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Travel Items: Discerning the Indian Traveler's Preferance

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Abstract: *In India, luggage market has shown noteworthy growth. Increasing business and leisure travels coupled with rising disposable income and organized retailing have led to increased demand for luggage. Amidst this scenario, it is pertinent to gain insight on what is the preference and priority of items that traveler's carry and how does it vary on basis of travel situation and traveler's characteristics. Based on a survey of 140 respondents, this study presents insights for luggage marketers to discern the patterns of preference across various segments. Primarily, laptop and accessories, personal care items and microelectronics are the most favored items to carry, implying efficient compartmentalization in design.*
Keywords: *Luggage Marketing, Laptop and Accessories, Personal care, Microelectronics*

I. INTRODUCTION

Over the last 13 years, India's luggage industry has grown at an average rate of almost 13 per cent. The last financial year has recorded a growth rate of 18 per cent and is expected to reach 20 per cent in the present FY [1]. The bags and luggage market in India during 2016 continued to develop with luggage in particular being driven by growth in the Indian tourism industry. Moreover, as disposable incomes are rising, more people are travelling, which is having a positive impact on sales of bags and luggage [2]. The Indian luggage industry is engaged in the production of luggage bags, bag packs, duffel bags, laptop bags, other business travelling bags and various travel accessories. The luggage that people carry varies according to needs and choices and this variation in needs and requirements makes the consumers to demand luggage in various styles and this provides the reason for the luggage products to be so diverse in terms of utility [3]. Amidst this scenario, it is pertinent to gain insight on what is the priority of items that traveler's carry and how does it vary on basis of travel situation and traveler's characteristics. This analysis may yield insights for better design based on consumer needs for efficient compartmentalization as customers may be desirous of organized interiors with separate compartments for carrying multiple items etc. This study focuses on the same. Academic literature in this area in Indian settings is conspicuously absent. This study may be deemed timely as its findings may offer insights for effectively formulating a market strategy for the luggage market in India. The rest of the paper is organized as follows- the backdrop and research objectives are outlined, the research methodology and results are discussed next, the conclusions are presented thereafter.

II. BACKDROP AND RESERCH OBJECTIVES

In India, luggage and handbags have, over the recent years, managed to shed their traditional utilitarian tag and have now evolved as lifestyle products. Increasing business and leisure travels coupled with rising disposable income and organized retailing have led to increased demand for luggage. Within this category, the demand for brand names has grown, as consumers aspire for goods that count as status symbols [4]. Several factors have provided impetus to the growth of luggage industry, notably the following:

a) It is also expected that India will account for 50 million outbound tourists by 2020, thereby presenting favourable prospects for the luggage industry.
b) Modern retailing and new fashion trends are also expected to drive the sale of casual bags and travel luggage bags category over the forecast period FY'14 to FY'18 according to Ken Research.
c) Luggage has also become an important part of the wedding trousseau, with even people in tier II and III cities buying branded suitcases and strollers during the wedding season
d) Millennial, who constitute a considerable portion of Indian population, travel and like to travel hands free, which in turn have initiated growth for the backpack-duffle bag category.

Despite a promising growth it's a fiercely competitive industry. The overall luggage market in the country stands between Rs 3,000 crore to Rs 4,000 crore, according to market estimates and approximately 50 per cent of this is dominated by organised players. Samsonite and V.I.P. are dominant players in the organized segment. It is imperative for all players to actively design their strategy. A fundamental outlook to the strategy

development, irrespective of the type of industry, is to follow the marketing philosophy of giving precedence to customer needs. The design of products offered to the target group therefore acts as a differentiating factor. In fact, Dilip Piramal, Chairman, VIP Industries [5] comments that the consumer preferences are fast changing and they want excitement. Thus, design based on consumer needs for efficient compartmentalization as customers may be desirous of organized interiors with separate compartments for carrying multiple items etc could possibly be the order for the day. Based on the above discussion the following research questions are pursued in this research:
RQ1: Which personal items are preferred to carry by individuals on solo travelling?
RQ2: Does item preference vary basis gender, age and travel motive and travel mode?
RQ3: Which personal items are preferred to carry in a family trip?
RQ4: Does item preference vary basis family size and travel mode.
It is expected that these findings can provide insights to luggage marketers to better design and market their products.

III. METHODOLOGY

A survey questionnaire was administered via. Google forms Simple random sampling was used in this situation which requires nothing more than contact information. The sample profile is presented in table 1. The questionnaire sought basic demographic information, travel motive, travel mode and multiple response on the travel items preferred to be carried. Apparel and footwear has been excluded as these are the common and obvious categories. Subsequently, multiple response analysis was used in SPSS 24 to examine RQ1 to RQ4.

IV. RESULTS

Based on the multiple response analysis the findings are represented in figures 1-4 and tables 2and 3 we can conclude the following

1. Laptop and accessories has the highest rating, followed by personal care and microelectronics for individuals (figure 1).
2. Laptop and accessories has the highest rating items for both men and women. The pattern is similar for age groups and travel motive too as shown in table 2.
3. Irrespective of the mode of travel individuals give priority to carrying Laptop and accessories (figure 2).
4. In case of family travel personal care items are given preference followed by micro electronics (figure 3).
5. In case of family size there is quite a variation as depicted in table 2. In particular food items are the top priority in case of family size above 6. Laptop and accessories, personal care and micro electronics are favored most.

V. CONCLUSION

The findings from this study clearly point towards the need to design luggage items according to the consumer needs. Most consumers carry multiple luggage items such as laptop bags to accommodate different items. In this study apparel and footwear were omitted as they are the obvious items. Subsequently, the results demonstrate the dominance of laptop and accessories, personal care items and microelectronics as the most favored items to carry. An efficient compartmentalization may surely find appeal across different consumer segments. Furthermore, consumers match their requirements according to the airlines guidelines. Luggage size, dimensions and weight are also decisive factors in their decision making. Also, millenials, who constitute a considerable portion of Indian population, travel and like to travel hands free, which in turn has initiated growth for the backpack-duffle bag category [6]. Thus, the findings from this paper may provide meaningful insights for luggage marketers.

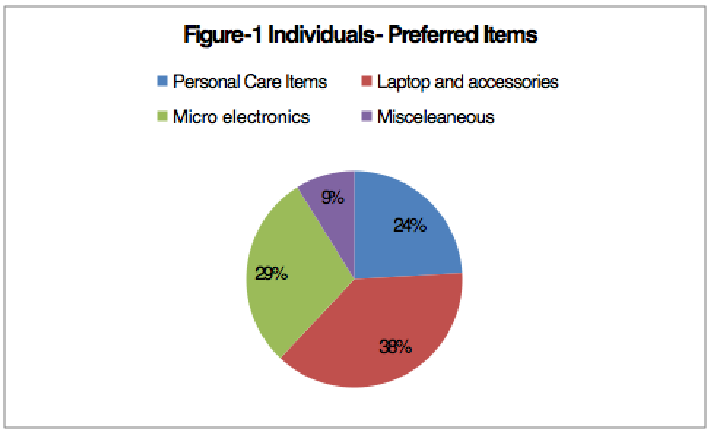


Table 1: Sample profile

Gender:	
Male	84
Female	56
Age group:	
24-29	88
29-40	25
Above 40	27
Occupation:	
Private	36
Govt/Public	56
Self employed	28
Others	20
Size of Family:	
2	25
4	39
Less than 4	7
More than 6	69
Annual household income:	
Below 10 lakhs per annum	24
10-20 lakhs per annum	84
Above 20 lakhs per annum	32

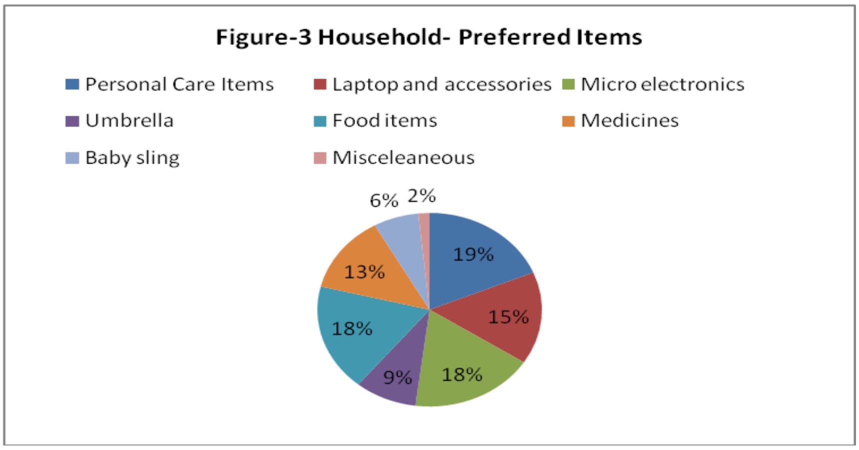


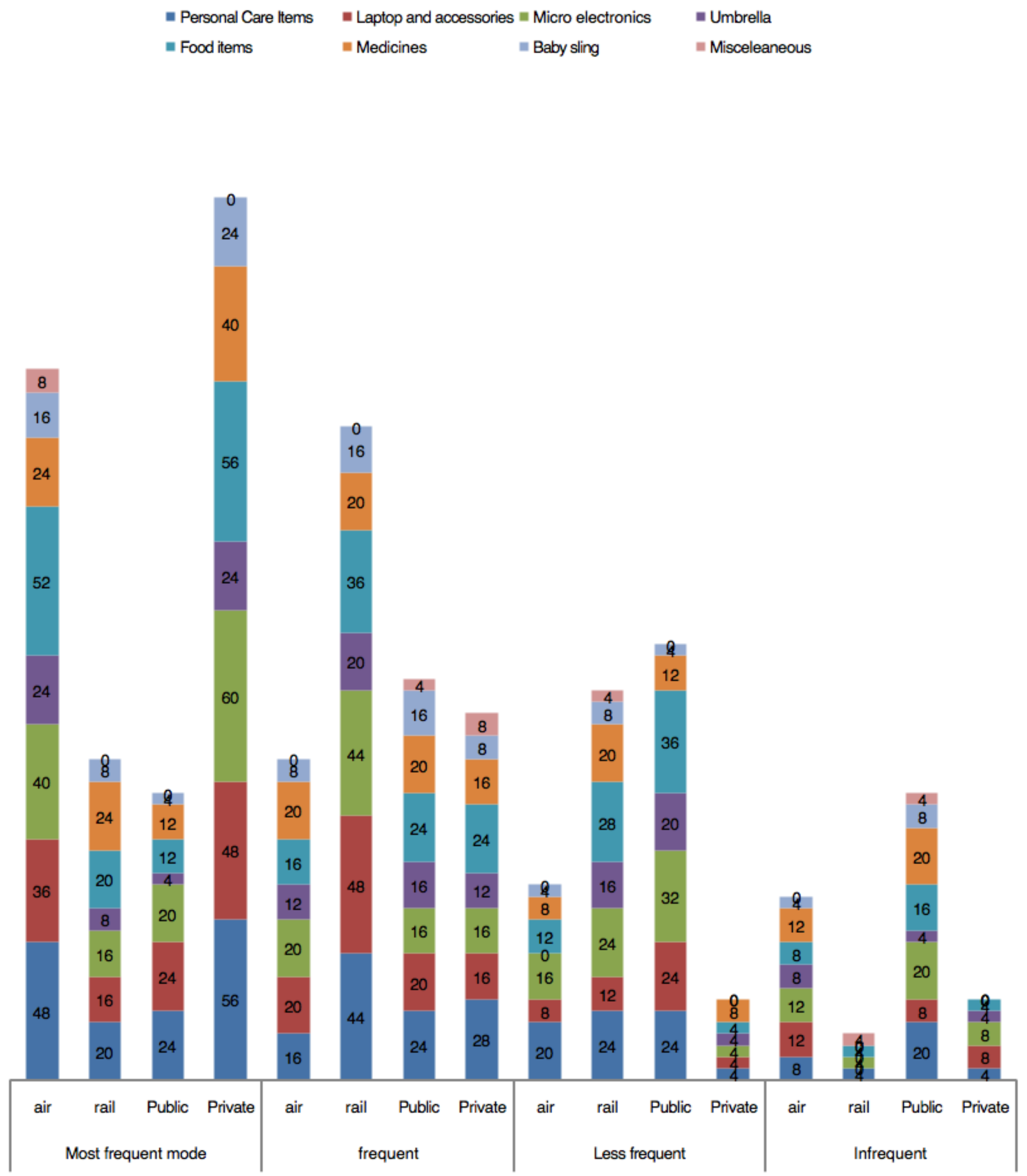
Table 2: Individual's preference on items - Gender, Age and Travel Motive

			Personal Care Items	Laptop and accessories	Micro electronics	Misceleaneous
gender	male	Count	36	68	48	16
	female	Count	40	52	44	12
age	24-29	Count	48	72	52	16
	30-40	Count	13	21	17	4
	above 40	Count	12	24	20	8
Travel motive	business	Count	33	45	35	2
	leisure	Count	43	75	57	26

Table 3: Household's preference on items - Family size

	two	four	5-6	above 6
Personal Care Items	17	25	4	44
Laptop and accessories	17	21	6	32
Micro electronics	14	19	3	52
Umbrella	6	18	3	16
Food items	8	25	2	52
Medicines	11	14	2	36
Baby sling	6	9	1	16
Misceleaneous	0	0	0	8

Figure 4 -Mode of Travel & Household Travlel Items



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