A STUDY ON THE CHANGING SCENARIO OF PERSONAL SELLING IN MUMBAI CITY

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Abstract:

Salesmanship or Personal selling is oral communication with potential buyers of a product with the intention of making a sale. The personal selling may focus initially on developing a relationship with the potential buyer, but will always ultimately end with an attempt to "close the sale".

Salesmanship or Personal selling is one of the oldest forms of promotion. It involves the use of a sales force to support a push strategy (encouraging intermediaries to buy the product) or a pull strategy (where the role of the sales force may be limited to supporting retailers and providing after-sales service). Personal selling is a promotional method in which one party (e.g., salesperson) uses skills and techniques for building personal relationships with another party (e.g., those involved in a purchase decision) that results in both parties obtaining value. In most cases the "value" for the salesperson is realized through the financial rewards of the sale while the customer’s "value" is realized from the benefits obtained by consuming the product. However, getting a customer to purchase a product is not always the objective of personal selling. For instance, selling may be used for the purpose of simply delivering information. Because selling involves personal contact, this promotional method often occurs through face-to-face meetings or via a telephone conversation, though newer technologies allow contact to take place over the Internet including using video conferencing or text messaging (e.g., online chat).

Personal selling has a vital role in pushing sales of company’s products. It is the only method available to market some specific products and services. The meaning of personal selling may be understood well with the help of the following definitions:

1. According to Richard Bushkirk, “Personal Selling consists of contracting prospective buyers of product personally.”

2. In the words of Mahoney and Slone, “Personal Selling is the personal communication between a salesperson and a potential customer or group of customers.”
3. According to **Prof. Sharlehar**, “Personal Selling refers to oral presentation in conversation (by a salesperson) with one or more prospective customers for the purpose of marketing sales.”

In this way, personal selling is a personal, interpersonal and oral communication between the seller and the prospective customer, in which the seller persuades his customer to purchase the product, through his sale dialogue and presentation, which depends upon social behavior also.

**Introduction:**

Salesmanship or Personal selling is oral communication with potential buyers of a product with the intention of making a sale. The personal selling may focus initially on developing a relationship with the potential buyer, but will always ultimately end with an attempt to "close the sale"

Salesmanship or Personal selling is one of the oldest forms of promotion. It involves the use of a **sales force** to support a **push strategy** (encouraging intermediaries to buy the product) or a **pull strategy** (where the role of the sales force may be limited to supporting retailers and providing after-sales service). Door-to-door marketing is a technique in which a salesperson walks from the door of one house to the door of another trying to sell a product or service to the general public. A variant of this involves cold calling first, when another sales representative attempts to gain agreement that a salesperson should visit. Door-to-door selling is usually conducted in the afternoon hours, when the majority of people are at home. Door to door sales were once a novel concept in India. Today wary citizens hang boards on their front gates asking salesmen to keep away. But door to door system can work because it cuts out middleman. Many of these sales people are under 30 yrs old and come from humble backgrounds. They pocket a commission based salary, and they tirelessly cover the cities—street-by-street and home by home demonstrating and selling products that were unheard earlier. The home appliances Eureka Forbes (joint venture between the Shapoorji Pallonji Group’s Forbes & Company Ltd. based in Mumbai and Electrolux of Sweden in the year 1982) introduced door to door salesmen to the country back in 1982, starting off with vacuum cleaners following with other products and now Eureka Forbes has captured about 75% of domestic water purifier appliance market. There are few more players in the sales market basically in the Insurance sector out of those one of the major player is Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) the Life Insurance Corporation of India has a huge net work of agents-sales team. Then these agents are allocated the territories and the agents have to visit the customers at their doorstep.

Unfortunately, personal selling is widely misunderstood. For instance, many customers think salespeople possess traits that include being manipulative, arrogant, aggressive and greedy. While many marketers believe salespeople can build strong brands. The interactive nature of personal selling also makes it the most effective promotional method for building relationships with customers, particularly in the B to B market. Our economy has shifted from a "manufacturing-oriented" economy to a "marketing-oriented‘ economy. Today the sale force requires more knowledge and professional skills. The modern salesperson must not only be skillful in selling their product or service but must also be able to show the individual customer how to use and possibly
refilling the product or service. Personal selling has a vital role in pushing sales of company’s products. It is the only method available to market some specific products and services. The meaning of personal selling may be understood well with the help of the following definitions:

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The basic features of salesmanship are as follows:
a. Salesmanship involves persuasion of customers
b. Salesmanship involves winning buyer’s confidence
c. Salesmanship involves providing information
d. Salesmanship aims at mutual benefit

Objective:

1. To study and to differentiate the present personal selling- sales team on the basis of education, personality wise differences in Mumbai
2. To study the significance of personal selling in various selling outlets in Mumbai.
3. To analyze and to evaluate the potential prospects of personal selling in Mumbai city. (To study regarding the reasons for the well educated people like engineers and MBA’s entering into sales field.)
4. To study and to analyze the extent of success of salesmen’s in converting a prospect into a customer.
5. To analyze the various ways to motivate the sales personal in the organizations in across Mumbai.
6. To study the changing scenario of B to B selling.
7. To make some recommendations to the sales personnel in respect of planning and implementing some efficient sales techniques in the light of the findings of this research study.

Review of literature

According to Marvin A. Jolson A prime difference between in-store and in-home buying is that the former method allows the consumer to buy at his own convenience at the seller's establishment. Often the consumer's written response to a magazine advertisement or direct mail circularization results in the surprise visit of the salesman who often arrives without having telephoned for an appointment.
According to Philip Kotler (2009), direct marketing is the use of consumer direct channels to reach and deliver the goods & services to customers without using marketing middleman. Direct marketers can use a number of different channels to reach individual prospects and customers: direct mail,

According to Wells, Moriarity & Burnett, Consumer promotions is of little use if the product isn’t available where the consumer can find it. So here again the Marketing Mix –Place, comes into picture which communicates that for making the product available to the consumer sellers has to reach to the door step of the consumer.

According to Norton Paley, Sales people should be trained in strategic planning and the techniques of thinking like strategists. In today’s selling environment, people are expected to go beyond just writing the order. They should be equipped to gather market intelligence with special emphasis on interpreting competitor’s activities.

According to the Pearson Education, Inc (2010) sales people manage their time as 10% on active selling, 10% Prospecting, 14% problem solving, 17% personal downtime, 18% travel time, and 31% administration. Presentation is the most crucial part of the selling process wherein the salesperson tells the story of the product, its benefits and how the product can solve the problems of the customer.

Therefore this attempt has been made to understand and analyze the available literature to study the Personal selling and its impact on consumers in Mumbai, which is undoubtedly a unique contribution in the field of marketing.

**Hypothesis:**
- The performance of Personal selling-salesmanship in Mumbai City During the recent time has been satisfactory. (Education, changing style, professionalism, Mall culture, training etc.)
- Testing of hypothesis will be done by using quantitative tools such as measures of chi-Square and other tests.

**The dependent variables:** are changing methods of approach of salesmanship and today’s present requirement and needs.

**Independent variable:** The independent variables are age, gender, occupation, and annual income of respondents. Since population elements are selected for inclusion in the sample based on the ease of access, the sampling design is convenient sampling. The sample size is 50 selling personnel.

**Sources Data**
- Primary data is collected from various salesmen working in different selling outlets as well as from those who have taken up marketing as their passion in Mumbai city
- The location of study is Mumbai city
- The tools used for the study are percentage Analysis
- Chi-Square Method
The study is mainly based on as the primary data and thus certain Limitations are bound to arise in the collection of primary data

- Some officials and sales personnel of the organizations may be reserved while sharing their experiences.
- The research is based on recent data which is subject to change in the near future as the economic conditions and the inflation rates are uncertain.
- The research study time is the limiting factor.
- Interaction with managers, sales personnel’s of the organizations and the customers in Mumbai is subject to their availability and disclosure of confidential information, which limits the study.
- This study is based on sales force and sales outlets located in Mumbai only. The findings, suggestion, in other cities are not taken in account.

Chi-Square Testing and Analysis

1) Since Chi-Square is significant the null hypothesis of no association between the two attributes is rejected from the study that there is significant association between education status of the respondents and type work undertaken by marketing/salesmanship. The study reveals that the salesmanship in Mumbai is based on education proficiency, expertise in marketing field.

2) Since Chi-Square is significant the null hypothesis of no association between the two attributes is rejected from the study that there is significant association between education status of marketing/sales people and the customers immediate response towards them. The study reveals that today the selling outlets as well as customers need smart, educated and professional salesmen.

3) Since Chi-Square is significant the null hypothesis of no association between the two attributes is rejected and concluded from the study that there is significant association between education status of the personal selling people and present requirement of market. Thus the study reveals that sources of awareness about marketing depends on education, training, skills, talent etc qualities of the sales/marketing people.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Qualification</th>
<th>Various selling outlets</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mall</td>
<td>Retail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under graduate</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Graduate</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 Proficiency, Skill, Personality are the distinctive requirements for marketing people

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Qualities</th>
<th>Various selling outlets</th>
<th>Mall</th>
<th>Retail</th>
<th>Big shops</th>
<th>Chain store</th>
<th>Free Lanc</th>
<th>Other corporate</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intelligent</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Skills</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good Looking</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 Changing Scenario of sales force for B to B in Mumbai City

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Changing Scenario</th>
<th>Various corporate sectors</th>
<th>Mall</th>
<th>Retail</th>
<th>Big shops</th>
<th>Chain store</th>
<th>Free Lanc</th>
<th>Other corporate</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A to C (Agent - Customer)</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B to C (Business-Customer)</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B to B (Business - Business)</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Result of the Study Summarised As Follows

1. Majority of the respondent are from the age group of 25-45 years.
2. It is found that 55% of the respondent are male and 45% are female.
3. It is found that and 60% are uneducated 32% of the respondents are graduates and 4% are postgraduates.
4. Majority of the respondents are private employees.
5. It is found that 67.6 % of the respondents are married and 25.9 % of the respondents are widows.
6. The normal income of salesman is between Rs.20,000 to 30,000/-pm.
7. The majority of them have selected this occupation with their marketing passion.
8. In corporate marketing majority of respondent have higher qualification.
9. There are 30% salesman selected on the basis of their personality and over all 50% preference is based on their good look- personality.
10. Majority of the big shops prefer the sales team on the bases of their personality.
11. Majority of the retailer are unchanged
12. In changing scenario there is 50% of the salesman bring good number of customers.
13. There is 18% business is developed through B to B by proficiency skills

Suggestions
1. Efforts should be made to influence the customers by applying different techniques to attract B-B.
2. Retail trades till today is untouched and without professional touch.
3. The upcoming marketing people can bring some innovative techniques to change the sales culture.
4. Banking, Insurance, BPO, can diversify the trade link through internet and MMS as a direct link through webcam so there will be a direct eye to eye contact with the customers, client and business.

Conclusion

Personal selling plays an important role in our lives. Among its functions in, and contributions to, our business and economic system. It has given our country the highest standard of living in the world. It is the major objective of every business enterprise and the only function that generates direct revenue and profits. In this sense, then, it is the heart of our business economy. It helps to maintain the spirit of competition, which is the basis for a free enterprise system. In today`s mass society, "the world will not beat a path to your door," and selling becomes the bridge for introducing new products and services. When a new product or service is introduced by a competitive firm, a company offering an established product or service will often rely on improved salesmanship to retain its share of the market.
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