

For devout followers of a cult brand, their relationship with the brand is a mixture of both love and madness. The brand symbolizes a specific lifestyle and becomes more of an identity. To cult brand buyers, buying a product enables them to fit in with a certain group, or culturally as a whole. Cult brands tend to succeed in creating a community based on common habits, choices or affinities.

Cult brands are an example of what is known as a "benign cult," in which followers are extremely dedicated to a product or service that the brand represents. Such cults are not harmful. They tend to welcome fellow devotees who have discovered a brand that represents them and fulfills their wants and needs without harming them.

Cult Brand Characteristics

Cult brands tend to have several characteristics in common. For example, they tend to be distinctive, meaning that they provide an alternative style or feeling that differs from existing brands. They help people differentiate themselves. Cult brands also tend to represent a cultural shift, often starting with a small group of dedicated followers who spread their message. As such, cult brands also tend to have a compelling, persuasive story behind them, such as an origin story. They also have enough recognition and respect that they are able to create trends. Cult brands are also persistent in that they tend last many generations.

A brand, by definition, is a distinguishing logo, mark, sentence, symbol, slogan or word that identifies a particular product. Companies use various strategies to improve brand recognition and build brand equity. Very recognizable brands include Nike, Coca-Cola and Microsoft. Cult brands may or may not be widely advertised, but they do tend to exemplify the spirit of the era they occupy. Companies that attempt to elevate a regular brand to cult status with the use of a marketing campaign may find it very difficult; cult brands tend to be more grassroots in nature and may take many years to elevate to cult brand status. Sometimes one feature or aspect of a company or product will enable the rise of a brand to cult status. Examples could include free, fast shipping, a very permissive return policy, scarcity, a special, unusual ingredient or exclusive product, or an association with an iconic person or event.

A **brand** can be defined as a **cult brand** if the following factors are present: A superior level of customer loyalty is achieved. **Brand** loyalists perceive no true competitors to the **brand** as there are no substitutes for the "true" **brand**. Customers receive a sense of ownership with the **brand**. A **cult brand** refers to a product or service that has a loyal customer base that approaches fanaticism. A **cult brand**, unlike regular **brands**, has customers who feel a sense of ownership or vested interest in the **brand's** popularity and success.

An icon **brand** is a symbol-intensive **brand** that carry powerful universal values making it instantly recognizable thanks to own able and distinctive codes. ... Fashion **brands** can become **iconic** by delivering universal values and **iconic** elements that allow them to remain successful over time, like Ralph Lauren or Dolce&Gabbana.

A **Cult** brand is a symbol-intensive brand usually tied to a single customer segment or a specific **product** category. **Cult** brands deliver a sense of belonging between people who share the same culture and passions.

Brands who embrace these traits understand that the linear, purchase-funnel marketing model taught for decades in business schools is outdated, and that engagement is a more effective and lasting relationship goal with consumers than simply providing entertainment or education to prompt a transaction or other behaviour. Cult brands focus on stimulating attachment, which pushes them to deploy audience-centric tools and programs, monitor success with more qualitative metrics, and empower their internal teams to see the brand from the customer's perspective. Above all, they believe that marketing is about far more than communications, it's about creating a customer experience based on a clear and valued proposition, relentless service delivery, and a shared culture that both the brand and the consumer takes pride in.

A **Cult Brand** offers the specific range of products or services that enjoys the loyal and committed set of customers. Accomplishing of such true believers of the brand and the brand fanatics is made possible as the Cult Brand sell more than the products or a service; they sell a lifestyle experience.

1. The loyal customers of the Cult Brand share a deep bond and connection of love, affinity, and affection towards the brand that makes them feel happy and extremely satisfied and proud whilst using the products of the brand.
2. It is a unique art of curating experiences that result in the feeling of belongingness after using the products of the Cult Brand and customers get a sense of feeling that they have finally arrived at a certain peak or level in their life.
3. The loyal customers of the brand endorse its offerings to its family, friends, and the social circuit earning plenty of referrals to the brand. The loyal base of customers tend to form a community who only prefers and buy the products from the Cult Brand and this trend has been very common nowadays amongst the youth generation.
4. The profits and sales targets of the Cult Brand gets multiplied in manifolds owing to the community of loyal customers plus the referrals earned due to the word of mouth publicity.
5. As mentioned earlier, the Cult Brand not just sell the products but they make the customer shopping experience a wonderful through the simple acts of kindness such as showcasing hospitality, solving the problems then and there, loyalty programs, and more helping the brand build long-term relations and a strong bond with the customers.
6. The Cult Brand wins the love and trust of the customers in the most magnificent manner along with ruling their hearts and minds.
7. Cult Brand has a superior understanding of the customer's psychology and what motivates and drives the customers to indulge in the purchase of the unique offerings of their products.

8. The brand attains the cult status when there is a perfect amalgamation of deep insights on the customer's lifestyle experiences, innate taste, and preferences along with the human touch and characteristics of the brand.
9. The loyal customers of the Cult Brand feel the sense of ownership towards the brand and its offerings and are able to highly relate with the core values and fundamentals of the brand.
10. The main objective of the brand that has or needs to attain the cult status in the market and in the minds of the customers is to develop the unique connection with the customers by offering the products that give them a sense of pride whilst using it.
11. The customers take a lot of interest in the developments of the brand in the market and industry as a whole like what are its latest offerings, brand's popularity, and the success that it has been receiving from all the quarters.
12. The customers of the Cult Brand showcase the love and madness for the brand by not only being loyal to its offerings but also endorsing its products to their family and friends in a positive light getting the brand additional purchases.
13. Using the products of the Cult Brand becomes an integral part of the customer's lifestyle and identity.
14. There is a cultural shift in the minds of the customers as they differentiate themselves from their contemporaries, peers, and other people in their social circuit who don't use the products of the Cult Brand.



Cult brands have an element of the mysterious, even mystical. Their fans adore them, love them, and consider them irreplaceable. This special attachment of fans leads to more loyalty, identification, and willingness to recommend. Ultimately, it manifests itself in lower price sensitivity and higher margins.

Cult brands stand out because of their unmistakable, unique brand personality, and they stay true to that personality, no matter what. They do not pursue customers, but use their values and convictions to attract the people who identify with the brand. These people then form a fan community that is loyal and less price sensitive.

Cult brands know exactly what they can do and what they stand for. The focus on the monopoly position they want to occupy in people's perception. Cult brands are unique, express their values at all brand touch points, and are instantly recognized by their brand stylistics.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

Sl.No	Statement	SDA	DA	NA	A	SA
1	Extra fittings have you fit after buying your royal enfield:	24	25	1	0	0
2	I have bought my royal enfield intentionally	2	2	5	16	25
3	Fought with my parents to buy royal enfield because they wanted me to buy some other bikes:	2	2	5	16	25
4	I love to drive royal enfield	1	0	1	10	38
5	I like to go for long rides on royal enfield:	1	1	2	15	31
6	Girls love to get ride on royal enfield	3	1	13	14	19
7	I keep my royal enfield neat and clean:	2	2	8	20	18
8	I service it at proper intervals:	1	4	4	14	27
9	My keychain has the logo of Royal Enfield	7	5	3	6	29
10	I have fixed lot of extra fittings on my bike	19	7	11	9	4
11	I have bought a jacket of Royal Enfield for long drives	15	9	6	5	15
12	Even if I am to buy another bike I will still buy Royal Enfield	11	9	7	6	17
13	I suggest others to buy Royal Enfield	1	4	8	21	16
14	Royal Enfield is worth buying for an individual once in a lifetime	1	0	5	27	17
15	The cost of Royal Enfield is high but still people buy it because of its brand image and status	2	3	11	21	13
16	I'm very comfortable with my Royal Enfield	2	0	2	22	24
17	I feel confident while using my Royal Enfield	5	3	2	19	21
18	Rather than a bike it becomes a part of my life	1	3	5	13	28
19	Maintenance is easy for Royal Enfield	7	10	17	12	4
20	Design of Royal Enfield is very attractive	3	1	1	22	23
21	Ride on Royal Enfield is not affected by bad climate and roads	7	9	11	10	13
22	I'm not interested in giving my Royal Enfield to others for ride	2	0	12	20	16
23	I feel motivated when I'm with my bullet					
24	When I go on bullet people should know that I'm coming by hearing the sound of my bullet	5	8	11	14	12
25	Royal Enfield have good mileage	4	7	16	18	5
26	It is suitable for long travels because it is stable during to its heavy weight (less jerking)	5	4	9	16	16

27	It is more preferred because it causes lesser back pain to the riders and the co-traveller (in long rides)	4	6	8	20	12
28	When I drive my Royal Enfield, I feel like my image or prestige has boosted	3	6	12	22	7
29	Accidents are less among the people who drive Royal Enfield Bikes	0	2	10	20	18

- H1: There is significant association between riders considering royal Enfield as part of their life and boost it provides to the prestige and image of the rider.

Chi-Square Test

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
BP	50	4.28	1.011	1	5
CT	50	3.48	1.074	1	5

Frequencies

BP

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
1	1	10.0	-9.0
2	3	10.0	-7.0
3	5	10.0	-5.0
4	13	10.0	3.0
5	28	10.0	18.0
Total	50		

CT

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
1	3	10.0	-7.0
2	6	10.0	-4.0
3	12	10.0	2.0
4	22	10.0	12.0
5	7	10.0	-3.0
Total	50		

Test Statistics

	BP	CT
Chi-Square	48.800 ^a	22.200 ^a
Df	4	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 10.0.

As per the above table the p value .000 is less than .05 level of significance, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted. Therefore there is significant association between riders considering royal Enfield as part of their life and boost it provides to the prestige and image of the rider. Thus it can be concluded that riders consider Royal Enfield as part of their life as it boots their prestige and image.

2. H1: There is significant relation between love for long rides and more preference to Royal Enfield models as riders consider it as one causing lesser back pain.

**Chi-Square Test
Descriptive Statistics**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
LD	50	4.48	.839	1	5
PR	50	3.60	1.212	1	5

Frequencies**LD**

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
1	1	10.0	-9.0
2	1	10.0	-9.0
3	2	10.0	-8.0
4	15	10.0	5.0
5	31	10.0	21.0
Total	50		

PR

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
1	4	10.0	-6.0
2	6	10.0	-4.0
3	8	10.0	-2.0
4	20	10.0	10.0
5	12	10.0	2.0
Total	50		

Test Statistics

	LD	PR
Chi-Square	69.200 ^a	16.000 ^a
Df	4	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.003

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 10.0.

According to the test results the p value .003 is less than .05 level of significance, thus we reject null hypothesis and accept alternative hypothesis. Thus there is significant relation between love for long rides and more preference to Royal Enfield models as riders consider it as one causing lesser back pain. It indicates that the riders who love long rides consider Royal Enfield as a preferred model as it causes lesser back pain and is more comfortable.

FINDINGS:

1. Most of the ROYAL ENFIELD holders own a bike which they have bought between 2015-2019.
2. Major models owned by ROYAL ENFIELD holders are Classic 350 and Standard.
3. Majority of people hold a new ROYAL ENFIELD, only one or two people hold a second-hand ROYAL ENFIELD.
4. Extra fittings are less for ROYAL ENFIELD.
5. Black and red are most preferred colour among ROYAL ENFIELD.
6. Most of them have bought their ROYAL ENFIELD intentionally.
7. Among the respondent's majority haven't fought with their parents to buy ROYAL ENFIELD
8. Majority of ROYAL ENFIELD holders love to drive their ROYAL ENFIELD.
9. The respondents are very much interested to go for long drives on ROYAL ENFIELD.
10. Majority of girls love to get a ride on ROYAL ENFIELD.
11. Among the respondents most of them keep their ROYAL ENFIELD neat and clean.
12. Majority of them service their ROYAL ENFIELD at proper intervals.
13. Most of the keychains of ROYAL ENFIELD have a logo of ROYAL ENFIELD.
14. There are equal number of respondents who are strongly agree and strongly disagree to the statement that they have bought a jacket of ROYAL ENFIELD for long drives.
15. Majority of people have the opinion that even if they buy another bike they will prefer ROYAL ENFIELD.
16. Most of them recommend others to buy ROYAL ENFIELD.
17. Among the respondent's majority are with the opinion that ROYAL ENFIELD is worth buying for an individual once in a life time.
18. The cost of ROYAL ENFIELD is high but still people buy it because of its brand image and status.

19. Majority of people are very comfortable with their ROYAL ENFIELD.
20. Most of the respondents felt confident while using ROYAL ENFIELD.
21. For most of the ROYAL ENFIELD holders it become a part of their life.
22. The respondents are neutral to the statement that maintenance is easy for ROYAL ENFIELD.
23. Design of ROYAL ENFIELD is very attractive.
24. Ride on ROYAL ENFIELD is not affected by bad climate and roads.
25. Most of the ROYAL ENFIELD holders are not interested in giving their ROYAL ENFIELD to others for ride.
26. Most of the respondents get motivated when they are with their bullet.
27. Majority of people recognise by its sound.
28. ROYAL ENFIELD has different models which helps the customer to select the model according to their customised preference.
29. ROYAL ENFIELD doesn't provide as much mileage according to the expectation of customers.
30. It is suitable for long travels because it is stable due to its heavy weight (less jerking).
31. Most of the respondents prefer ROYAL ENFIELD for long drives because it causes lesser back pain to the riders and co travellers.
32. Majority of the ROYAL ENFIELD holders have the opinion that when they drive ROYAL ENFIELD their image or prestige is boosted.
33. Accidents are less among the people who drive ROYAL ENFIELD bikes.
34. Only few ROYAL ENFIELD holders are aware about the HQ, year in which production started and its brand slogan.
35. There is significant association between riders considering royal Enfield as part of their life and boost it provides to the prestige and image of the rider.
36. The riders who love long rides consider Royal Enfield as a preferred model as it causes lesser back pain and is more comfortable.

SUGGESTIONS

- Royal Enfield have good performance but from the study it is understood that most of the consumers have the opinion that it is better if the company should increase its mileage.
- Most of the customers do not have adequate knowledge about the brand and its features. Good awareness about the brand is required.
- Royal Enfield is a very good brand and people love the brand but for normal persons it is very costly and it should be better if the company reduces its cost.

CONCLUSION

From the research study on “Relevance of Cult Branding towards royal Enfield with special reference to students of Christ college Irinjalakuda” it is found that more than a brand it become a part of their life and creates a feeling of belongingness and madness towards it. Most of the people love to go for long drives and they are very comfortable with the driving and causes less accidents and back pain. Majority of Royal Enfield holders have bought keychains and jackets of Royal Enfield. More than a vehicle it is considered as a part of their life and possess a great feeling of love towards it. Royal Enfield provides higher degree of customisation. Even if the cost is high people buy it because of its brand image and status. It is considered as a tool of motivation. From the above facts it is clear that Royal Enfield is not only a brand it is a cult brand which creates love and madness towards it.

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