

Study on Consumer Buying Behavior for Clearpath Aligners

**Internship Training
at
Clearpath Orthodontics**

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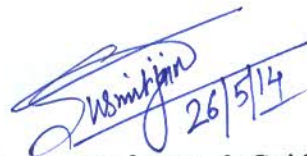
TO WHOMSOEVER MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that Dr. Samriddhi Jain student of Post Graduate Diploma in Hospital and Health Management (PGDHM) from Institute of Health Management Research, Jaipur has undergone internship training at ClearPath Orthodontics Pvt. Ltd. from 20th February 2014 to 20th May 2014.

The Candidate has successfully carried out the study designated to her during internship training and her approach to the study has been sincere, scientific and analytical. The Internship is in fulfillment of the course requirements. I wish her all success in all her future endeavors.



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Certificate of completion of Internship/dissertation

The certificate is awarded to

Name DR SAMRIDDHI JAIN

In recognition of having successfully completed her
Internship in the department of

Title MARKETING

and has successfully completed her Project on

Title of the Project

A Study on consumer buying behavior for ClearPath aligners

Date 20th Feb 2014 to 20th May 2014

Organisation CLEARPATH ORTHODONTICS PVT. LTD.

She comes across as a committed, sincere & diligent person who has a
strong drive & zeal for learning

We wish her all the best for future endeavors


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CERTIFICATE BY SCHOLAR

This is to certify that the dissertation titled Consumer buying behavior for ClearPath aligners and submitted by Dr.Samriddhi Jain Enrollment No.1369 under the supervision of Dr.Susmit Jain for award of Postgraduate Diploma in Hospital and Health Management of the Institute carried out during the period from 20th February 2014 to 20th May 2014 embodies my original work and has not formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma associate ship, fellowship, titles in this or any other Institute or other similar institution of higher learning.


Signature

ABSTRACT

Nowadays influencing consumer behaviors is very important for companies which aim to be successful in such an intense competitive environment. To cope with intense competition and to influence consumer behaviors is inevitable for companies to consider cultural, social, psychological and, personal status of consumers. Main aim of the companies is to profit. Therefore companies should understand behaviors of their consumers to keep the permanency of the situation, to keep their customers and to keep their customers to buy.

This study focused on buying behavior of dentists and orthodontists for Clear path aligners with the objectives to know the understanding of clear aligners among dentists and to improve knowledge and attitude regarding clear aligners. Exploratory and qualitative study was performed with a sample size of 150 dental doctors in Chennai in time span of 3 months.

Data was collected by conducting face to face interview using structured questionnaire and in depth discussion with the doctors. Respondents were selected by simple random and convenience sampling. The obtained data was analyzed using MS EXCEL and interpreted qualitatively.

The study concluded that most of the consumers were unaware about the aligners and some had misconception for its functions. Major factors for resistance to buy aligners are its price and reliability for the treatment outcome after using aligners.

Awareness through seminars, workshops by trained professionals and personal visits by promoters will result in improvement for buying behavior among dentists.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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COMPANY PROFILE

ClearPath was incorporated in USA in 2008 after over 8 years of R&D. Lately, it has established regional headquarters & manufacturing unit in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia to cater to Asian & North African countries and today it is an established name in the Middle east for clear orthodontic treatment and the first company to launch clear aligner solutions for the Asian doctors!

Business Operations In:

**INDIA | SAUDI ARABIA | UAE | NETHERLANDS | GERMANY | BELGIUM |
LUXEMBOURG | ALBANIA | MACEDONIA | JORDAN | LEBANON | EGYPT | SYRIA |
KENYA | SOUTH AFRICA | UGANDA | R.O. AFRICA | SRI LANKA | MALAYSIA**

The ClearPath process is an amalgamation of

- *Conventional dental laboratory procedures*
- *Highly precise mechanical & software systems and*
- *Digital technology*
-

taking the best of three worlds.

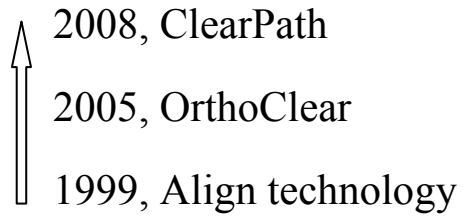
*Purpose is to make aligners available
globally at affordable prices!*

ClearPath was established with the mission to provide state of the art clear aligners as an affordable treatment option to the dental practitioners around the globe. The technology innovation of ClearPath Orthodontics' removable clear aligners not only gives the benefits of comfort, esthetics and hygiene to the patient but also offers control and predictability to the doctors in the course of treatment.

MISSION:

*To deliver high quality, affordable, clear
orthodontic aligner solutions to the global market*

Being a successful company is about more than just selling great products. ClearPath believes that building long-term relationships with our customers requires delivering superior training, support and services at every step along the way.



BACKGROUND

When the destination is beautiful, why should the journey be painful?

Malocclusion is one of the most prevalent clinical conditions, affecting over ~70% of the Global population. While most individuals seek orthodontic treatment to improve their appearance, malocclusion may also be responsible for various dental problems such as tooth decay, tooth loss, gum disease, jaw joint pain and headaches. The only option available for correction of malocclusion till now was traditional orthodontic treatment i.e. braces!

Although braces are generally effective in correcting a wide range of malocclusions, they are subject to many limitations and disadvantages like unattractive appearance, discomfort, frequent lacerations, poor oral hygiene etc. Due to these limitations of braces, only a relatively small proportion of people with malocclusion seek traditional orthodontic treatment thereby creating a large need gap.

ClearPath was incorporated to cater to this large unmet need for an orthodontic system that addresses these patient concerns. ClearPath also believes that there is an unmet need among dental professionals for a treatment modality that increases the predictability and efficiency of treatment and enhances profitability of practice also.

CLEARPATH ALIGNER DETAILS

BASICS OF ALIGNERS:

1. An aligner is a **custom made clear plastic tray** that fits over your teeth and corrects their malpositioning.
2. Aligners are made in **medical grade plastic**, ClearPath uses FDA approved plastic, made by **Raintree Essix, Inc. USA** to make aligners.
3. Each aligner moves teeth a **little bit** by exerting light, continuous & uninterrupted pressure on them.
4. These aligners provide a **hygienic, convenient and a clear solution** for the correction of malocclusion without having to wear brackets and wires.
5. These aligners are **removable** and patients can eat, brush and floss their teeth and **enjoy their normal life**.
6. These aligners are **nearly invisible** and nobody can notice the aligners when you are wearing them.
7. ClearPath aligners are made by an **internationally patented unique process**, which involves advanced technology supported by customized software and mechanical systems.
8. The treatment comprises of a **series of aligners**. Each set has to be worn by the patient for **~22 hrs in a day** for **2 weeks** before advancing to the next set. Treatment duration is **6-24 months** depending on the severity of case.
9. Recommended age limit for usage is **14 to 65 years** of age.
10. Aligners apply precise, light, uninterrupted & continuous forces on the teeth so they are not painful but a slight discomfort may be experienced at the beginning of treatment, which goes away within 24 hours. Aligners are made in medical grade plastic unlike metal wires braces, which hurt your cheeks and lips.
11. Aligners are **not a new appliance**. Millions of People have already been treated with aligners in developed countries like USA, UK, Middle East and other European countries and their number is increasing every day.

TYPES OF ALIGNER SYSTEMS:

1. MANUAL SETUP ALIGNERS: Entire processing & fabrication done by manual process in the laboratory by a technician.

Disadvantages:

- a) Non Predictable
- b) Multiple impressions required
- c) More chair side time
- d) Imprecise & inaccurate procedure
- e) Cannot treat complex & extraction cases

Examples:

- a) Conventional Laboratory Vacuum Forming Technique (e.g. using Biostar machine)
- b) MaxDent Ortho's Removable aligner systems
- c) MTM Aligners
- d) ClearAligner International

2. CAD CAM ALIGNERS: Entire processing & fabrication is done by an automated process which is an amalgamation of *Conventional dental laboratory procedures, highly precise mechanical & software systems and Digital technology*

Advantages:

- a) Predictable and can accurately show the results of treatment and exact no. of aligners at the beginning of the treatment!
- b) Only 1 impressions required in the beginning
- c) Only 10 minutes of chair side time required per 6 weeks per patient
- d) Highly precise, automated & sophisticated procedure
- e) Can treat all varieties of cases, including extraction cases, crossbites, rotations, edge to edge, bi-maxillary protrusion etc.

Examples:

- a) Invisalign
- b) ClearPath

ADVANTAGES OF ALIGNERS:

FOR THE PATIENT

1. **CLEAR:** ClearPath is virtually invisible. Hardly anyone gets to know you're straightening your teeth. So now you can align your teeth and get the smile you always desired without having any social inhibitions.
2. **REMOVABLE:** You can remove ClearPath Aligner to eat, drink, brush, floss or for special occasions.
3. **COMFORTABLE:** With ClearPath, the edges are smooth so they won't irritate your gums or cheeks.
4. **PREDICTABLE & EFFECTIVE:** With ClearPath, You can see the treatment outcome even before starting it and start enjoying a better smile even before completing the treatment.
5. **CUSTOMIZED:** Your doctor will take precise impressions and customize your aligners for your teeth.



FOR THE DOCTOR

- 1) **EVIDENCE BASED & SCIENTIFIC (PRECISION OF MOVEMENT):** The entire process is designed to deliver customized aligner that moves each tooth directly along the most efficient way to achieve the desired goal. By optimizing each aligners output, the number of aligners and intermediate changes required are minimized leading to shorter treatment times for patients, and increased capacity for practice.
- 2) **ACCURACY** of regeneration of patient occlusion without any digital data manipulation, eliminating any potential inaccuracy of appliance fit.
- 3) **MORE CONTROL OVER TREATMENT** with our batch aligner shipment products where treatment can be modified in between batches during the course of treatment.
- 4) **SUPERIOR CLARITY OF ALIGNERS** compared to other aligners available in the market which makes it more transparent and a hygienic choice.
- 5) **FASTER TURNAROUND TIME** from the time a case is received to the time aligners are shipped back to the doctor.
- 6) **UNLIMITED MODIFICATIONS** to the diagnostic setup are allowed.
- 7) **QUALITY** ensured at each step of the process monitored by trained and experienced dental staff members.
- 8) **ACCURATE AND PRECISE IPR** using original patient dentition without any digital error introduced to it.
- 9) Original Patient Data used during the whole manufacturing process from casting to treatments and aligner fabrication which adds to the accuracy of the end product and ensures **BETTER TREATMENT OUTCOME.**
- 10) **EXPANDED PATIENT BASE:** ClearPath has the potential to exponentially grow the practice of orthodontics. We believe that ClearPath will allow dental professionals to attract patients who would not otherwise seek orthodontic treatment.
- 11) **DECREASED CHAIR SIDE TIME:** ClearPath reduces both the frequency and length of patient visits. ClearPath eliminates the need for time-intensive processes such as bonding appliances to the patient's teeth, adjusting arch wires during the course of treatment and removing the appliances at the conclusion of treatment. As such, use of ClearPath reduces dental professional and staff chair time and can increase practice throughput.

LIMITATIONS WITH BRACES:

Although braces are generally effective in correcting a wide range of malocclusions, they are subject to many limitations and disadvantages. Conventional orthodontic treatment is associated with:

UNATTRACTIVE APPEARANCE: Braces call attention to the patient's condition and treatment. In addition, braces trap food, which can further compromise appearance. Braces can also result in permanent discoloration of teeth. Many adults associate braces with adolescence.

ORAL DISCOMFORT: Braces are sharp and bulky and can abrade and irritate the interior surfaces of the mouth. The tightening or adjustment of braces results in root and gum soreness and discomfort, especially in the few days immediately following an orthodontic visit.

POOR ORAL HYGIENE: Braces compromise oral hygiene by making it more difficult to brush and floss. These problems can result in tooth decay and periodontal damage. Additionally, the bonding of brackets to teeth can cause permanent markings on the teeth.

INABILITY TO PROJECT TREATMENT: Historically, dental professionals have not had means to model the movement of teeth over a course of treatment. Accordingly, they must rely on intuition and judgment to plan and project treatment. As a result, they cannot be precise about the direction or distance of expected tooth movement between patient visits. This lack of predictability may result in unwanted tooth movements and can limit their ability to estimate the duration & course of treatment.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS ON DENTAL PROFESSIONAL: The manipulation of wires and brackets requires sustained manual dexterity and visual acuity, and may place other physical burdens on the dental professionals.

ROOT RESORPTION: The sustained high levels of force associated with conventional treatment can result in root resorption, which is a shortening of tooth roots. This shortening can have substantial adverse periodontal consequences for the patient.

EMERGENCIES: At times, braces need to be repaired or replaced on an emergency basis. Such emergencies cause significant inconvenience to both the patient and the dental professional.

LIMITATIONS WITH ALIGNERS:

In some instances, Clearpath may have certain limitations relative to conventional treatment. Aligners cost more to produce than conventional braces, and we charge dental professionals more than they generally pay for the supplies used in conventional treatment. Depending on the individual pricing policies of each dental professional, the cost of Clearpath to the patient may be greater than for conventional braces.

Dental professionals must also incorporate our manufacturing cycle times into their overall treatment plan. Once a dental professional submits a case to us, there is generally a turn-around time of 3-4 weeks before the aligners are delivered.

Aligners may not be appropriate for all cases, such as severe malocclusion, which may require Aligners to be used in combination with conventional braces for optimal results. In addition, because aligners are removable, treatment using Clearpath depends on patients wearing their aligners as recommended. Some patients may experience a temporary period of adjustment to wearing aligners that may mildly affect speech.

HOW DOES IT WORK? :

1) GETTING STARTED

Patients will start off by locating a ClearPath Certified Provider. Doctor evaluates patients' oral condition and discuss patient problems & treatment goals. Once it's established that ClearPath is the right treatment option for the patient; the doctor will take impressions, photos and x-rays that are necessary for ClearPath's custom aligner manufacturing.

2) CUSTOM TREATMENT PLAN

The doctor sends the records —impressions, photos and x-rays — to ClearPath with a prescription for custom aligners. ClearPath uses these records to create exact 3D models of the teeth. Then working with the doctor at every step, and following the precise instructions provided on the prescription, ClearPath maps out a complete treatment plan of gradual adjustment that takes the teeth from where they are currently to where they want them to end up. Once the impressions are processed, the patient & doctor will be able to preview the projected results of treatment in "treatment set-up," a computerized digital representation of teeth before and after treatment.

3) THE ALIGNERS ARE COMPUTER CRAFTED

Once the patient & doctor are satisfied and approve the projected results shown in treatment set-up, the manufacturing process begins. Using the latest digital mapping and molding technology, ClearPath fabricates custom aligners with software guided precision. ClearPath then sends aligners to the respective doctor for delivery to the patient.

4) PROGRESS WEARING ALIGNERS

Patients are advised to wear the aligners all the time, except while eating and drinking and during daily tooth care, such as brushing and flossing. ClearPath aligners are so clear they are barely noticeable so they won't have an impact on patient's day to day life. Aligner by aligner, patient will be able to see the difference as teeth slowly adjust and align to the target smile.

Patient visits the doctor periodically for check-ups & follow-ups (preferably once every month) to see the progress until he eventually has the great smile he always wanted.

HOW TO GET CLEARPATH? :

1) GATHER PATIENT RECORDS:

- a) Impressions: *Both upper and lower impressions in rubber base (PVS).*
- b) Bite Registration
- c) Photos: *Intra-oral, Extra-oral and profile photographs of patients.*
- d) Radiographs: *Lateral Cephalogram & OPG*
- e) Diagnosis and Treatment Form: *Filled completely.*

2) **SUBMIT** all these records to ClearPath office.

3) TREATMENT PLAN:

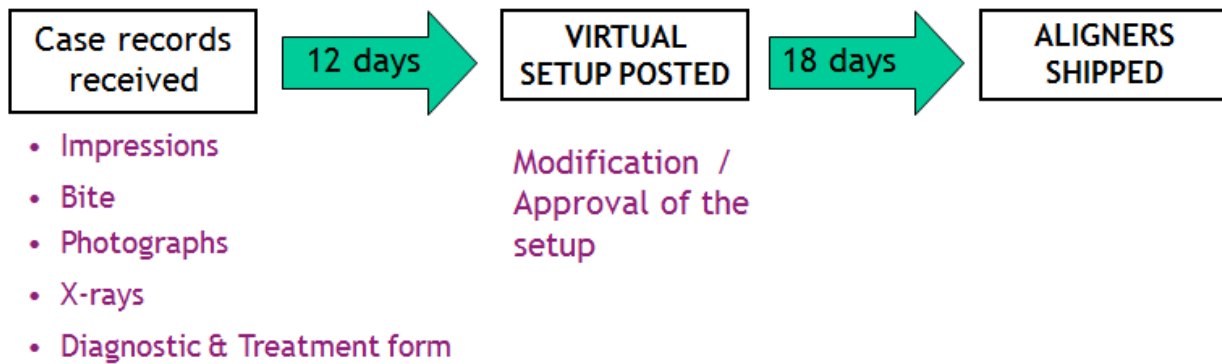
Intimation is sent regarding receipt of records & entry into system post which you confirm the treatment plan for the patient by evaluating the tooth movements & before-after scenarios on the Online Diagnostic Setup.

4) ALIGNER MANUFACTURING:

Once the Diagnostic Setup is approved, the plan is locked and sent for manufacturing process initiation. The aligners are designed, manufactured & dispatched to the clinic in 2 weeks.

5) PROGRESS WITH ALIGNERS:

Patients should be advised to wear the aligners all the time, except while eating and drinking and during daily tooth care, such as brushing and flossing. Each set has to be worn by the patient for ~22 hrs in a day for 2 weeks before advancing to the next set. Periodic checkups should be made to see how the patient is progressing. Aligner by aligner, you'll be able to see the difference as teeth slowly adjust and align to the target smile.



CLEARPATH MANUFACTURING:

Once a case is received it goes through a number of steps before it is ready for the doctor's review. This includes impression and records evaluation, digitization & integration of the records, computerized manipulation of the digitized model suitable for constructing a diagnostic setup, and uploading on website for doctor's review. This whole process includes a number of quality checks and quality assurance monitoring to ensure optimum quality product delivery to the customer.

ClearPath is committed to post the online diagnostic setup for review by the treating doctor within 7 working days from the receipt of complete records. After posting the online diagnostic setup, if the treating doctor desires some modifications, it will take around 2 to 5 working days to redeliver the modified setup.

In a situation where ClearPath receives incomplete / faulty patient records, the case is put on hold and communication to the concerned doctor is initiated to get accurate and complete records. This time period is not included in the 7 working days required by ClearPath for setting up the online diagnostic setup.

Once the diagnostic setup is approved by the concerned doctor it takes ~15 working days to ship the aligners to the doctor.

THE CLEARPATH ADVANTAGE:

1. Doorstep collection of impression anywhere & everywhere
2. Doorstep collection of payment anywhere & everywhere
3. Multiple modes of payment accepted
4. Multiple currency options
5. Unlimited free case reviews by experienced orthodontists on our panel
6. One free post treatment refinement per case (if required)
7. Free treatment planning assistance by most experienced orthodontists in CAD/CAM aligner technology
8. Flexibility in IPR scheduling

COMPARISON BETWEEN ALIGNERS & BRACES

Aligners	Brackets and wires
Nearly invisible	Visible
Completely removable	Not removable
With aligners its easier to clean teeth	Very difficult to maintain good oral hygiene
Less irritation and injury to patient's cheeks	Constant source of irritation and discomfort
Better chewing and digestion for total body health	Difficult to chew food while having brackets and wires inside mouth
Can correct harmful habits that can distort body growth.	Does not help
Less discomfort to patient during the treatment	Painful during treatment
Less chair side time is required	Lengthy appointments
Less visits are required and are also pain free	More frequent visits are required
Better jaw alignment, proportion and function	Does not help
Calculated and precise tooth movements are given through aligners and controlled force is applied	No as such control of movements and force
Doctor and Patient can see the outcome of the treatment in advance	Does not apply

STUDY ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR **FOR CLEARPATH ALIGNERS**

INTRODUCTION

Understanding the buying behavior of the target market for its company products is the essential task for the marketing dep't. The job of the marketers is to "think customer and to guide the company into developing offers, which are meaningful and attractive to target customers and creating solutions that deliver satisfaction to the customers, profits to customer and benefits to the stakeholders.

The job of marketer is to meet and satisfy target customers needs and wants but "knowing customer" is not a simple task. Understanding the buying behavior of the target market for its company products is the essential task for the marketing dep't. The job of the marketers is to "think customer" and to guide the company into developing offers, which are meaningful and attractive to target customers and creating solutions that deliver satisfaction to the customers, profits to customer and benefits to the stakeholders.

Marketers must study the customer taste, preferences, wants, shopping and buying behavior because such study provides the clues for developing the new products, price, product changes, messages and other marketing mix elements. In understand the concept of buying we have the some of the key questions. They are: -

Why does the market buying?	Objective
Who does the market buying?	Organization
What does the market buying?	Objects
When does the market buying?	Occasions
Where does the market buying?	Outlets
How does the market buying?	Operations

Along with that there are two more questions that are also related with above. They are: -

How do the buyer's characteristics influence the buying behavior?

How does the buyer make purchasing decisions?

Selling of any product, there is needed to build relationship with customers. For building a relationship there is need for knowing the customer behavior and how will be they satisfied?

Consumer Buying Behavior

Consumer decision processes are the decision making processes undertaken by consumers in regard to a potential market transaction before, during, and after the purchase of a product or service. More generally, decision making is the cognitive process of selecting a course of action from among multiple alternatives. Common examples include shopping, deciding what to eat. Decision making is said to be a psychological construct. This means that although we can never "see" a decision, we can infer from observable behavior that a decision has been made. Therefore we conclude that a psychological event that we call "decision making" has occurred. It is a construction that imputes commitment to action. That is, based on observable actions, we assume that people have made a commitment to effect the action.

In general there are three ways of analyzing consumer buying decisions. They are :

- **Economic models** - These models are largely quantitative and are based on the assumptions of rationality and near perfect knowledge. The consumer is seen to maximize their utility. See consumer theory. Game theory can also be used in some circumstances.
- **Psychological models** - These models concentrate on psychological and cognitive processes such as motivation and need recognition. They are qualitative rather than quantitative and build on sociological factors like cultural influences and family influences.
- **Consumer behavior models** - These are practical models used by marketers. They typically blend both economic and psychological models.

Nobel laureate Herbert Simon sees economic decision making as a vain attempt to be rational. He claims (in 1947 and 1957) that if a complete analysis is to be done, a decision will be immensely complex. He also says that peoples' information processing ability is very limited. The assumption of a perfectly rational economic actor is unrealistic. Often we are influenced by emotional and non-rational considerations. When we try to be rational we are at best only partially successful.

Buyer Decision Process:

The buyer decision process consists of the following steps

1. Need recognition;
2. Search for information on products that could satisfy the needs of the buyer;

3. Alternative selection;
4. Decision making on buying the product
5. Post purchase behavior

There are a range of alternative models, but that of AIUAPR, which most directly links to the steps in the marketing/promotional process is often seen as the most useful.

→ **AWARENESS** - before anything else can happen the potential customers must become aware that the product or service exists. Thus, the first task must be to gain the attention of the target audience. All the different models are, predictably, agreed on this first step. If the audience never hears the message they will not act on it, no matter how powerful it is.

• **INTEREST** - but it is not sufficient to grab their attention. The message must interest them and persuade them that the product or service is relevant to their needs. The content of the message(s) must therefore be meaningful and clearly relevant to that target audience's needs, and this is where marketing research can come into its own.

• **UNDERSTANDING** - once an interest is established, the prospective customer must be able to appreciate how well the offering may meet his or her needs, again as revealed by the marketing research. This may be no mean achievement where the copywriter has just fifty words, or ten seconds, to convey everything there is to say about it.

• **ATTITUDES** - but the message must go even further; to persuade the reader to adopt a sufficiently positive attitude towards the product or service that he or she will purchase it, albeit as a trial. There is no adequate way of describing how this may be achieved. It is simply down to the magic of the copywriter's art; based on the strength of the product or service itself.

• **PURCHASE** - all the above stages might happen in a few minutes while the reader is considering the advertisement; in the comfort of his or her favorite armchair. The final buying decision, on the other hand, may take place sometime later; perhaps weeks later, when the prospective buyer actually tries to find a shop which stocks the product.

• **REPEAT PURCHASE** - but in most cases this first purchase is best viewed as just a trial purchase. Only if the experience is a success for the customer will it be turned into repeat purchases. These repeats, not the single purchase which is the focus of most models, are where the vendors focus should be, for these are where the profits are generated. The earlier stages are merely a very necessary prerequisite for this.

This is a very simple model, and as such does apply quite generally. Its lessons are that you cannot obtain repeat purchasing without going through the stages of building awareness and then obtaining trial use; which has to be successful. It is a pattern which applies to all repeat purchase products and services; industrial goods just as much as baked beans. This simple theory is rarely taken any further - to look at the series of transactions which such repeat purchasing implies. The consumer's growing experience over a number of such transactions is often the determining factor in the later - and future - purchases. All the succeeding transactions are, thus,

interdependent - and the overall decision-making process may accordingly be much more complex than most models allow for.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The systematic and objective identification, collection, analysis, dissemination, and use information for the purpose of assisting management in decision making related to the identification and solution of problem and opportunities in marketing.

When an industry comes in the competitive market then the main problem comes in front of him is, how can survive in the market. For this purpose they have to

known about their production process, employment process, distribution process, consumer needs and consumer behavior. The main purpose of the industry is to satisfy the consumer needs. Their all function rounds around the customer, they try to know the behavior of the customer and fulfill their goal and to know about the customer's behavior they do marketing research. In this era the marketing research is the basic part of the industry.

Marketing research include the evaluation of the organization's all functions like their production, manufacturing, distribution, marketing, financial and human resources. We can say it is the internal research of an industry. There are some external factor which affects the growth of the organization like customer behavior and the political, technological, economical, and legal environment. And the most important factor is consumer buying behavior because this factor is responsible for the utilization of the product and ultimately sells of the product. So industry also needs the research on the consumer buying behavior.

When we do the research on the consumer behavior we should know the entire factor which affects the consumer buying behavior. Social environment, education, culture and traditions, income, society are the factors which affect the buying behavior of the consumer. We can also divide it into geographic, demographic, psychological factor.

The main objective of this study is –

- ☐ To understand why customer buy a particular product.
- ☐ To know the marketing opportunities.
- ☐ To know about customer acceptance of the product.
- ☐ To analyse the customer expectation from the manufacturer.

□To help the company to know what consumer want in the product.

LITERATURE REVIEW

I. INTRODUCTION TO CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

Consumer behaviour has been always of great interest to marketers. The knowledge of consumer behavior helps the marketer to understand how consumers think, feel and select from alternatives like products, brands and the like and how the consumers are influenced by their environment, the reference groups, family, and salespersons and so on. A consumer's buying behavior is influenced by cultural, social, personal and psychological factors. Most of these factors are uncontrollable and beyond the hands of marketers but they have to be considered while trying to understand the complex behavior of the consumers. Consumer is the study "of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy needs and desires" (Solomon 1995, 7). In the marketing context, the term „consumer “ refers not only to the act of purchase itself, but also to patterns of aggregate buying which include pre-purchase and post-purchase activities. Pre-purchase activity might consist of the growing awareness of a need or want, and a search for and evaluation of information about the products and brands that might satisfy it. Post-purchase activities include the evaluation of the purchased item in use and the reduction of any anxiety which accompanies the purchase of expensive and infrequently-bought items. Each of these has implications for purchase and repurchase and they are amenable in differing degrees to marketer influence (Foxall 1987). Engel, et al. (1986, 5) define consumer behavior as "those acts of individuals directly involved in obtaining, using, and disposing of economic goods and services, including the decision processes that precede and determine these acts". Simple observation provides limited insight into the complex nature of consumer choice and researchers have increasingly sought the more sophisticated concepts and methods of investigation provided by behavioral sciences in order to understand, predict, and possibly control consumer behavior more effectively.

Psychology, social psychology, and sociology are the disciplines most widely employed in this endeavour which has become a substantial academic industry in its own right. This article presents a review of the literature, in the field of consumer buying behavior. The first section, describes, the importance of various factors including lifestyle and its impact on the consumer buying behavior. The second section describes the dominant, positivistic consumer perspectives.

The third section, presents a methodological and analytical overview of the traditional perspectives. The remainder of this section is devoted to presenting the highlights of the debate between the recent non-positivist perspectives and the traditional positivist-based approaches. This discussion surrounds the issues of fundamental assumptions and techniques of analysis of various alternative modes of enquiry. The main purpose of this article is to identify different streams of thought that could help and guide for future consumer researchers.

CONSUMER PERSONALITY FACTORS

There are two factors mainly influencing the consumers for decision making: Risk aversion and innovativeness. Risk aversion is a measure of how much consumers need to be certain and sure of what they are purchasing (Donthu and Gilliland, 1996). Highly risk adverse consumers need to be very certain about what they are buying. Whereas less risk adverse consumers can tolerate some risk and uncertainty in their purchases. The second variable, innovativeness, is a global measure which captures the degree to which consumers are willing to take chances and experiment with new ways of doing things (Donthu and Gilliland, 1996). The shopping motivation literature is abound with various measures of individual characteristics (e.g., innovative, venturesome, cosmopolitan, variety seeking), therefore, innovativeness and risk aversion were included in this study to capture several of these traits. Measures by Donthu and Gilliland (1996) were used to measure innovativeness and risk aversion.

CONSUMER PERCEPTION FACTORS

Perception is a mental process, whereby an individual selects data or information from the environment, organizes it and then draws significance or meaning from it.

PERCEIVED FIT

Perceived fit is an attitudinal measure of how appropriate a certain channel of distribution is for a specific product .Morrison and Roberts (1998) found that consumer's perception of the fit between a service/product and a channel is very influential in determining whether they will consider using that channel for a specific service. In fact, perceived fit was found to be more important than consumer's preferences for the distribution method or service.

QUALITY

It is our aim to provide the best product for the consumer and we believe that if the products have quality the consumer will pay the price, says Amal Pramanic, regional business director. Oral-B

PACKAGING

Packaging establishes a direct link with the consumers at the point of purchase as it can very well change the perceptions they have for a particular brand. A product has to draw the attention of the consumers through an outstanding packaging design. Earlier packaging was considered only a container to put a product in, but today, research in to the right packaging is beginning at the product development stage itself. Packaging innovation has been at the heart of Dabur's attempt to rap with the urban consumers. It spends large sums annually on packaging research. -“We have been laying emphasis on aesthetics, shelf appeal and convenience for consumer” says Deepak Manchandra, manager packaging development.

II. PROMOTION

The greatest challenge faced by companies today is holding and increasing their market share and value. This is always a strenuous exercise and one of the tools for the same is marketing. There is no specific game rule available for using these marketing tools .The reason is: each promotional tool has its own characteristics.

FAMILIARITY WITH A CHANNEL

Consumer's familiarity with a channel is a measure of the general experience they have with purchasing products through specific channels (i.e.. catalog, internet, and bricks-and-mortar retailer). Through frequent use consumers should become accustomed to using the channel which reduces their apprehension and anxiety in purchasing products through the channel.

BRAND AWARENESS

According to Rossiter and Prey (1987), brand awareness precedes all other steps in the buying process. A brand attitude cannot be performed, unless a consumer is aware of the brand. In memory theory, brand awareness is positioned as a vital first step in building the bundle of associations which are attached to the brand in memory (Stokes, 1985).

FAMILY INFLUENCE

A family exerts a complex influence on the behaviors of its members. Prior family influence research has focused on intergenerational rather than intergenerational influence in consumer

generationalisation. As has been compellingly demonstrated, parents influence children. Yet, consumption domains clearly exist where sibling efforts may also be exerted.

SHOPPING MOTIVES

Shopping motives are defined as consumer's wants and needs as they relate to outlets at which to shop. Two groups of motives, functional and nonfunctional, have been proposed by Sheth (1983). Functional motives are associated with time, place, and possession needs and refer to rational aspects of channel choice. Whereas non-functional motives related to social and emotional reasons for patronage. The functional motives included: convenience, price comparison, merchandise assortment. The nonfunctional motives entail: recreation.

III. THE TRADITIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON CONSUMER RESEARCH

This section outlines the perspectives that emerged during the traditional-positivist era in consumer research. Thus, a brief discussion on the early models of buyer behavior, proposed by economists is presented, followed by a discussion on each of the traditional perspectives in consumer research that emerged thereafter. These are the behavioral, cognitive, trait, motivational, attitudinal, and situational viewpoints. Overall, the objective of this section is to outline the features and the central arguments of each of these perspectives. While a detailed analytical review of the paradigms is presented in section two, at this stage it is worth noting, that the traditional perspectives while diverse with respect to the many aspects of consumer behaviour they investigate, are fundamentally similar in terms of their philosophical and methodological bases for undertaking the examination of consumer issues. That is, they are built on the common foundations of "rationalism" and share allegiance to the principles of a single traditional, positivist-based approach to consumer research.

IV. THE RATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

The economists were the first to dominate model building, in the area of buying behavior. The early economic view considered consumer behavior in terms of a single act of purchase itself, and post-purchase reactions. Economic theory holds that purchasing decisions are the result of largely "rational" and conscious economic calculations. Thus, the individual buyer seeks to spend his income on those goods that will deliver the most utility (satisfaction) according to his tastes and relative prices. The antecedents of this view can be traced back to Adam Smith (1776). Alfred Marshall (1890) consolidated the classical and neoclassical traditions in economics, into a refined theoretical framework which came to be known as the theory of marginal utility. His theoretical work aimed to simplify assumptions and thereby examine the effects of changes in

single variables (e.g., price) holding all other variables constant. While economic models such as the Marshallian theory of “marginal-utility” are useful to the extent that they provide behavioural hypotheses (e.g., the lower the price of a product the higher the sales), the validity of these hypotheses does not rest on whether all individuals act as calculating machines in making their purchasing decisions. For example, Eva Muller (1954) reported a study where only one-fourth of the consumers in her sample bought with any substantial degree of deliberation. The Marshallian model ignores the fundamental question of how product and brand preferences are formed. Several studies have identified the impacts of price differentials on consumers’ brand preferences; changes in product cues on demand variations; changes in price on demand sensitivity; and scarcity on consumer choice behavior amongst many others (Lewis et al. 1995).

V. THE BEHAVIOURAL PERSPECTIVE

As mentioned above, in contrast to the economic view which underscores the importance of internal mental processes in consumer decision making, the behavioural perspective emphasizes the role of external environmental factors in the process of learning, which it is argued causes behaviour. Thus, the behaviourists approach the consumer, as a “black box” and thereby assume that consumer behaviour is a conditioned response to external events. The behavioural perspective therefore focuses on external environmental cues (such as advertising) that stimulate consumer response through learning. The strategic emphasis, of the behavioural modification theories, for example, are to devise a set of expanded behaviour modification techniques (e.g., respondent conditioning; operant conditioning; vicarious learning etc.) that can be used to influence, modify, and control consumer behaviour (Peter and Nord 1982). While a number of researchers have proposed models to study learning principles e.g., Thorndike (1911); Watson and Rayner (1920), this view is represented by two major approaches to learning: classical conditioning and instrumental learning. Classical conditioning occurs when a stimulus that elicits a response is paired with another stimulus that initially does not elicit a response on its own. Over time, this second stimulus causes a similar response because it is associated with the first stimulus. The theory of classical conditioning is rooted in Pavlov’s research on digestion in animals. Pavlov induced classically conditioned learning by pairing a neutral stimulus (a bell) with a stimulus known to cause a salivation response in dogs (dried meat powder). The powder was an unconditioned stimulus (UCS) because it was naturally capable of causing the response. Over time, the bell became a conditioned stimulus (CS) resulting in a conditioned response (CR). Thus, conditioned effects are more likely to occur after the conditioned and unconditioned stimuli have been paired a number of times. The basic form of classical conditioning demonstrated by Pavlov primarily applies to responses controlled by the autonomic (e.g., salivation) and nervous (e.g., eyeblink) systems. That is, it focuses on visual and olfactory cues

that induce hunger or thirst. When these cues are consistently paired with conditioned stimuli, such as brand names, consumers may learn to be hungry or thirsty, when later exposed to brand cues. Classical conditioning can have similar effects for more complex reactions. Even a credit card becomes a conditioned cue that triggers greater spending, especially since it is a stimulus that is presented only in situations where consumers are spending money. People learn that they can make larger purchases when using credit cards, and they also have been found to leave larger tips than they do when using cash (Feinberg 1986).

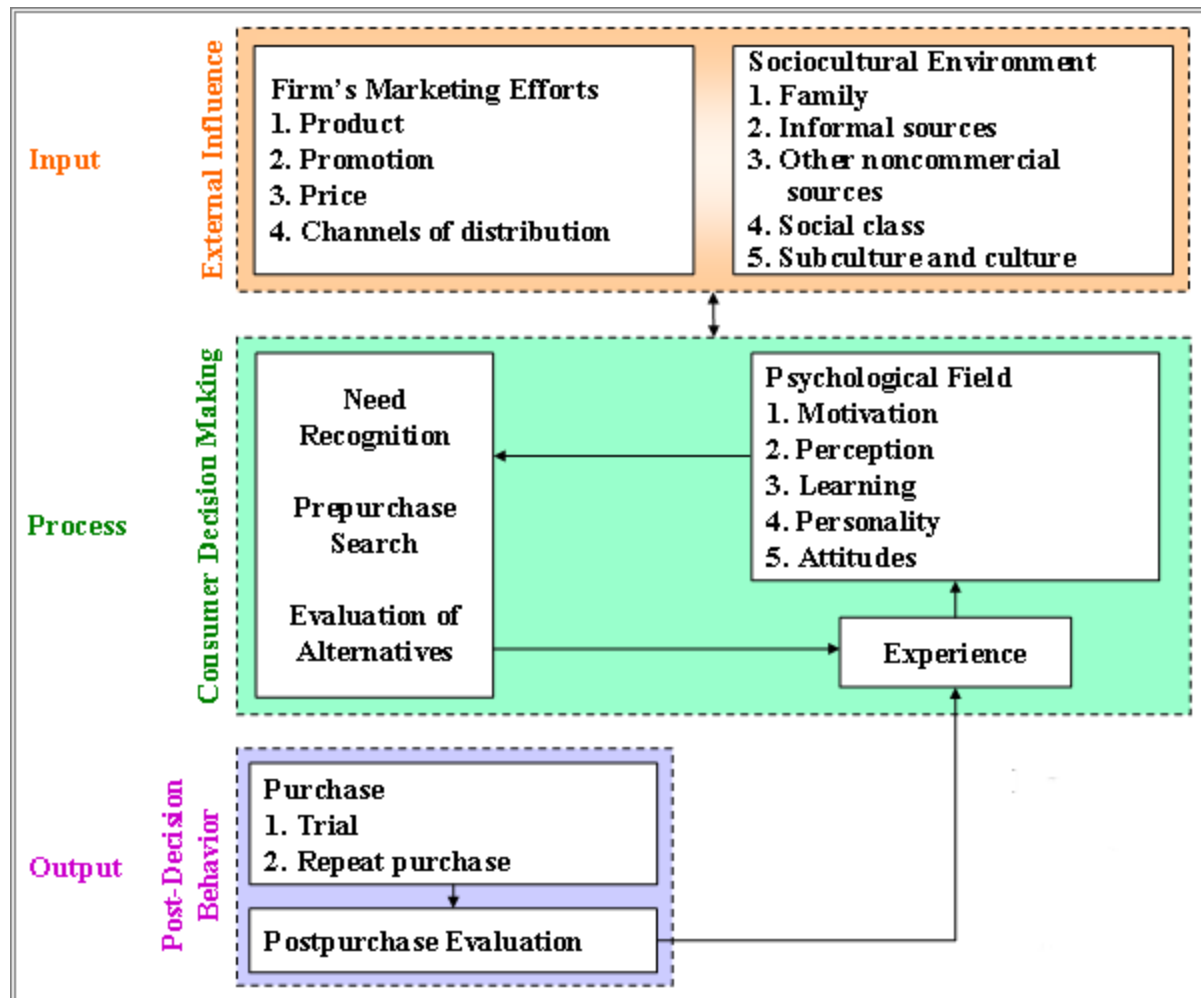
VI. THE COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE

In contrast to behavioural theories of learning, the cognitive perspective stresses the role of information processing in consumer decision making. This perspective views people as problem solvers who actively use information from the world around them to master their environment. However, much debate surrounds the issue of whether or when people are actually aware of these learning processes. On the one hand, there is some evidence for the existence of unconscious procedural knowledge. That is, people apparently do process at least some information in an automatic, passive way, which is a condition that has been termed mindlessness (Langer 1983). Nonetheless, many modern theorists are beginning to regard some instances of conditioning as cognitive processes, especially where expectations are formed about the linkages between stimuli and responses. Studies using masking effects, wherein it is difficult for subjects to learn CS/UCS associations, show substantial reductions in conditioning (Allen and Madden 1985). The information processing theory (or cognitive theory) is central to the variety of hierarchy of effect models which, as Barry and Howard (1990, 121) explain, posit that consumers go through a “variety of stages, namely cognitive, affective, and conative, in responding to advertising, and other marketing messages”. Accordingly, “the dominant pattern of relationship between the three stages is that cognition (thought) precedes both affect (feeling) and conation (behaviour)” (Marsden and Littler 1998, 7). The most widely accepted position that opposes behaviourism is that thought and feeling can produce change in action directly. This is cognitivism; in its strongest form it suggests that attitudes control behaviour, and reinforcement only acts by changing attitudes. Overall, the implication for marketing strategy is that - “Consumers must be exposed to information [e.g., advertising] if it is to influence their behaviour” (Sternthal and Craig 1982, 314). In addition, the cognitive theories have been criticized for assuming that individuals are complex information processing entities. Nevertheless, the problem solving perspective has tended to dominate the field of consumer research. And as discussed next, decision making models that have governed consumer theory, are in fact based on the fundamentals of the cognitive principle.

VII. CONSUMER DECISION MAKING MODELS

The three major „comprehensive“ models for consumer decision making were proposed by Nicosia 1966; Engel et al. 1968; and Howard and Sheth 1969. These attempt to trace the psychological state of individual consumers from the point at which they become aware of the possibility of satisfying a material need by purchasing and consuming a product to their final evaluation of the consequences of having done so. Engel et al., (1986) suggest that high involvement with a product results in an extended problem solving process which starts with problem recognition, followed by an information search, alternative evaluation, purchase, and post purchase activities. This process is aided by an active information processing sequence involving exposure, attention, comprehension, yielding/acceptance, and retention. The choice determined by the outcome of the information process-aided decision sequence may have satisfying or dissonant outcomes: Festinger (1957) first introduced the theory of cognitive dissonance for the consumer, which influence future purchasing. Engel and Blackwell (1982) also point out that environmental influences may affect the decision sequence acting on the

consumer's motivation and intention, and that unpredictable factors (such as non-availability of the desired brand or insufficient funds) may result in modification of the actual choice made by a consumer. This model assumes that observed consumer behaviour is preceded by intrapersonal psychological states and events (attitudeintention- purchase sequence). Moreover, the model depicts these psychological events as outputs of the processing of information, taking for granted that consumers seek and use information as part of their rational problem solving and decision making processes.



CONCLUSION

Conditions of competition are changing rapidly today and companies that strategize and react to these changes promptly and quickly are the most successful. Due to technological developments, physical differences of products have decreased. Differentiation should be made on the meanings products bear instead of on their physical features. A successful brand differentiation can be possible by building personality. Thanks to brand personality, consumer sees brand as friend since it provides him with emotional benefits. Overall, it is argued that the study of consumer behaviour is rapidly evolving as researchers recognize and implement new techniques and transdisciplinary perspectives to understand the nature of purchase and consumption behaviour. This wider view attempts to study consumer behaviour in the light of rapidly evolving lifestyles, values, priorities, and social contexts. Various theories on consumer research were not tested empirically until the middle twentieth century. The distinctly practical emphasis awaited development of the field of marketing in the business curriculum. In particular the buying

process of consumer behaviour is of more importance to marketing practitioners than the consumption process. From a practitioner's perspective consumer research is pertinent so as to enable him to understand changing consumer needs, wants, and motivations and thereby devise the most appropriate mix for his market. Then, to the marketer the dynamic nature of consumer behaviour implies rapid product development, changing communications, and distribution strategies in order to be more effective. It is this (marketing) concept, as articulated by several marketing scholars (e.g., Alderson 1965; Bagozzi 1975; Kotler 1972; Kotler and Levy 1969) that captures many of the more essential characteristics of modern marketing which has tended to dominate thinking in the field. Those whose research motivation is consumer influence largely embrace the research paradigm of positivism in which rigorous empirical techniques are used to discover generalizable explanations and laws. Consumer decision making processes and behavioural outcomes are studied to bring about prediction and change (Ozanne and Hudson 1989). However, the arena of consumer research goes far beyond the managerial perspective, when primary focus is placed on consumption. Holbrook and Hirschman (1982), among others, strongly advocate that the purchase decision is only a small component in the constellation of events involved in the consumption experience. Holbrook (1987) suggests that consumer researchers must expand their view to examine "all facets of the value potentially provided when some living organism acquires, uses, or disposes of any product that might achieve a goal, fulfill a need, or satisfy a want." The decision process then assumes secondary importance as compared with consumption. This broadened perspective has been recently reflected in the literature, as published research focuses on the subjective aspects of the consumption experience, such as hedonic consumption. Research methodology moves beyond positivism to naturalism (ethnography, semiotics, literary criticism, and historicism) in order to achieve a broader understanding of the impact of consumption on the consumer without any particular intent to change or influence the process. While some outcomes may be significant to marketing practice the overall goal of such research endeavour is to achieve better understanding of consumer behaviour.

STUDY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Type of study: The study is exploratory and qualitative in nature as it is carried out to get the informational about the buying behavior of orthodontists and dentists for Clearpath aligners.

Location of study: Chennai, Tamil Nadu (Dental clinics and Hospitals).

Study subjects: Orthodontists & Dentists.

Sample size: 150

Sampling method: Simple random & Convenience SAMPLING

Data collection tools: Face- to-face Interview with patients using structured questionnaire, In-depth interviews with orthodontists and dentists.

Data analysis: using MS-Excel

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. Informed consent will be taken from the respondents.
2. The privacy and confidentiality of the information will be maintained.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. Only small population of the consumers were studied, which may not be enough to consumers throw correct picture.
2. The consumers were reluctant to answer the questions and the response may be biased.
3. The answer given by the consumers were vague to deduct exact figures.

DATA ANALYSIS

I had made dentists and orthodontists aware about the Clearpath aligners and its functioning. Some of them knew about the aligners and most of them did not know about it. And after getting

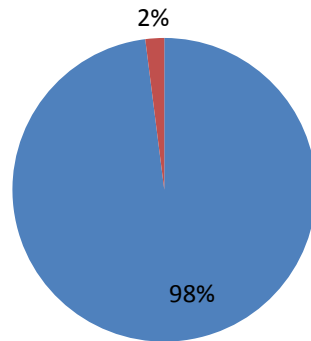
the information many of them have shown interest for aligners. I have collected their response and analyzed those.

While collecting data directly from the consumers, many questions had been asked and had been noted down the data. Here are some representations of my analysis.

1. Which treatment modality do you prefer for correction of dental malocclusion?

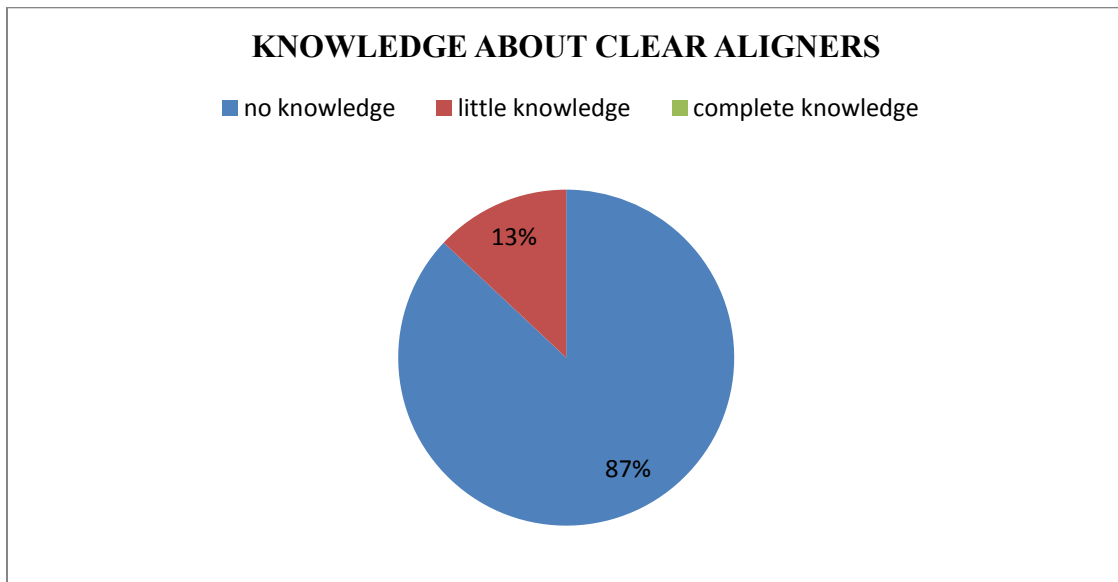
PREFERENCE OF TREATMENT MODALITY FOR MALOCCLUSION CORRECTION

■ braces on facial/buccal aspect ■ lingual braces ■ clear aligners



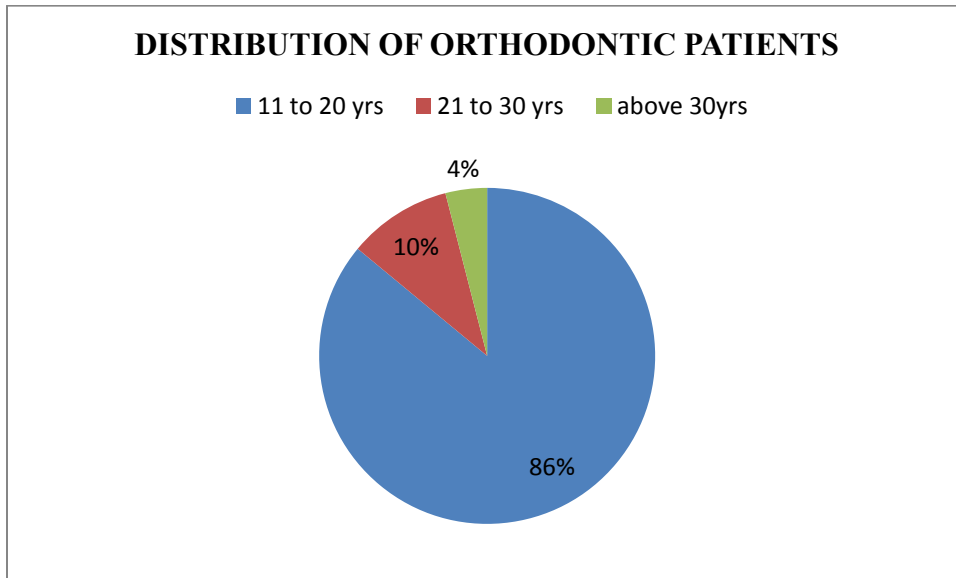
INTERPRETATION: As per this figure 98% of the population studied preferred braces on facial / buccal aspect and 2% for lingual braces. Most of the dentists are not aware for clear aligners or they don't want to switch to new treatment modality. They have belief only on the conventional treatment modality.

2. Do you know about Clearpath orthodontic aligner?



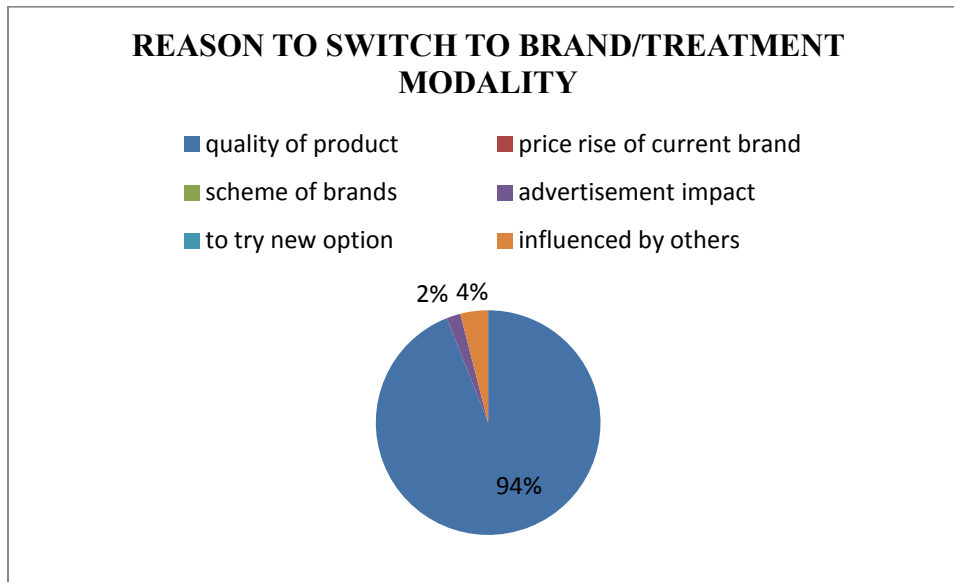
INTERPRETATION: This figure shows that 87 % of the sample did not have knowledge about clear aligners, 13 % had little knowledge but none of them had complete knowledge about clear aligners. Most of them had misconception that these aligners are used as retainers after fixed orthodontic treatment. They were unaware of the fact that these aligners are used to treat dental malocclusion and its advantages.

3. Most of your orthodontic patients fall in which age group



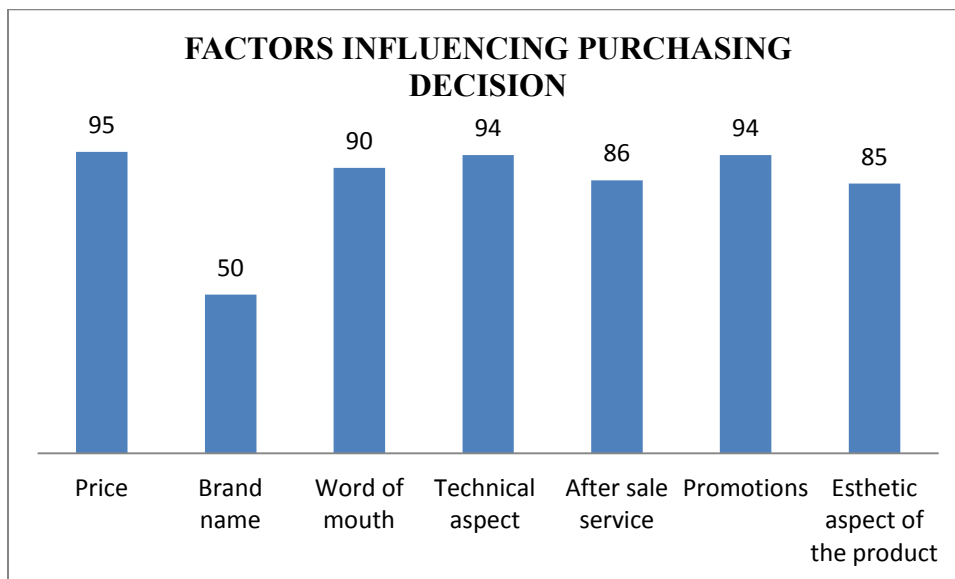
INTERPRETATION: The above figure shows that 86% of the orthodontic patients fall in age group 11-20 yrs and decreases with the increase in age. For 11 -20 yrs age group parents decide about the treatment option and are not much inclined for invisible braces for their children. Age group 21-30 yrs and above 30 yrs prefers invisible/clear aligners in terms of esthetics since they fall in marriageable age and are more social.

4. For which reason do you switch to a brand/ treatment modality?



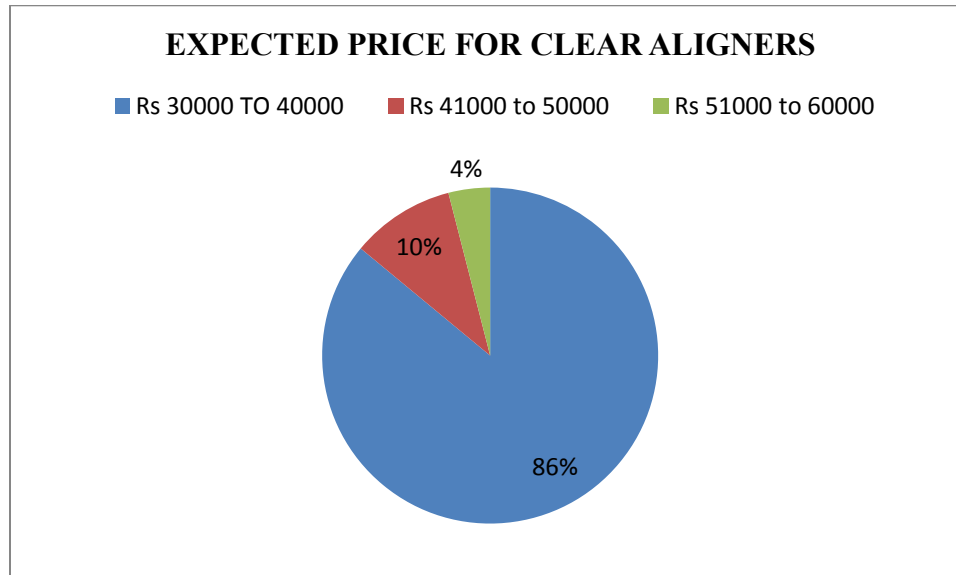
INTERPRETATION: From the above figure we interpret that majority of the dentists (94 %) choose the product for its quality and some choose due to impact of advertisements and being influenced by others.

5. Select the factors which influence your purchasing decision



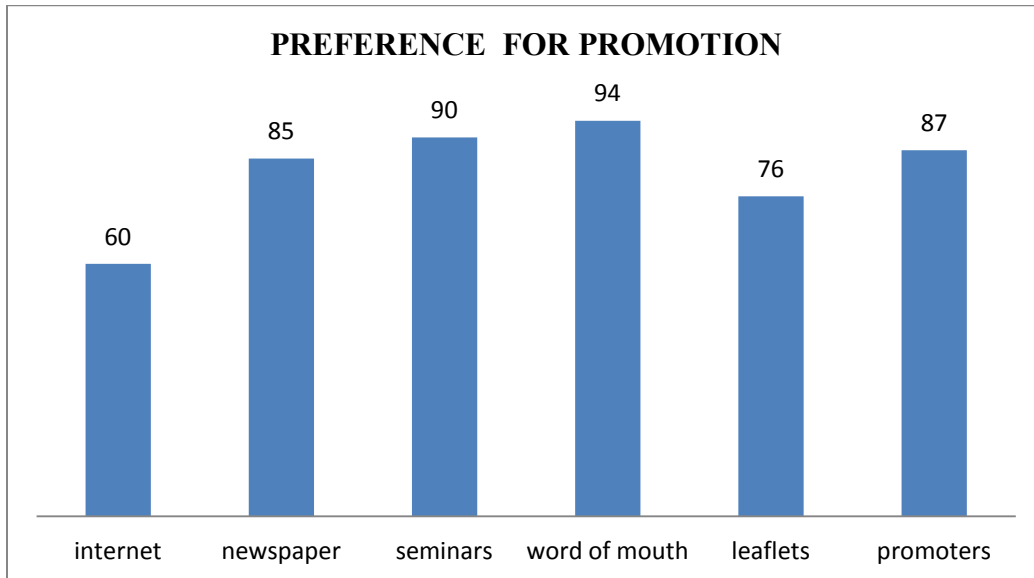
INTERPRETATION: Figure shows that price of the product, word of mouth, technical aspect and promotions are the top factors which influence purchasing decision of a dental treatment product. These factors are followed by after sale service, esthetic aspect of the product and brand name. Most of the dentists were less interested due to the high cost of aligners (Rs 40000 to Rs 60000).

6. What is the price range you are considering for clear aligners?



INTERPRETATION: The above figure shows that 86% of the study population expected the cost of aligners to be in the range of Rs 30000 to Rs 40000, 10% of the sample for Rs 41000 to 50000 and rest for Rs 51000 to Rs 60000. So it can be analyzed that reduction in price can lead to increase in sales of the aligners.

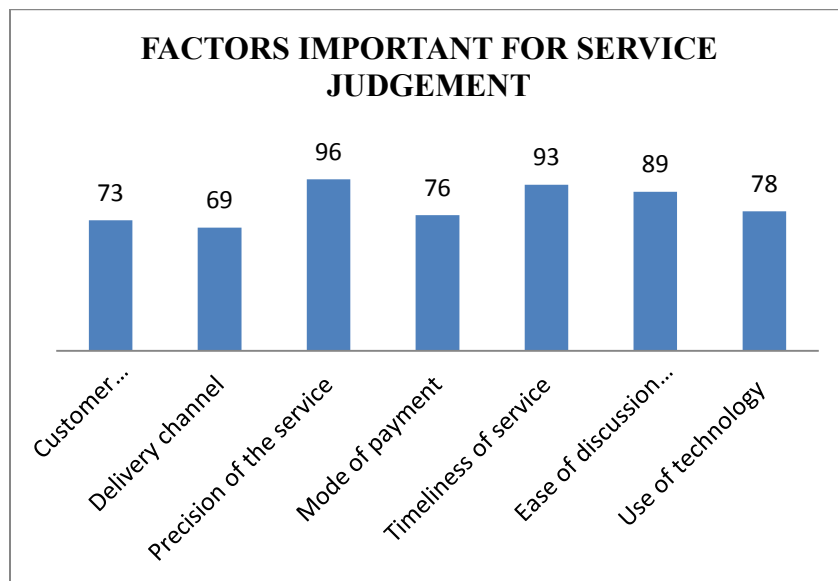
7. What kind of promotion would attract you to buy clear aligners?



INTERPRETATION: The above graph shows that most of the dentists (90%-94%) get attracted for the treatment product promoted by word of mouth , seminars , promoters (personal visit to their clinic) followed by internet , newspaper and leaflets.

For the patients, the most effective promotion methods are television advertisements, celebrity endorsement, magazines, attractive banner and hoardings.

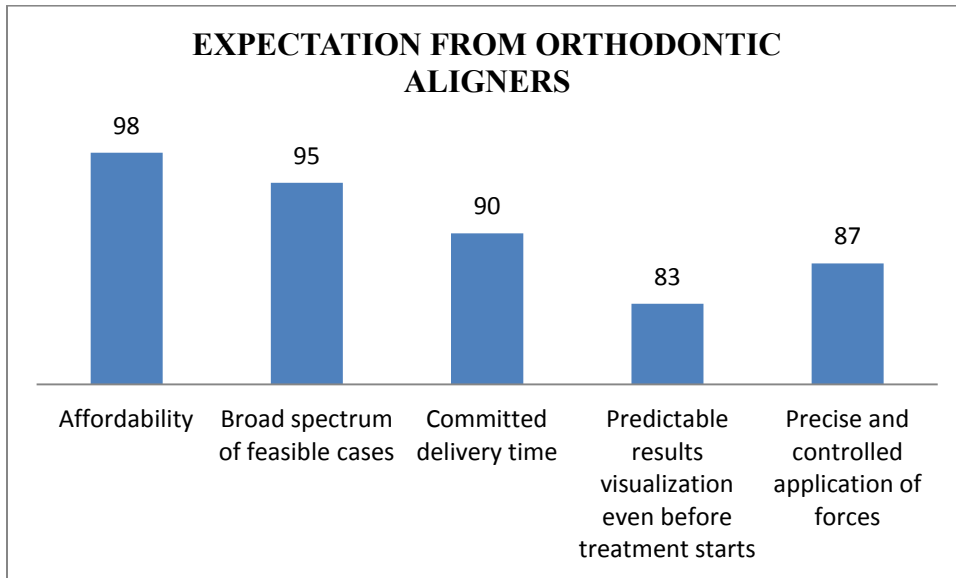
8. To what extent do these factors are important for your service judgment?



INTERPREATION: As per the above figure, precision of service, timeliness of the service and ease of discussion with the orthodontists are the most important factors chosen by the study population for service judgment. These factors are followed by customer communication channel, delivery channel, use of technology and mode of payment.

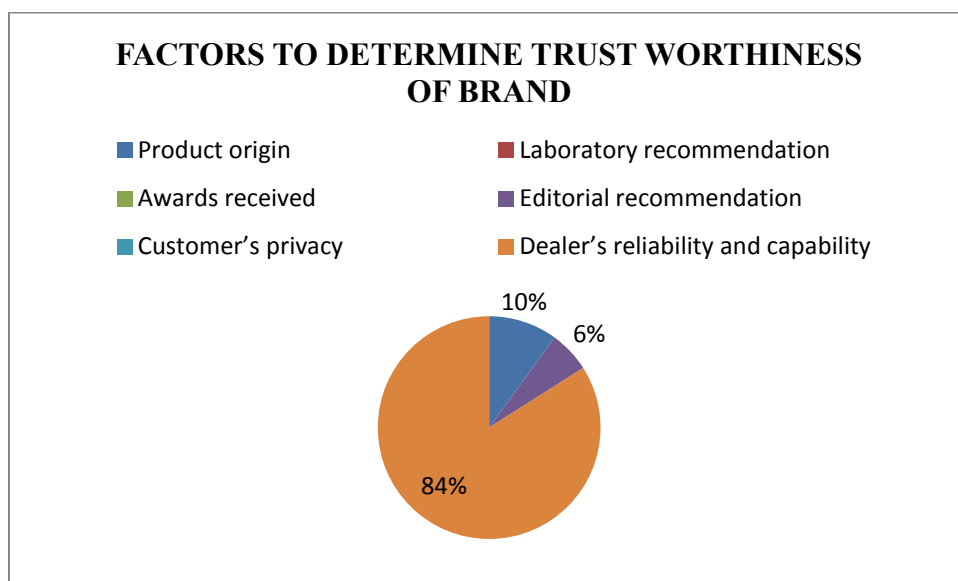
Dentists prefer the correct, timely service and clarity of the facts is must for procedure to be followed.

9. What do you look for in an orthodontic aligner?



INTERPRETATION: As per the above graph, most important expectations from the aligners are affordability, correction of broad spectrum of cases followed by committed delivery time, predictability of the results and controlled application of forces.

10. How do you determine the trust worthiness of brand you are using?



INTERPRETATION: The above figure shows that 84% of the dentists trust the brand on dealer's reliability and capacity, 10% on product origin and 6% on editorial recommendation.

CONCLUSION

1. Lack of awareness about the Clearpath aligners among the dentist and resistance to try new treatment modality is the reason for less demand for aligners among the consumers.
2. This product is affordable by upper middle class and high class patients, preferred mostly by patients of age above 17 yrs since they focus more on esthetics and are more social.
3. Major factors to switch to a new treatment option are quality of the product and influence by colleagues/ patients who demand for clear aligners.
4. Factors influencing purchase decisions are price of the aligners, word of mouth, technical aspect of the product, timeliness and accuracy of the services.
5. Effective promotion methods are seminars, workshops, newspapers, sales executive's personal visit to dental clinics.
6. Dentists expect that the aligners must treat broad spectrum of cases.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Awareness can be increased by conducting workshops by a trained professional or senior practioners.
- 2) Most dental surgeons believed that clear aligners can treat only mild to moderate malocclusion and can be used adjacent to fixed orthodontic treatment. This misconception can be removed by continuous motivation, awareness and workshops and seminars for the dental surgeons.
- 3). Awareness can be increased by advertising about the product in leading television channels
- 4)Sales Team Initiative: Sales team could meet existing dissatisfied clients and change client dissatisfaction into client delightedness
- 5) Dental surgeons were not willing to buy clear aligners. This could be improved by reducing cost or market penetration by developing new strategy like promotional strategy.
- 6) Patient education using print media/online media

- **OTHER SUGGESTIONS GIVEN BY THE DENTAL SURGEONS**
- 1) Clear path aligners are too expensive and their cost should be reduced.
- 2) Proper workshops should be conducted to train the dentists to carry out the desired treatment by international speakers or senior practitioners.
- 3) Patient awareness to be increased by advertisement and approaching the public
- 4) Standees to be installed in huge hospitals.

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ANNEXURE

Questionnaire on Consumer Buying Behavior for ClearPath Orthodontic aligners

Dear doctor,

I am Dr. Samriddhi Jain. This is a research on consumer buying behavior for Clear Path orthodontic aligner. I need some information in this regard and this process would be taking some of your valuable time. It is purely for the academic purpose and confidentiality of the information provided will be maintained.

1. Which treatment modality do you prefer for correction of dental malocclusion?

- 1) Traditional method using braces on facial / buccal aspect
- 2) Lingual braces
- 3) Clear aligners

2. Do you know about Clearpath orthodontic aligner?

- 1) Never heard
- 2) Little information
- 3) Complete knowledge

3. Most of your orthodontic patients fall in which age group

- 1) 11-20yrs
- 2) 21-30yrs

3) Above 31yrs

4. For which reason do you switch to a brand/ treatment modality?

- 1) Quality of product
- 2) Price rise of current brand
- 3) Scheme of brands
- 4) Advertisement impact
- 5) To try new option
- 6) Influenced by others

5. Choose the factors which influence your purchasing decision

Price

Brand name

Word of mouth

Technical aspect

After sale service

Promotions

Esthetic aspect of the product

6. What is the price range you are considering for clear aligners?

- 1) 30000 to 40000
- 2) 41000 to 50000
- 3) 51000 to 60000

7. What kind of promotion would attract you to buy clear aligners?

- 1) Internet
- 2) Newspaper
- 3) Seminars
- 4) Word of mouth
- 5) Leaflets
- 6) Promoters

8. Which factors are important for your service judgment?

Customer communication channel
Delivery channel
Precision of the service
Mode of payment
Timeliness of service
Ease of discussion with experts/ orthodontists
Use of technology

9. What do you look for in an orthodontic aligner?

Affordability
Broad spectrum of feasible cases
Committed delivery time
Predictable results visualization even before treatment starts
Precise and controlled application of forces

10. How do you determine the trust worthiness of brand you are using?

- 1) Product origin
- 2) Laboratory recommendation
- 3) Awards received
- 4) Editorial recommendation
- 5) Customer's privacy
- 6) Dealer's reliability and capability
- 7) Transaction security

