CUSTOMER SATISFACTION & BRAND AWARENESS TOWARDS STELLAR CIGARETTES OF GODFREY PHILLIPS INDIA LTD: A RESEARCH CONDUCTED IN KOLKATA

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ABSTRACT

A consumer's decision to buy a product is the result of interplay of many factors. The market is now mostly consumer driven. Consumer has given many options to decide also. The study throws light on various features that the manufacturer should concentrate on to attract the prospective buyers. The purpose of this research is to investigate the consumer awareness, the level of preferences and satisfaction measurement towards the STELLAR cigarette of Godfrey Philips India Limited (GPI). A descriptive study was conducted in Kolkata to achieve the objectives. In total 200 respondents filled a well-structured questionnaire. Results reveal that the dimensions which influence the satisfaction level of customer's are: product quality, price & size. Further results show that there is a significant relation between the brand name and the preference of customers. Hence, it has been recommended that the company should focus on brand awareness, proper supply & distribution of the product. In order to increase customer satisfaction and drive them to be brand loyalists, manufacturer is encouraged to develop aggressive marketing programs.

Keywords: Customer preference & satisfaction, brand name, brand awareness, customer response, product quality.

INTRODUCTION

The tobacco industry is one of the oldest industries in India. It is highly labor intensive and provides livelihood to about 5 million people directly and indirectly. India is the second largest producer of tobacco in the world. Godfrey Philips India Limited is an India-based company and is the second largest player in the Indian tobacco industry after ITC ltd. The company operates in two segments: Cigarettes and tobacco products, and Tea and other retail products. It offers STELLAR slim cigarettes specially engineered to deliver low nicotine without a compromise in taste and flavour.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This project has been carried out to study the scope of STELLAR cigarette under Godfrey Philips India Limited with an aim to popularize & meet the expectation level of the consumer. Research activities with the help of well structured questionnaire have been carried out to interact with the customers for their feedback and also concentrated on a comparative study of Stellar with its competitors through direct interview method. The project also covered the opinion of the distributors and dealers among with different types of customers of different industrial sectors and households.

SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Tobacco industry is the fastest growing industry in India. For this reason so many companies are also entering into this market segment. Naturally there are various scopes are still there for further researches. The researches are not only conducted the research for the purpose of finding the problem but also find their corresponding remedies for the purpose of effective functioning of the organization. Godfrey Philips India Limited, is a giant organization in tobacco segment, has got lot of customer base for many years. Nowadays it is mandatory that an organization remains accustomed to changes and continuous development for the purpose of survival of the organization and also for maintaining the growth. Based on this background, this research will include data collection and methodology through interviews and direct observation as a tool to identify the specific problems within the organization and trying to find out the subsequent remedies for this.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To determine the consumer of cigarettes.
- Brand awareness of the product.
- Comparison with other brands in the market.
- Customers need and expectation towards STELLAR.
- Customers satisfaction measurement towards STELLAR.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on primary data and secondary data. Secondary data was collected from various sources and the primary data was collected through structured questionnaire. The questionnaire has been prepared according to the objective of the study. Before preparing the questionnaire I have collected little information from the company web sites, newspapers, periodicals and different textbook of marketing. Here the sample size is 200 and the research has been conducted in Kolkata. In this study simple stratified random sampling method has been used to select respondents. However the collected data have been summarized by the tabulation sheets according to the objective of the study. The summarized data have been analyzed by using graphical statistical tools and techniques like bar charts and pie charts.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Age wise usage of cigarette

Age Group	No. of Respondents	Percentage
18-20 yrs	22	11%
21-25yrs	30	15%
25-30yrs	40	20%
30-35yrs	40	20%
35-40yrs	48	24%
40 & above	20	10%
Total	200	100%
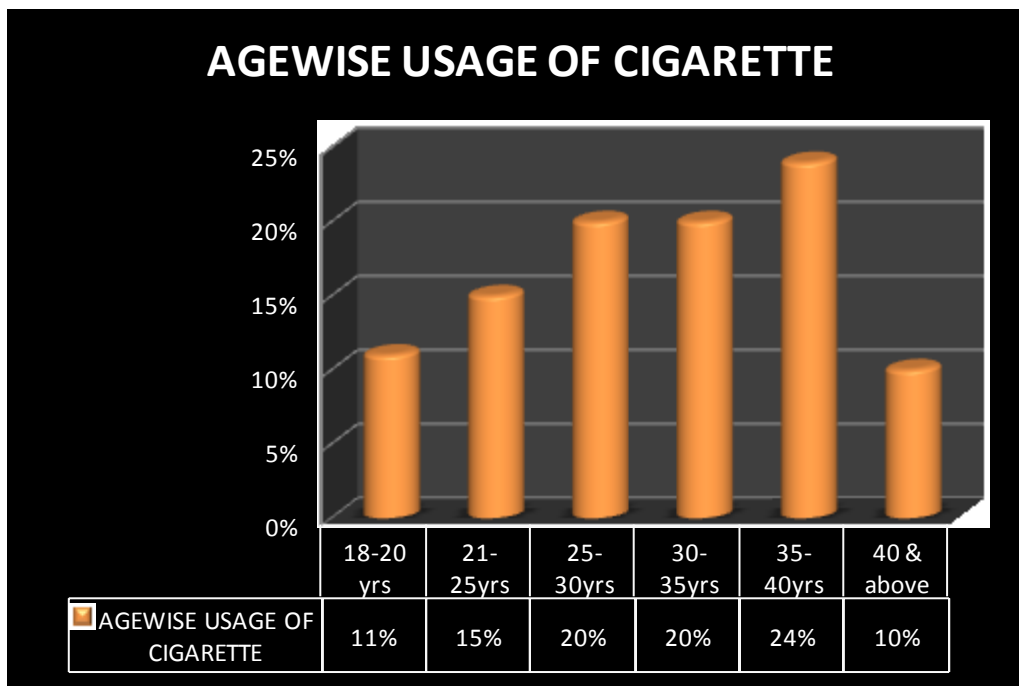
Usage of various brands in the market

Brand Preference	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Silk cut	82	41%
Gold Flake	46	23%
Flake	34	17%
Navy cut	20	10%
Special	12	6%
Stellar	6	3%
Total	200	100%

BRAND PREFERENCE

	Silk cut	Gold Flake	Flake	Navy cut	Special	Steller
BRAND PREFERENCE	41%	23%	17%	10%	6%	3%
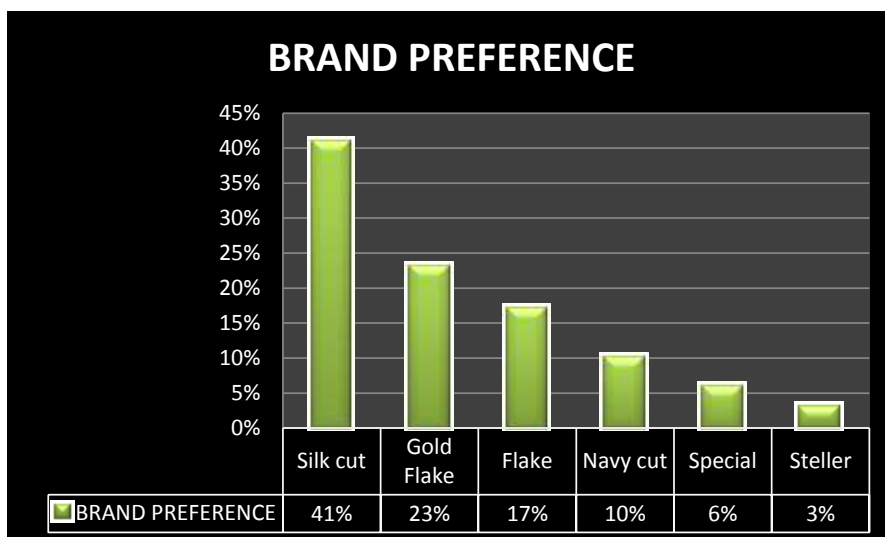
Awareness of the brand STELLAR

Awareness level	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	72	36%
No	128	64%
Total	200	100%

AWARENESS OF THE BRAND

	Yes	No
AWARENESS OF THE BRAND	36%	64%
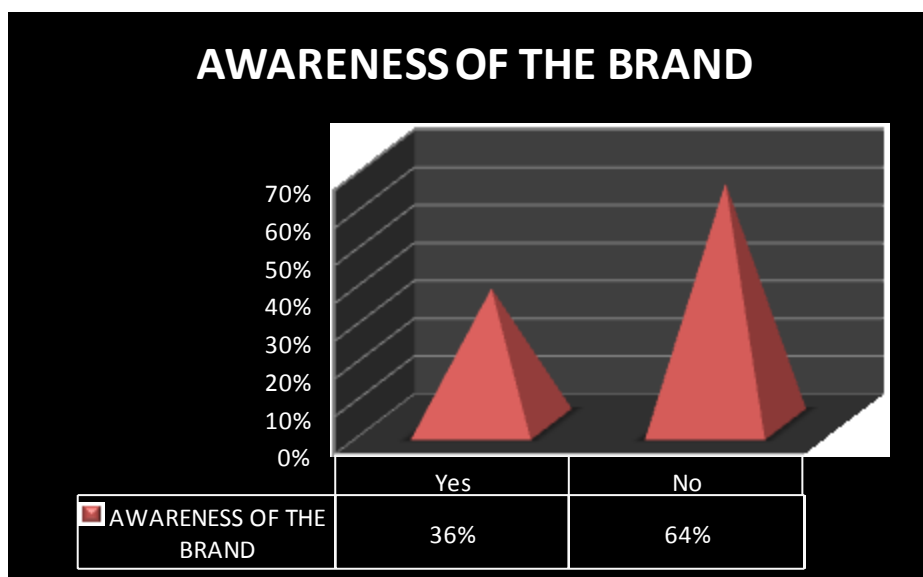
Have you tested the STELLAR Cigarettes ever?

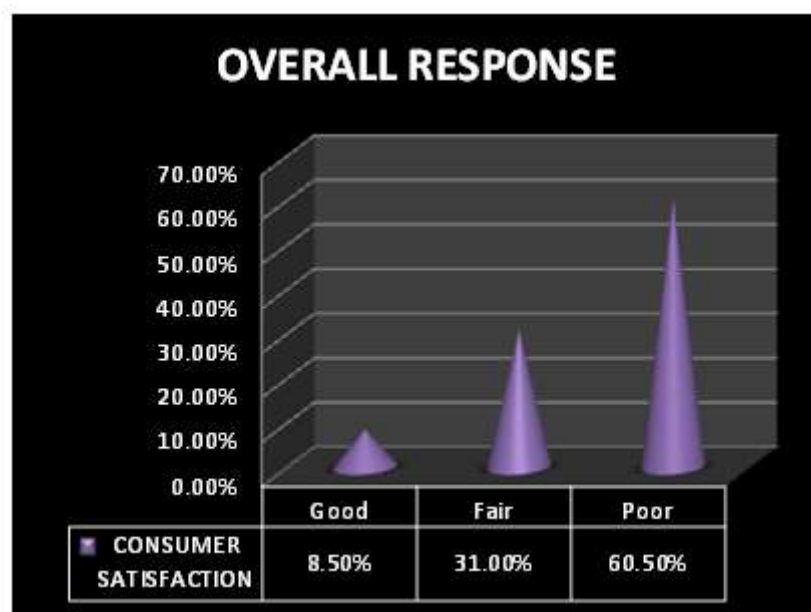| Usage	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	40	20%
No	160	80%
Total	200	100%
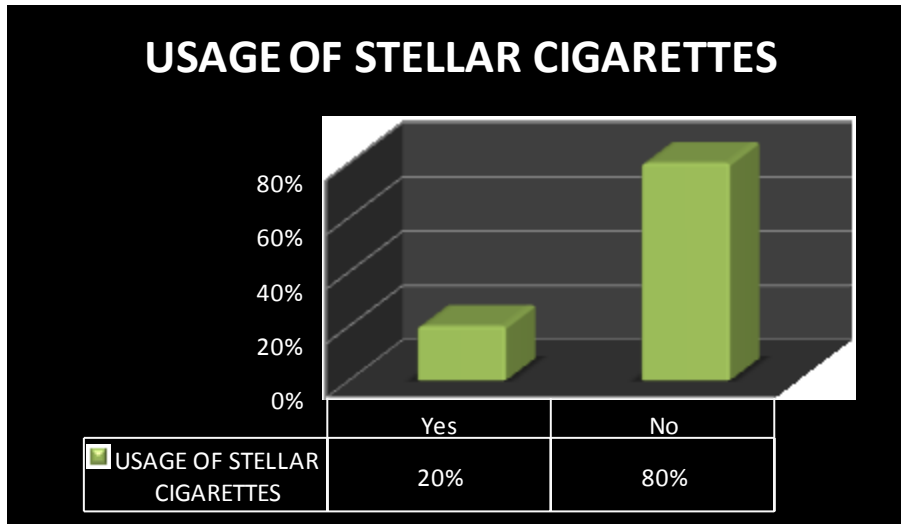
Consumer response (for those who are using the product or used before) of the STELLAR cigarette

Consumer response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Excellent	0	0%
Very Good	2	5%
Good	5	13%
Fair	13	32%
Unsatisfied	20	50%
Total	40	100%
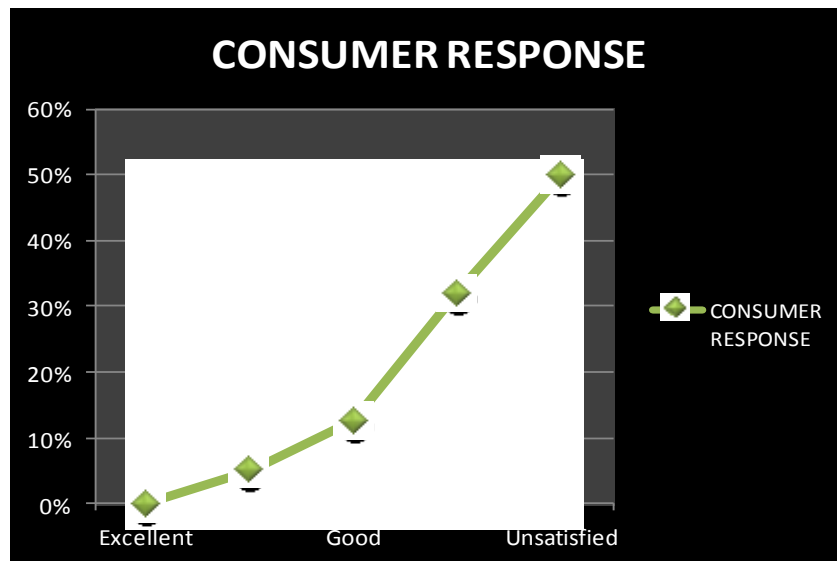
Overall response of the product named STELLAR

Consumer response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Good	17	8.50%
Fair	62	31.00%
Poor	121	60.50%
Total	200	100%

Which size is the best?

Best size	No. of Respondents	Percentage
King Size	87	43.50%
Regular Size	113	56.50%
Total	200	100%
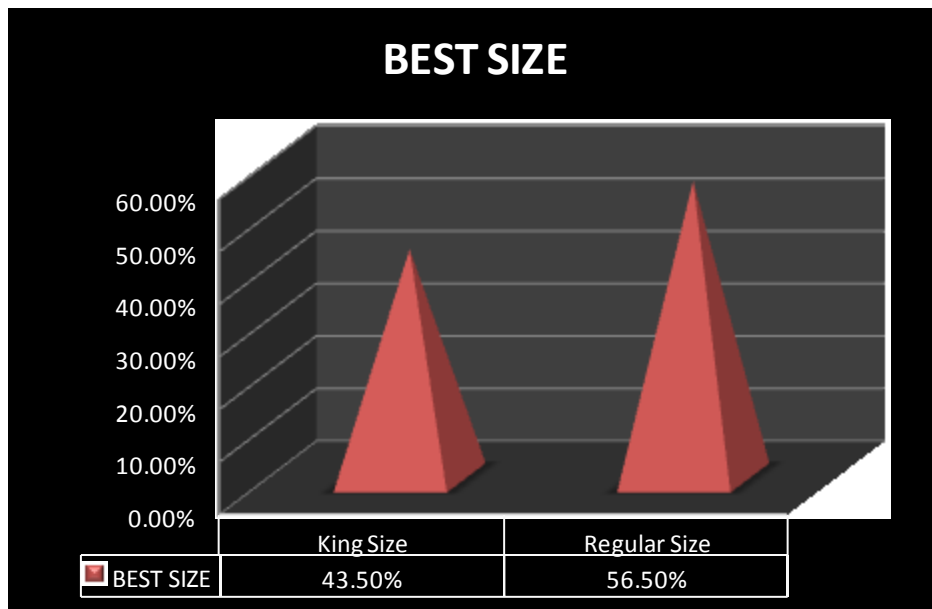
Can Price factor affect the sale of cigarette?

Effect of price factor	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	111	55.50%
No	89	44.50%
Total	200	100%

EFFECT OF PRICE FACTOR

	Yes	No
EFFECT OF PRICE FACTOR	55.50%	44.50%
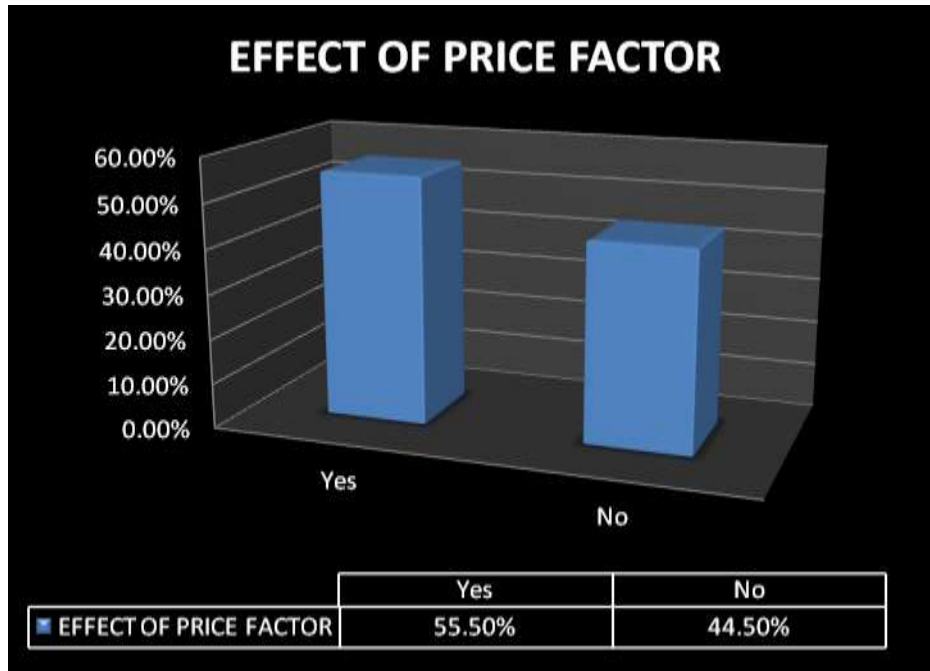
The Price of cigarette is Rs 4 is satisfactory or not?

Price of the cigarette	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Satisfactory	143	71.50%
Not satisfactory	57	28.50%
Total	200	100%

PRICE

	Satisfactory	Not satisfactory
PRICE FACTOR	71.50%	28.50%

Most preferable content in cigarette

Preferred content in cigarette	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Filter	56	28%
Tobacco	84	42%
Size	60	30%
Total	200	100%
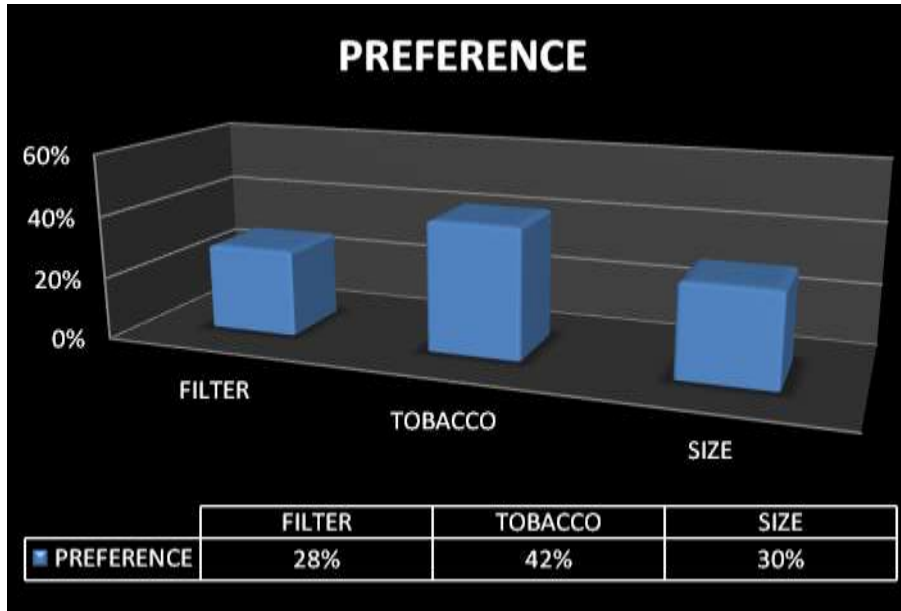
FINDINGS

1. The age group of 35-40 yrs are the main user of the cigarette. But the age group below 35-40 yrs are also smoking cigarettes extensively.

2. The most preferred brand in the market is Silk cut. Around 41% customers have voted for this product.

3. Only 36% of the customer aware about the brand named STELLAR.

4. Only 20% of the customer tested the STELLAR cigarette in their life time.

5. According to the consumers who have tested the STELLAR cigarettes before or smoking this brand currently, 50% of them are unsatisfied with the product.

6. According to all the consumers who have tested or not tested the STELLAR cigarettes, 60.50% of them are unsatisfied with the product.

7. 56.50% of the respondents voted for the regular size.

8. Most of the customers (55.50%) have said that higher prices can affect the sales of the product.

9. 71.50% of the respondents said that Rs. 4 for a cigarette is satisfactory.

10. Around 42% of the respondents said that the most preferred content of the cigarette is tobacco.

RECOMMENDATIONS & SUGGESTIONS

- The quality should be improved.

- Need more advertisement of the product for brand awareness. Because very few people are aware about the product.

- Customer awareness is more important for any product which is absent over here.

- Proper supply and distribution channel is required. Most of the retailers are not keeping this brand because of poor availability of the product.

- New marketing strategies need to develop for the customers for more sales and brand awareness.

- The customers want quality, so the manufacturers should maintain it otherwise they can not survive in the market.

- According to customers point of view they are feeling that quality & services are much important than the price. So the manufacturers need maintain the proper quality.

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths:

- The second biggest tobacco company in India.

- The first and only tobacco company to organize fragmented Cigar market in India and secure its position as the market leader in the cigar distribution.

- Partnering with some of top most players in the international tobacco industry.

Weakness:

- Low popularity of most of its products.

- No sole authority.

- Weak and irregular supply.

- Irregular visit of EXECUTIVES.

Opportunities:

- Already present in the Middle East, West Africa, South East Africa & South East Asia, GPI can strengthen its position as an international player by entering new markets.

- Even expanding market share in the Indian tobacco market is an opportunity.

Threats:

- ITC getting into the Cigar market.

- It has a mere 12% in market share.

- Impulse customer's buy whatever is in the offer, so company should give offer regularly.

- People are becoming health conscious.

LIMITATIONS

- Some of the customers/retailers were not interested to answer all the queries as per the questionnaire.

- It was difficult to convince respondents that their feedback was only for statistical purposes and not for any other purpose whatsoever.

- Some of the respondents were either busy or not interested during the interview. Among those who were ready to answer they were not cooperative also. Non-co-operative behaviour of respondents was a big problem in this survey & it is an important fact which should be taken into consideration.

- The respondents are not likely to spend much time for interview.

- The sample size taken for the research work is 200 which may not represent the actual population.

- Few retailers were not comfortable at the time of giving the answers, as they want to keep it confidential.

- This is purely based on verbal meetings and may be influenced by unprecedented factors.

- The research was based on primary data collection so there may be chances of human errors and biasness.

CONCLUSION

Through this study we understood the various perceptions of different respondents towards STELLAR cigarette. We also found out how much they were satisfied with the overall quality & service of the product. The customer's expectation from the various segments and the problems faced by them were identified. Today STELLAR is facing severe challenges from the ITC. They need to again fully organize the distribution system. What is most needed is the advertising and promotion of the particular product. As we surveyed we found out that most of the people didn't knew about the product named STELLAR. If the above suggestions are implemented, the brand named STELLAR can find better prospect in the future.

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