

## Rational Distribution Channel Mix for Lifestyle Brands in India – An Empirical Study

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### ABSTRACT

Indian lifestyle brands need to understand the importance of their retailing distribution channels in relation to their overall brand image, products / categories they offer, target consumer group and their implications on the overall brand profitability and consumer perceptions over the brand image rather applying standard thumb rules, assumptions and misconceptions followed by other generalist brands or even short-term lucrative deals offered by distribution channel partners. It is evident that only few Indian brands are able to create true lifestyle brand image in their employees, investors, competitors and consumers mind and trueness level of majority of Indian lifestyle brands is still a question. Majority of developing and developed Indian lifestyle brands assume that the success of a lifestyle brand is measured basis the revenue or profit they generate through having presence across wider distribution channels and are impatient / unaware of implicit long-term strategical benefits of creating a true lifestyle brand image in consumers mind using a rational distribution channel mix strategy. It is true that India is one of the countries with consumers belonging to the widest range of Religions, Regions, Languages, Sub-Cultures and Economic backgrounds which makes it very difficult for any lifestyle brand to have their presence across the country through various distribution channels as each one of them have their own pros and cons for the brand. This makes it furthermore important for lifestyle brands in India to be more careful and efficient in ensuring the adaptation of rational distribution channel mix. It is observed that the majority of Indian lifestyle brands believe they have adopted the right distribution channel mix and it is yielding the best possible revenue and profit. This belief / assumption always distracts them from analysing the pros and cons of each distribution channel with respect to the overall brand image and they rather spend most of their time in finding sales channels which are new or latent in nature to be added to the existing distribution channel mix. In this research, we have analysed twelve months actual sales data across various distribution channels available in India of few select lifestyle brands and drawn insights to recommend a rational distribution channel mix for lifestyle brands in India.

**Keywords:** Indian Retail, National Brand, Lifestyle Brand, Indian Lifestyle Brand, Distribution, Distribution Channel Mix, Retail Distribution Channels in India, Brand Image, Store Choice, Store Locations, Store Count Ratio.

### How to Cite this Paper:

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