



**BIJU PATNAIK INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
& MANAGEMENT STUDIES (BIITM), BHUBANESWAR**

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Plot No. F/4, Chandaka Industrial Estate, Infocity, Patia, Bhubaneswar-24

**SUMMER INTERNSHIP
PROJECT 2025**

REPORT TITLE

Penetration of New Launch in South Bhubaneswar

SUBMITTED BY

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MBA Batch: 2024-26

University Regn. No.: 2406258003

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Area Executive

ITC, Bhubaneswar



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CERTIFICATE OF FACULTY/INTERNAL GUIDE

This is to certify that Mr. Abhijit Behera, bearing university registration no 2406258003 of 2024-26 batch, has completed his summer internship at ITC Ltd. From 04/06/2025 to 19/07/2025 under the supervision of Mr. Jyoti Prakash Swain, Area Executive ITC (Corporate Guide) and has submitted this project report under my guidance in partial fulfilment of the requirements for award of the degree of Master of Business Administration at Biju Patnaik Institute of Information Technology and Management Studies, Bhubaneswar. To the best of my knowledge and belief, this project report has been prepared by the student and has not been submitted to any other institute or university for the award of any degree or diploma.

Date:
Place: Bhubaneswar

Signature of the Faculty/Internal Guide
Name: Dr. Ankita Agarwal
Designation: Asst. Prof Marketing

DECLARATION

I, Mr. Abhijit Behera Bearing university registration no 2406258003 (2024-26 batch), hereby declare that the project report titled “**Penetration of New Launch in South Bhubaneswar**” is based on my internship at ITC Ltd. during the period 04/06/2025 to 19/07/2025 and is an original work done by me under the supervision of Mr. Jyoti Prakash Swain, Area Executive ITC (Corporate Guide) and Dr. Ankita Agarwal Asst. Prof Marketing (faculty guide) .This report is being submitted to Biju Patnaik Institute of Information Technology and Management Studies, Bhubaneswar, affiliated to Biju Patnaik University of Technology, Odisha, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Business Administration. This project report has not been submitted to any other institute/university for the award of any degree or diploma.

Date:

Place:

Signature

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to all the individuals who have contributed to the successful completion of my project work.

First and foremost, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our esteemed company guide, Mr. Jyoti Prakash swain, for their unwavering support and mentorship. His expertise, guidance, and valuable insights have been instrumental in shaping the direction of my project.

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I would like to express my profound gratitude to my mother and family members for their unwavering love, encouragement, and continuous support throughout my academic journey.

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I would also like to extend my gratitude to the employees of ITC Limited who generously shared their time, knowledge, and insights. Their cooperation, willingness to assist, and valuable inputs have enriched my project and expanded my understanding of the subject matter.

I am indebted to the retailers who participated in my project, graciously providing their inputs and sharing their experiences.

Thank you all for being an integral part of my journey.

Sincerely,

Mr. Abhijit Behera

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This live project titled “**A Study on Market Penetration of ITC’s New Cigarette Launch – Classic ICON in South Bhubaneswar**” was carried out to understand how well the new product has reached customers and how it is being accepted in the market. The main aim was to look at factors like product awareness, taste, packaging, price, availability in stores, and the impact of promotions on customer response.

ITC Limited, one of India’s most established FMCG and tobacco companies, introduced Classic ICON in 2024 to strengthen its presence in the cigarette segment. Since tobacco is a highly competitive market where consumer preferences change quickly, measuring the success of a new launch is crucial.

The study revealed some interesting insights:

- Awareness levels are very high – almost 9 out of 10 people surveyed knew about Classic ICON.
- Most customers (81%) have already tried it, and many of them purchase it regularly, especially on a weekly basis.
- People said availability and advertising were the biggest reasons they picked up the brand, while word-of-mouth also played a role.
- Local grocery stores turned out to be the main buying point (91%), proving the importance of retailer networks.
- On the satisfaction side, 3 out of 4 customers liked the taste, and a large majority (86%) were happy with the packaging.
- Only a few people (7%) faced any issue finding it, showing that ITC’s distribution is working well.

From these findings, the project suggests ITC should work more closely with retailers, give extra focus to high-selling outlets, and push ICON more strongly compared to slower-moving brands.

Overall, Classic ICON has made a strong start in South Bhubaneswar. Customers are aware, satisfied, and the product is widely available. With continued focus on retailer relationships and sharper promotions, it has the potential to become one of the most preferred brands in the region.

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CHAPTER –1

Introduction

The cigarette industry in India is characterized by intense brand rivalry, evolving consumer tastes, and the persistent challenge of maintaining loyalty in a market where switching behaviour is common. Players in the industry continuously innovate in product design, flavour, and packaging to capture and retain their consumer base.

ITC Limited, India's largest tobacco company and market leader in the cigarette segment, introduced Classic ICON in March 2024 as part of its strategy to reinforce its RSFT (Regular Size Filter Tip) portfolio. Positioned as a premium offering, Classic ICON incorporates dual filters (normal + activated carbon) for smoother smoking, top-leaf premium tobacco for enhanced taste, and modern, sophisticated packaging to appeal to aspirational and brand-conscious consumers. The product is primarily targeted at young adults, urban professionals, and upwardly mobile smokers who value both status and quality in their smoking choices.

South Bhubaneswar, as one of the fastest-growing urban centres in Odisha, provides a fertile ground for assessing the performance of Classic ICON. The area houses a diverse consumer base consisting of college students, working professionals, entrepreneurs, and business communities, making it a microcosm of ITC's intended target market. Moreover, the city's growing café culture, nightlife, and modern retail environment contribute to shifting smoking preferences, increasing the relevance of lifestyle-driven cigarette brands.

This study aims to:

- Evaluate the market penetration, consumer awareness, and acceptance levels of Classic ICON.
- Measure customer satisfaction in terms of taste, smoothness, filter effectiveness, and packaging appeal.
- Examine ITC's distribution efficiency and retailer engagement strategies, including retailer perceptions and product push mechanisms.
- Assess the role of advertising, promotional campaigns, and point-of-sale visibility in influencing purchase behaviour.
- Understand the competitive positioning of Classic ICON against other leading RSFT brands in the segment.

By exploring these aspects, the research seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of Classic ICON's early performance and future potential in South Bhubaneswar, offering valuable insights for ITC's marketing and brand-building strategies.

Scope of the Study

The scope of this project is focused but multi-dimensional, aiming to provide a holistic understanding of Classic ICON's market performance in South Bhubaneswar. The study is restricted geographically but wide-ranging in terms of consumer, retailer, and marketing insights.

- **Geographical Scope:**

The research is geographically confined to South Bhubaneswar, which includes key residential and commercial areas such as BJB Nagar, Old Town, Kalpana, Rajmahal, Sundarpada, and Bapuji Nagar. These localities collectively represent a mix of student populations, professionals, and business communities, thereby offering a diverse demographic sample for the study.

- **Consumer Awareness:**

The study seeks to understand the extent of awareness about Classic ICON among smokers, including recognition of the brand, recall of its features (dual filter, premium tobacco, packaging), and perception compared to other ITC and non-ITC cigarette brands.

- **Consumer Buying Behavior:**

A detailed analysis will be undertaken regarding purchase frequency, preferred buying channels (retail shops, kiosks, or grocery stores), and influencing factors such as price sensitivity, taste preference, filter smoothness, packaging appeal, and promotional exposure.

- **Distribution and Availability:**

The project evaluates the availability of Classic ICON across local retail outlets, grocery stores, and kiosks, along with ITC's distribution efficiency. It will assess whether retailers are sufficiently engaged and whether product visibility at the point of sales influences consumer choices.

- **Consumer Satisfaction:**

The study will measure consumer satisfaction levels in terms of product quality, smoking experience, smoothness, filter design, and packaging. This helps determine whether Classic ICON is meeting the expectations of its target demographic.

- **Role of Promotion and Influence:**

The research will explore how advertising campaigns, retailer push, and peer recommendations contribute to creating awareness, encouraging trials, and influencing repeat purchases.

- **Strategic Recommendations:**

Based on findings, the study will propose recommendations for improving market penetration, strengthening retailer relationships, and enhancing promotional strategies to boost the long-term success of Classic ICON.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of the project is to analyze the market response and acceptance of Classic ICON in South Bhubaneswar. To achieve this, the study sets the following detailed objectives:

- To assess the level of brand awareness and recall of Classic ICON among smokers in South Bhubaneswar and to identify the extent to which consumers are informed about its premium features.
- To identify the strategies adopted by ITC for penetrating the market (distribution reach, pricing, packaging, promotions) and to evaluate their effectiveness in building visibility.
- To evaluate consumer satisfaction with regard to taste, smoothness, price affordability, filter effectiveness, and packaging design, and to identify key strengths and gaps in product performance.
- To provide practical and actionable suggestions for enhancing Classic ICON's sales performance, distribution efficiency, promotional effectiveness, and customer retention in South Bhubaneswar.

Methodology

The present study adopts a descriptive research design with exploratory elements, aiming to capture both consumer perceptions and market realities surrounding the launch and penetration of Classic ICON in South Bhubaneswar.

Research Design

- Descriptive: To evaluate awareness levels, consumer preferences, and satisfaction with Classic ICON.
- Exploratory: To gain insights into the effectiveness of ITC's penetration strategies and the influence of retailers, advertisements, and peer recommendations in shaping consumer behaviour.

Data Sources

- **Primary Data:** Collected through a structured questionnaire administered to 100 respondents (smokers residing in South Bhubaneswar). The questionnaire covered awareness, buying behaviour, satisfaction levels, and perceptions about Classic ICON. Personal interactions with select retailers were also conducted to gather supplementary insights on distribution and sales strategies.
- **Secondary Data:** Obtained from ITC's official annual reports, market research studies, academic journals, government publications, and credible online sources that highlight consumer trends in the cigarette industry.

Sample Size

A total of **100 respondents** were surveyed. The sample included individuals from different age groups (18–40 years), occupations (students, professionals, entrepreneurs), and gender segments, ensuring diversity in responses.

Duration

The field survey and analysis were conducted over a 6-week period.

Review of Literature

- Kotler & Keller (2019) – Marketing Management: Emphasizes that penetration is one of the most critical growth strategies, especially in saturated or competitive markets. In the cigarette industry, this is particularly significant given brand loyalty and frequent switching behaviour.
- Gupta & Kumar (2021) – Consumer Behaviour in Tobacco Industry: Suggest that while smokers are highly brand-conscious, they often switch based on price sensitivity, promotional schemes, and availability. This reinforces the importance of affordability and visibility for sustaining loyalty.
- Shukla (2020) – Retail Penetration Studies: Highlights the role of retailers as brand influencers, noting that in FMCG and tobacco markets, shelf visibility, product placement, and retailer push strategies significantly affect consumer purchase decisions.
- ITC Annual Report (2023): Identifies sampling initiatives, point-of-sale branding, and trade promotions as key strategies adopted by ITC to ensure effective product penetration and consumer trial.

- Srivastava (2018) – Impact of Advertising on Tobacco Brands: Explains how government restrictions on tobacco advertising have reduced the scope for traditional promotions, thereby increasing reliance on in-store branding, peer influence, and word-of-mouth as critical tools.
- Kumar (2017) – Distribution Networks in FMCG: Argues that effective penetration strategies depend heavily on robust distribution systems and strong retailer relationships, particularly in local markets where competition is intense.
- Banerjee & Das (2020) – Youth Smoking Preferences in Urban India: Found that urban youth are more influenced by peer groups and packaging aesthetics, making them an important demographic for new premium cigarette brands.
- Chatterjee (2019) – Consumer Switching Behaviour in Cigarette Industry: Notes that switching between brands is common in the tobacco sector, especially in the RSFT and premium segments, where consumers are often drawn to novelty or better perceived value.

Limitations of the Study

Despite its detailed approach, the study faced certain limitations that may have influenced the scope and generalizability of findings:

1. **Geographical Restriction:** The research was limited to South Bhubaneswar. Consumer behaviour in other regions of Odisha or India may vary due to socio-economic, cultural, and demographic differences.
2. **Sample Size:** A total of 100 respondents were surveyed, which is relatively small compared to the total consumer base of cigarettes in South Bhubaneswar. A larger sample size could have provided more statistically reliable insights.
3. **Convenience Sampling Bias:** Since the study used convenience sampling, the responses may not fully represent the entire smoker population. There is a chance of bias as respondents were chosen based on accessibility and willingness to participate.
4. **Reluctance to Disclose:** Tobacco consumption is a socially sensitive topic, and some respondents may have been hesitant to disclose true smoking habits, leading to potential bias in responses.
5. **Short Duration:** The project was conducted over six weeks, which limited the ability to observe long-term trends in brand adoption, consumer switching, and loyalty development.
6. **Focus on a Single Brand:** The study concentrated only on Classic ICON, without deeply analysing ITC's other cigarette brands or competitors' broader strategies. This restricted a more comprehensive industry-

level understanding.

7. External Factors Excluded: Government regulations, anti-tobacco campaigns, taxation policies, and competitor promotions were not studied in depth, though they significantly influence the cigarette industry.
8. Dynamic Market Nature: The cigarette and FMCG sectors are highly dynamic, with consumer preferences, price sensitivity, and retailer strategies changing rapidly. Hence, findings may not remain valid over an extended period.
9. Retailer Perspectives: While some retailer insights were gathered, the study did not include a large-scale retailer survey, which could have added depth to understanding product penetration at the distribution level.
10. Advertising Restrictions: Due to statutory advertising bans on tobacco, the impact of promotional campaigns could not be fully measured, limiting the scope of analysing ITC's overall communication strategy.
11. Peer Influence Measurement: Although peer recommendations were considered, the study did not employ advanced tools to measure the extent and depth of peer influence, which could be a critical factor in brand switching among youth.

CHAPTER –2



(Organizational History)

Year of establishment

ITC Limited is an Indian conglomerate company, headquartered in Kolkata. It has a presence across six business segments, namely FMCG, hotels, agribusiness, information technology, paper products, and packaging. It generates a plurality of its revenue from tobacco products. ITC Limited Company started from 24th August 1910.

Evolution of Company Name: -

Imperial Tobacco Company of India Limited (1910–1970)

India Tobacco Company Limited (1970–1974)

I.T.C. Limited (1974–2001)

ITC Limited (2001–present)

Profile of the Founder



Sanjiv Puri

(Chairman & Managing Director)

1. **India:** ITC has a strong presence throughout India, with manufacturing facilities, Distribution networks, and retail outlets across major states and cities.
2. **International:** ITC has expanded its presence internationally, though its international footprint is more limited compared to its domestic operations. The company has ventured into markets in countries like Sri Lanka, Nepal, and some other regions through exports and international partnerships.
3. **Offices:** ITC has offices in Singapore, Dubai, and London.

Types of Business (Portfolios/Sectors)

ITC Limited operates in a wide array of industries, making it one of India's most diversified conglomerates. Here's a more detailed breakdown of its key business segments:

1. Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG)

ITC's FMCG portfolio is vast and comprises multiple sub-categories:

- **Foods:** This includes staples, snacks, and packaged foods under popular brands like:
 - Aashirvaad (flour, spices, salt, ghee, and instant meals)
 - Sunfeast (biscuits, cookies, pasta, and noodles)
 - Bingo! (Potato chips and snacks)
 - Yippee! (Instant noodles)
 - Kitchens of India (ready-to-eat gourmet products)
 - Candyman (confectionery)
 - Fabelle (luxury chocolates)
- **Personal Care:** The company has expanded into personal care products such as:
 - Fiamma (body washes, shampoos)
 - Vivel (soaps, body washes)
 - Savlon (hygiene products like sanitizers, soaps, disinfectants)
 - Engage (deodorants and perfumes)
- **Cigarettes:** ITC is one of the largest cigarette manufacturers in India with brands like:
 - Classic
 - Gold Flake
 - Wills Navy Cut
- **Education & Stationery Products:** ITC is a market leader in this sector with its Classmate and Paperkraft brands offering notebooks, pens, and other stationery.
- **Lifestyle Retailing:** ITC also ventured into the apparel business with its Wills Lifestyle and John Players brands, though it has exited the lifestyle retailing business as of 2021.



2. Hotels

ITC's Hotels business operates in the premium and luxury segment. It is known for its environmentally responsible practices and luxury hospitality. Key brands include:

- **ITC Hotels:** The luxury chain offering high-end hospitality services.
- **Welcome Hotel:** Positioned as an upscale hotel chain catering to business and leisure travelers.
- **Fortune Hotels:** A mid-market hotel chain targeting budget-conscious travelers.
- **Welcome Heritage:** Focuses on heritage and boutique hotels, often situated in historically significant locations.



3. Paperboards, Paper, and Packaging



ITC is a major player in India's paper and packaging industry. This segment includes:

- **Paperboards:** ITC is the market leader in high-quality paperboards used for packaging, including food packaging.
- **Specialty Papers:** These are used in printing, publishing, and graphic arts.
- **Packaging:** ITC's packaging business produces a range of flexible and rigid packaging solutions for various industries, including FMCG, pharmaceuticals, and electronics.

4. Agri-Business



ITC's agri-business segment is heavily involved in the procurement and trading of agricultural commodities, contributing significantly to its supply chain. This includes:

- **E-Choupal:** ITC's pioneering digital initiative to support rural farmers by providing market access, price discovery, and agricultural insights.
- **Agri-commodities:** Trading in wheat, rice, coffee, soya, spices, and more.
- **Processed Foods:** ITC also sources raw materials for its branded foods portfolio through its extensive agri network.
- **Leaf Tobacco:** ITC is one of the leading exporters of leaf tobacco.

5. Information Technology (IT)

ITC Infotech, a subsidiary of ITC, provides global IT services and solutions. The company specializes in digital technologies, data analytics, IT consulting, and business process outsourcing (BPO). Key areas of focus include:

- Banking, Financial Services, and Insurance (BFSI)
- Manufacturing
- Consumer Packaged Goods (CPG)
- Hospitality
- Retail

ITC Infotech serves both Indian and international clients.

6. Sustainability and Social Initiatives

Beyond its core products and services, ITC is deeply involved in sustainability and social responsibility initiatives. ITC's Mission Sunehra Kal focuses on rural development, environmental conservation, and enhancing livelihood opportunities for farmers and local communities. ITC's commitment to sustainability is evident in its efforts to become a carbon-positive, water-positive, and solid waste recycling-positive organization.

7. Tobacco and Cigarettes

ITC's original and longstanding business is its tobacco and cigarette division. It is one of the largest players in the Indian cigarette market, with popular brands like Gol Flake, Classic, Navy Cut, Wills, and Scissors. While ITC has diversified into multiple sectors, its tobacco products remain a significant part of its business.

Cigarettes of ITC Limited

1. DSFT (Deluxe Size Filter Tip)
2. RSFT (Regular Size Filter Tip)
3. KSFT (King Size Filter Tip)
4. PKSFT (Premium King Size Filter Tip)

DSFT: -

NAME	MRP	PTS (Price to seller)	PTR (Price to retailer)
Flake	70	63.90	64.5
Gold Flake	60	54.4	55
Castle Metro	40	34.72	35

RSFT: -

NAME	MRP	PTS	PTR
Players Fruit Cool (Red)	70	64	64.5
Players Mint (Blue)	80	72.9	73.5
Players Rush (Green)	70	52.8	53
Gold Flake Premium	95	85.81	86.5
Gold Flake Indie mint	100	53	56
Gold Flake neo smart	95	73	75
Flake Navy cut	95	85.81	86.5
Flake excel taste pro	80	53.5	55
Classic icon	95	65	70

KSFT: -

NAME	MRP	PTS	PTR
GF King red	170	155.26	156.5
GF King blue	170	155.26	157
Classic Rich Taste	340	310.52	313
Classic Balance Taste	340	310.52	313
Classic Refined Taste	340	310.52	313
Classic Low Smell	340	310.52	340

Classic Ice Burst	340	310.52	340
Classic Double Burst	340	280.6	283
Gold Flake King	170	138.9	140
Gold Flake Mix pod	170	138	140
Gold Flake Twin pod	170	138.9	140
Gold Flake SLK	190	148.8	150
Classic Verve	190	148.8	150
Classic Verve Balance Taste	240	206.3	208
American Club	120	99.2	100
Benson & Hedges	340	310.52	310
Indie King	360	325.4	327

PKSFT: -

NAME	MRP	PTS	PTR
Classic Connect	300	248	345.24
Insignia	400	250	348

ITC Cigarette Branding Strategy

- ITC’s cigarette branding shows a combination of legacy prestige and ongoing innovation, enabling it to adapt to regulatory restrictions and changing consumer behaviour.
- Tactics like surrogate advertising and retailer push strategies compensated for the advertising constraints post-ban.
- Ongoing innovation—such as flavour capsules and “Low Smell” variants—helped keep their portfolio fresh and responsive to market need

1. Premium & Emotional Positioning

- Gold Flake: Positioned as a premium product aimed at affluent consumers. Its marketing themes—highlighting smoothness with visuals like silk scarves and feathers—and slogans like “*Go Smooth*” reinforce a refined and elegant image.
- Wills Navy Cut: The iconic “*Made for Each Other*” campaign (launched in 1965) created an emotional bond between product and consumer, using a clever analogy between cigarette-filter pairing and harmonious couples. This resonated deeply and sustained long-term brand recall.

2. Product Innovation & Variants

- Classic: Introduced in 1979 as a premium “king-size” cigarette, it evolved through the years with upgrades like improved paper quality, size adjustments, and new variants such as Ultra Mild’s (1997), menthol or tea Flavors, capsules, and “Low Smell” options
- Capsule Technology: Especially for international and economy markets, ITC pioneered flavour-on-demand capsules—an innovation that set them apart in competitive segments.

3. Distributed Reach & Manufacturing Strength

- ITC leverages a robust manufacturing footprint—plants in Bengaluru, Munger, Saharanpur, Kolkata, and Pune—that ensures quality, quick responsiveness, and cost efficiency
- Their strong distribution network reaches both urban and deeply rural markets through traditional retail channels and modern trade formats.

4. Surrogate and Retail-Level Promotion

- Due to advertising restrictions on tobacco, ITC used surrogate branding tactics—like the *Wills Lifestyle* fashion line—to maintain visibility without direct tobacco promotion
- Push marketing through retailers: ITC ran programs where retailers were incentivized (e.g., rewards or trips) to recommend ITC brands unless customers insisted otherwise. This helped secure display preference and product visibility at point of sale.

5. Portfolio Strategy & Brand Differentiation

- ITC maintains a diversified cigarette portfolio—Gold Flake, Classic, Wills Navy Cut, Insignia, India Kings, Scissors, Capstan, Berkeley, Bristol, Flake, etc.—each tailored to distinct segments and preferences.
- This segmentation enables targeting across price points, tastes, and socio-economic classes.

Retail Units of ITC Tobacco



ITC Limited's Tobacco Division primarily engages with consumers through a network of distribution channels rather than traditional retail units. Here's a look at how the Tobacco Division's retail operations are structured:

1. Distribution Channels:

- **Wholesale Distribution:** ITC's tobacco products are distributed to wholesalers who, in turn, supply them to retail outlets. This network includes large-scale distributors who manage extensive territories.
- **Retail Outlets:** ITC's cigarette brands are available in various retail formats such as convenience stores, pan shops, supermarkets, and dedicated tobacco shops.

2. Duty-Free Retailers:

- **International Airports:** ITC's tobacco products are also available in duty-free shops at international airports, catering to travelers who purchase products for personal use or gifting.

3. E-commerce Platforms:

- **Online Sales:** While tobacco sales online are restricted in many regions, ITC's tobacco products may be available through certain e-commerce platforms where regulations permit.

4. Trade Marketing:

- **Promotions and Partnerships:** ITC employs trade marketing strategies to promote its tobacco products through retailer partnerships and in-store promotions. This includes branding and point-of-sale displays to increase visibility and sales.

Product Details

Classic ICON

There are so many cigarettes which are comes under ITC Limited. There are four segmentations of cigarettes, there are DSFT (Deluxe Size Filter Tip), RSFT (Regular Size Filter Tip), KSFT (King Size Filter Tip) & PKSFT (Premium King Size Filter Tip).

Classic ICON was launched in 12th march 2024. Classic ICON comes under RSFT. MRP of classic ICON is 95, PTS (Price to Sell) is 65 and PTR (Price to Retailer) is 70. There are ten cigarettes stick in one packet of classic ICON.

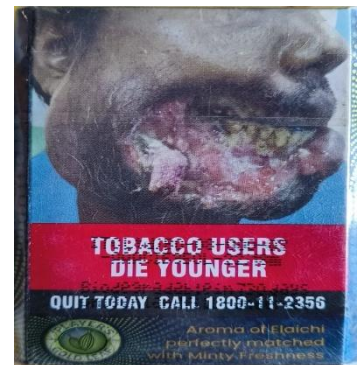


USP of Classic ICON: -

- High tech filter, one is normal filter and another one is active carbon filter
- Top leaf tobacco (Premium tobacco)
- Power teat

Player's Aromix

Player's Aromix is a premium clove cigarette from ITC, crafted for smokers who prefer a rich, aromatic, and distinctive flavor. Its USP lies in blending traditional tobacco with clove, creating a unique sensory experience that appeals to niche clove enthusiasts. Positioned as a high-quality offering, it emphasizes craftsmanship, flavor, and exclusivity, making it stand out from regular cigarette brands.



USP of Player's Aromix: -

- A premium clove-tobacco blend, crafted for those who crave a rich, aromatic smoking experience.
- Distinctive flavour, premium aroma – Player's Aromix redefines clove cigarettes for the modern enthusiast.
- More than tobacco, it's an aromatic journey – Player's Aromix, the clove cigarette with a unique edge.

Penetration strategy adopted by: -

ITC adopt various penetration strategy, such as;

1. Lunching Cash Card
2. Stock issues
3. Availability
4. Sampling

1. Lunching Cash Card: -

For outlets and consumers to be rapidly awed about the new product i.e., classic ICON, the company introduce offers for the outlets in the form of cash card by which it would create recognition all over. This is a kind of introductory offer for the outlets in order to create availability in the shelve.

2. Stock issues: -

To puss the new product the already existing products has been deliberately stock piled. No offers have been imparted on the already existing products.

3. Availability: -

Extra packets more than ordered quantity by the outlets was passed so as to make extra effort. The price that will be paid by the outlet was subjective towards the sale of the product. If the extra packets will not sell then it could be returned to the whole seller/distributor.

4. Sampling: -

Free sampling was done at prospecting outlets by sales persons in order to create definite awareness.

CHAPTER -3

Competitor Analysis

Marlboro Compact

1. Segment: Premium / International
2. Brand Owner: Philip Morris International (distributed in India by Godfrey Phillips India)
3. Positioning: Smooth, modern, urban; focuses on lifestyle, freedom, and sophistication.
4. Taste Profile:
 - o Tobacco-forward, smoother than regular Marlboro Reds.
 - o Compact variants are designed for a lighter, cleaner finish.
 - o In some markets, capsule versions (menthol/flavour on demand) exist.
5. Format: Slimmer, shorter sticks (compact size) with sleek, minimalist pack design appealing to young professionals.
6. After-Smell: Noticeably lower than strong blends, making it more discreet.
7. Target Audience:
 - o Young urban professionals.
 - o Consumers seeking a premium, international image.
 - o Smokers preferring smoother draws without overpowering harshness.



Four Square Clove (Clove Square)

1. Segment: Mid / Semi-Premium
2. Brand Owner: Godfrey Phillips India (a key rival of ITC).
3. Positioning: Flavour-led, trendy, and experimental—aimed at youth who want something different.
4. Taste Profile:
 - o Distinct clove (kretek-style) warmth with a touch of sweetness.
 - o Aromatic room note; stronger lingering smell compared to regular cigarettes.
 - o Some variants include capsules for enhanced flavour.
5. Format: Standard king-size sticks, with bold pack designs highlighting flavour appeal.
6. After-Smell: Strong clove aroma that lingers longer than tobacco-only cigarettes.
7. Target Audience:
 - o Young smokers looking for variety beyond plain tobacco.
 - o Consumers who enjoy spiced/aromatic smoking experiences.
 - o Budget-conscious buyers who want something unique at a lower price than Marlboro.



Addition

1. Segment: Semi-Premium / Premium Challenger
2. Brand Owner: VST Industries (Hyderabad-based company, part-owned by BAT).



3. Positioning: Stylish, smooth, and modern—an urban lifestyle brand designed for differentiation.
 - Taste Profile:
 - Smooth draw with a lighter tobacco-forward blend.
 - Less harsh compared to ITC's Gold Flake Kings.
 - Focus on refinement over strong flavour or clove-style aroma.
4. Format: Standard king-size sticks, often with sleek, contemporary packaging.
5. After-Smell: Moderate; lighter than strong Indian blends, making it more socially acceptable in urban environments.
6. Target Audience:
 - Young urban smokers and early professionals.
 - Image-conscious consumers who want sophistication without the full premium of Marlboro.
 - Middle/upper-middle-class buyers seeking balance of style and affordability.

ITC Tobacco Competitors

- British American Tobacco (BAT): Competes with ITC through brands like Gold Flake and Classic.
- Philip Morris International (PMI): Offers brands such as Marlboro and Parliament.
- Japan Tobacco International (JTI): Markets brands like Winston and Camel.
- Godfrey Phillips India Ltd: Known for brands like Four Square and Red & White.
- N. Rajan & Co.: Competes in regional markets with various cigarette brands

CHAPTER -4

Customers/Consumers

Customers/Consumers of ITC Tobacco

The customer base for ITC's Tobacco Division primarily includes:

1. Tobacco Consumers:

- **Cigarette Smokers:** This includes a broad demographic of adult smokers who consume ITC's cigarette brands such as Classic, Gold Flake, and Navy Cut. These consumers span various age groups and socio-economic backgrounds, with a significant focus on those who prefer premium and mid-range cigarette products.
- **Tobacco Enthusiasts:** Some customers may be brand loyalists who specifically seek out ITC's cigarette brands due to their taste, quality, or brand reputation.

2. Retailers and Distributors:

- **Retail Outlets:** Includes convenience stores, tobacco shops, and supermarkets that stock ITC's cigarette brands for sale to end consumers.
- **Wholesale Distributors:** These intermediaries purchase large quantities of ITC's tobacco products and distribute them to various retail outlets.

3. Duty-Free Retailers:

- **International Travelers:** ITC's products are available in duty-free stores, catering to international travelers who seek premium tobacco products during their travels.

4. Online Retailers:

- **E-commerce Platforms:** With the growth of online sales channels, ITC's tobacco products may also be available through online retail platforms, reaching consumers who prefer purchasing tobacco products online

5. Specialty Stores:

- **Premium Stores:** High-end or specialty stores that cater to consumers looking for premium tobacco experiences may stock ITC's premium cigarette brands.

ITC Limited, being the market leader in the Indian cigarette industry, caters to a wide spectrum of consumers ranging from the mass-market segment to the ultra-premium category. The company's diverse portfolio, including popular brands such as Gold Flake, Classic, Navy Cut, Capstan, and Insignia, enables it to serve different consumer classes across urban and rural markets.

Mass-Segment Consumers

- Largely working-class and middle-income groups.
- Prefer affordable brands like Gold Flake Kings, Capstan, and Navy Cut.
- Characteristics:
 - Strong tobacco-forward taste.
 - Value-for-money positioning.
 - High loyalty due to heritage and trust.
- Geographical preference: More common in smaller towns and semi-urban areas.

Premium Consumers

- Mainly urban youth and professionals.
- Prefer aspirational brands such as Classic Mild's, Classic Capsule, and Insignia.
- Characteristics:
 - Smooth and refined blends.
 - Focus on lifestyle and aspirational appeal.
 - Seen as a symbol of sophistication and social identity.

Across both categories, ITC consumers demonstrate strong brand loyalty, largely influenced by the company's long-standing heritage, consistent product quality, and unmatched distribution network. ITC maintains its dominance by offering a balance of affordability, aspirational appeal, and wide availability, ensuring its consumer base spans across different socio-economic groups.

The newly launched ITC product aims to capture customers across different lifestyle and income groups. Based on the market survey and analysis, the segmentation is as follows:

Consumers of Classic (Icon)

- Segment: Premium / Aspirational.
- Target Audience:
 - Urban youth, college students, and early professionals.

- Image-conscious smokers who associate smoking with style.
- Consumer Characteristics:
 - Prefer smooth, refined blends with a lighter draw.
 - Seek aspirational value and connect the brand with modern lifestyle & sophistication.
 - Willing to spend more compared to mass-segment smokers.
- Brand Perception: Considered stylish, trendy, and aspirational, often chosen to reflect personal identity.

Consumers of Player's Aromix

- Segment: Mid / Semi-Premium (flavour-led).
- Target Audience:
 - Younger consumers in both urban and semi-urban markets.
 - Smokers who like experimenting with flavoured or aromatic options.
- Consumer Characteristics:
 - Enjoy the distinctive clove/flavour-infused profile and aromatic smoke.
 - Value uniqueness and variety over plain tobacco taste.
 - More price-sensitive compared to Classic smokers but still want differentiation.
- Brand Perception: Seen as flavourful, youthful, and experimental, appealing to those who want something different from traditional cigarettes.

CHAPTER -5

Personal Learning During Internship

What Touched my Heart?

Emotional Impact on Consumers

ITC's product sampling aims to create a strong emotional connection with consumers. These events often inspire feelings of trust and appreciation, enhancing the brand's emotional appeal.

- **Creating a Connection:** Offering free samples allows ITC to engage with consumers on a personal level, creating memorable experiences. This approach helps build emotional ties, promoting loyalty and improving the overall consumer experience.
- **Consumer Insights:** Feedback from consumers highlights that sampling makes them feel recognized and appreciated. These positive interactions can shape their long-term view of the brand.

Building Brand Loyalty and Trust

The positive emotions generated during sampling events play a key role in fostering brand loyalty and trust. Consumers with favorable sampling experiences are more likely to view ITC's products positively and remain loyal.

- **Establishing Trust:** By allowing consumers to sample products before purchasing, ITC showcases confidence in its product quality, which helps build trust and credibility.
- **Enhancing Loyalty:** Positive sampling interactions are strongly associated with increased loyalty, with many consumers indicating a higher likelihood of repurchasing after a satisfying sampling experience.

What Touched my Head?

Strategic Insights and Intellectual Approach

ITC's sampling process is built on a strategic understanding of market dynamics and consumer preferences. This section explores how the sampling strategy supports ITC's broader business objectives and strengthens its competitive position.

- **Focused Market Analysis:** ITC conducts thorough market analysis to pinpoint target demographics, ensuring that sampling efforts are directed at consumer segments with the highest potential for engagement.
- **Data-Driven Approach:** Insights from consumer behavior and market competition guide the sampling strategy, increasing the precision and effectiveness of campaigns.

Decision-Making Processes

ITC's sampling strategy is guided by comprehensive research and analysis, leading to more informed decision-making and better outcomes.

- **Analytics-Based Decisions:** ITC relies on data analytics to evaluate the performance of sampling initiatives, allowing for strategic adjustments and informed future planning.
- **Ongoing Optimization:** Feedback from sampling activities is continuously incorporated to refine the approach, keeping the strategy aligned with shifting consumer needs and market trends.

What Touched my Hand?

Practical Aspects and Implementation

The implementation of ITC's sampling process involves several practical considerations, including logistics, execution, and overall effectiveness. This section details how these factors are managed in South Bhubaneswar.

- **Sampling Execution:** ITC meticulously plans its sampling events to ensure a smooth and engaging consumer experience. This includes selecting high-traffic locations, maintaining proper inventory levels, and collaborating with retail partners for seamless coordination.
- **Logistical Considerations:** Efficient logistics are critical to the success of these campaigns. ITC ensures that each event is well-organized, with adequate resources, personnel, and transportation to facilitate timely distribution of samples.

Effectiveness and Efficiency

The success of ITC's sampling process is measured by its impact on consumer behavior and sales. ITC continuously evaluates the efficiency of its efforts to achieve optimal results.

- **Performance Metrics:** Key indicators such as consumer responses, sales data, and market reach are used to measure the effectiveness of sampling events.
- **Optimization:** Insights from performance analysis enable ITC to refine its strategies, ensuring continuous improvement in the efficiency and effectiveness of future sampling campaigns.

What Touched my Habit?

Behavioral Changes and Consumption Patterns

Product sampling plays a crucial role in shaping consumer behavior and consumption patterns. This section explores the impact of sampling on long-term consumer habits and brand preferences.

- **Habit Formation:** Exposure to ITC's products through sampling can lead to the establishment of new consumption habits, encouraging consumers to incorporate the brand into their regular purchasing routines.
- **Brand Preferences:** By allowing consumers to experience the quality of ITC's cigarettes firsthand, sampling can effectively shift brand preferences and influence future purchasing decisions.

Long-Term Effects on Consumer Habits

This section assesses the long-term implications of sampling on consumer habits, examining how initial experiences can foster enduring brand loyalty and influence purchasing behavior.

- **Sustained Engagement:** Consumers who have a positive experience with product sampling are more likely to continue buying ITC products, indicating a strong impact on their long-term consumption habits.
- **Brand Affinity:** Sampling events often lead to heightened brand affinity, as consumers develop a preference for ITC's cigarettes over competing brands.

Research Methodology

Methods of Data Collection

Descriptive type research has used to complete the project. This research is based on fact finding enquires and the variables are totally independent and uncontrollable.

- **Primary Data**

Primary data of research are collected from direct customer of smoker of south Bhubaneswar through questionnaires.

- **Secondary Data**

Secondary data which are used for research to know about the consumer penetration and distribution of classic icon in south Bhubaneswar are collected from internet.

Limitations

The project has some limitation because it is totally based on efforts of individuals. People maybe careless and may not give correct answer to the questions, because of so many reasons.

- It is totally on personal efforts of individuals.
- Some of the consumers are hesitate to give the information.
- Some of consumer are not interested to give answering the questions.

Areas of South Bhubaneswar involved

- BJB Nagar
- Old Town
- Kalpana
- CTC Road
- Rajmahal
- Samantrapur
- Puri CTC Bypass
- Sundarpada
- Bapuji Nagar

Data Analysis and Interpretation: -

Section 1: Respondent Details

1. Age Group

Under 18	18-25	26-35	36-50	51 & more
8	52	22	12	6

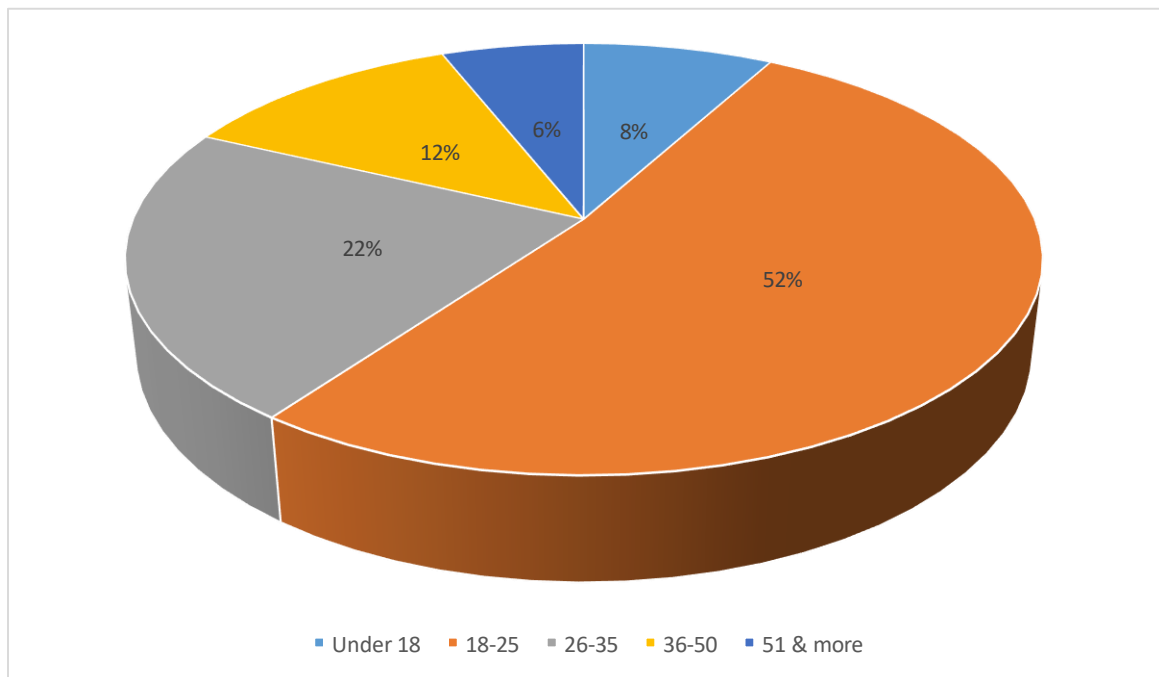


Figure-1

Interpretation: -

Data collection for project from 100 responded in which 8% people are the age under 18, 52% people are between 18-25, 22% people are the age between 26-35, 12% people are between 36-50 and 6% people are the age between more than 51 of total responded. In total respondent I analyses that most of the people were in between the age group of 18-25.

2. Gender

Male	Female
59	41

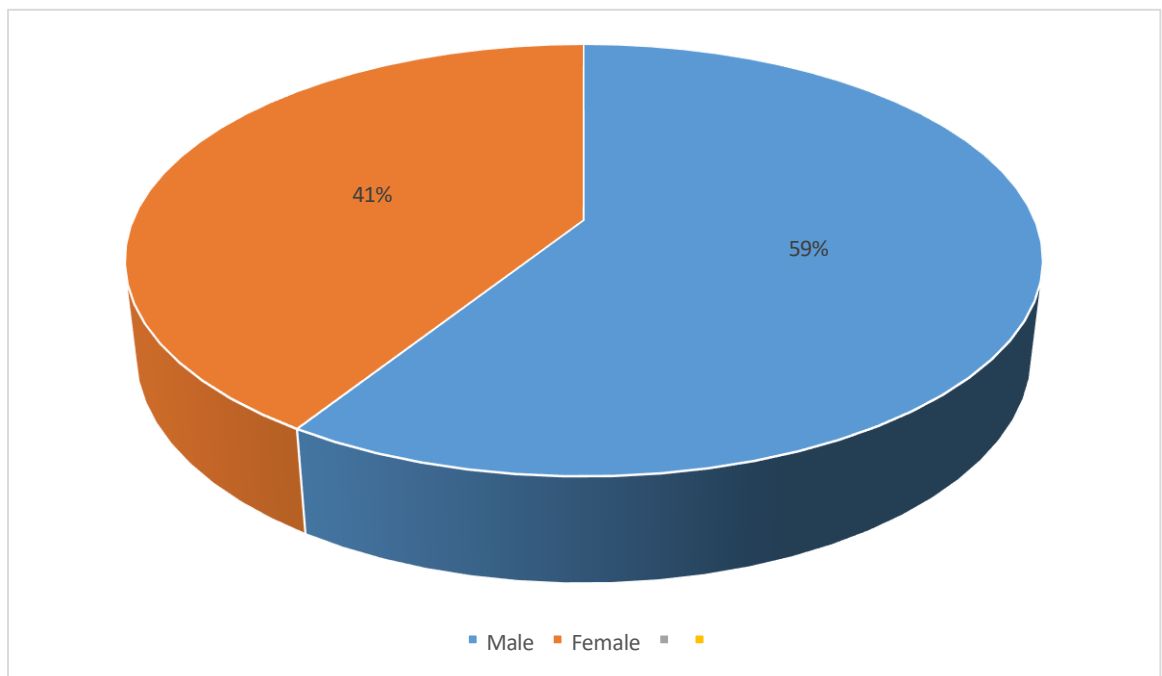


Figure-2

Interpretation: -

Data collection for project from 100 responded in which 59% people are male and 41% are female. In total respondent I analyses that most of the people are male.

3. Occupation

Student	Job Holder	Business owner	Retired
52	28	14	6

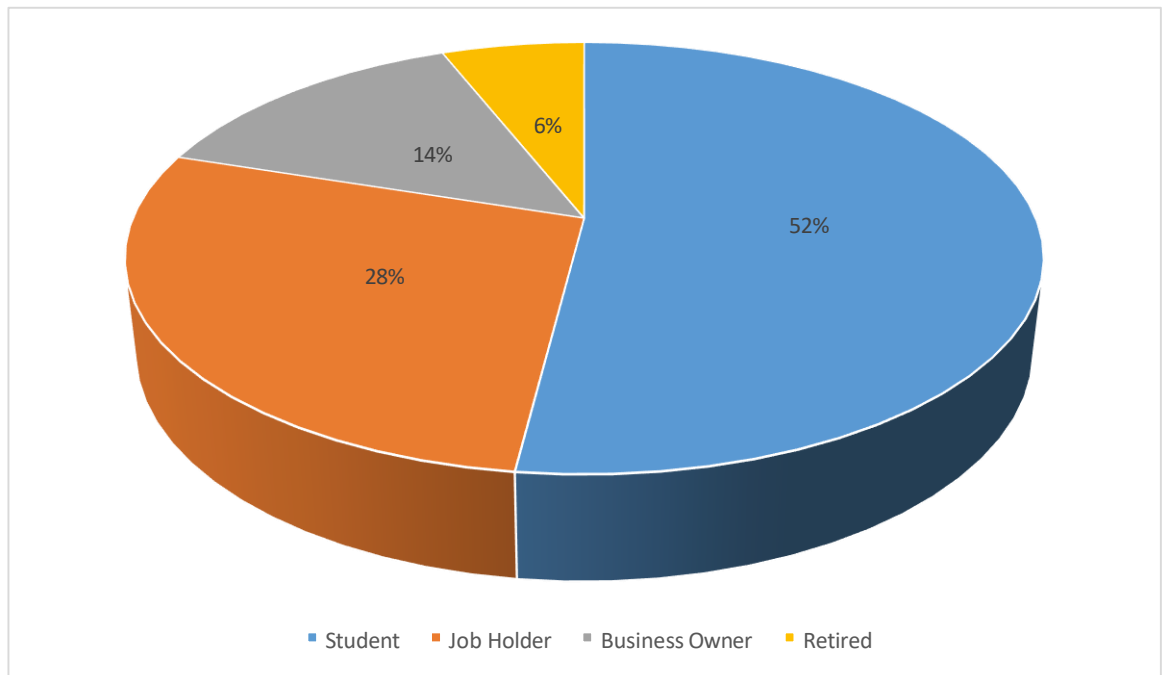


Figure-3

Interpretation: -

Data collection for project from 100 respondent in which 52% people are student, 28% people are job holder, 14% people are business owner & 6% people are retired person. In total respondent I analyses that most of the people are student.

Section 2: Awareness and Penetration of Classic Icon

4. Are you aware of the classic icon?

Yes	No
87	13

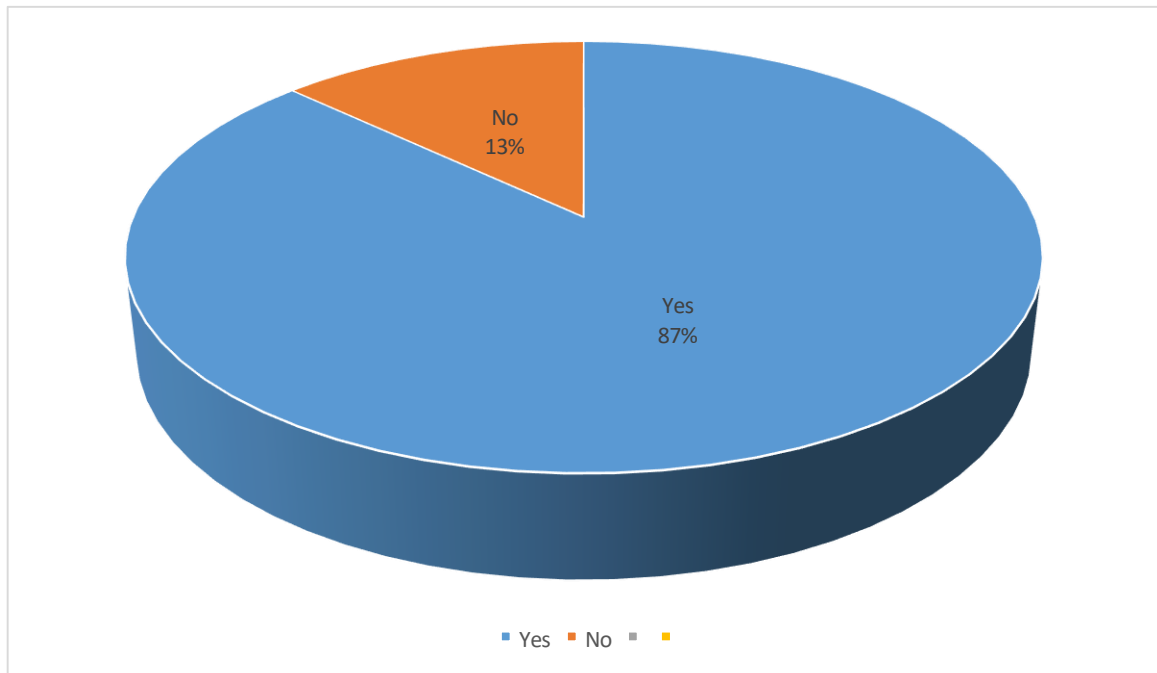


Figure-4

Interpretation: -

Data collection for project from 100 respondent in which 87% people are aware about the product and 13% people are don't know about the product. In total respondent I analyses that most of the people are aware about the product.

5. If yes, how did you first learn about the classic icon?

Social media	Retail Store	Friends
0	82	18

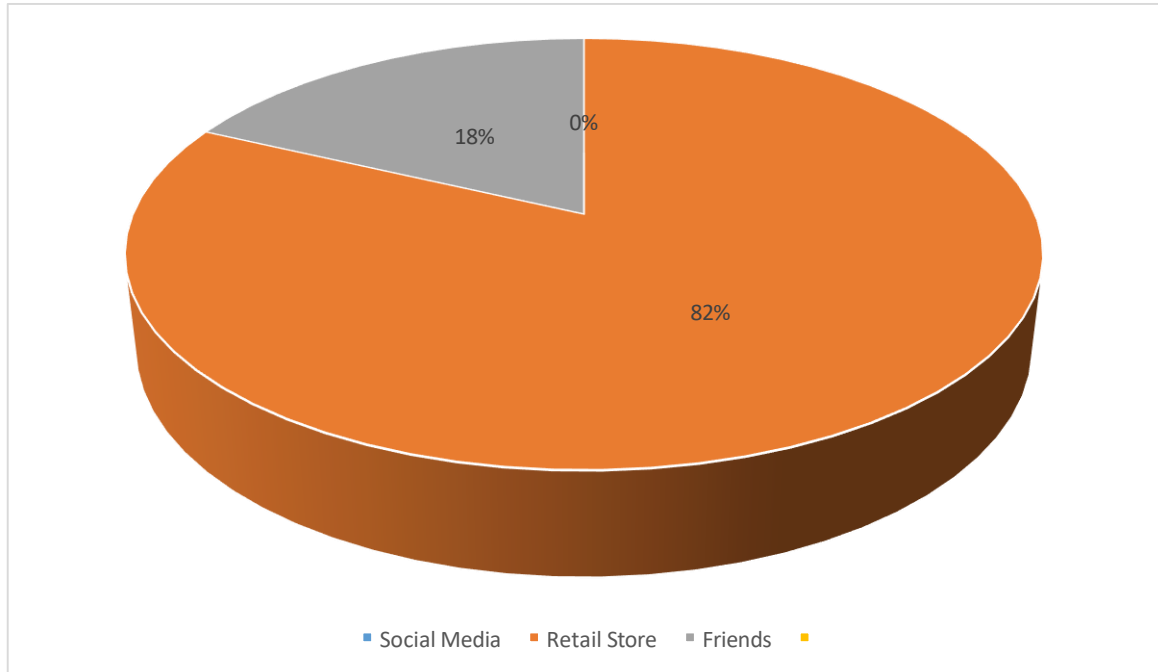


Figure-5

Interpretation: -

Data collection for project from 100 respondent in which 82% people are known about the product from retail store and 18% people are known about the product from friends. In total respondent I analyses that most of the people are get to know about the product from retail store.

6. Current Brand used by the people?

Compact	GFP	Indi mint Rs 10	Neo Smart	Edition
41	15	27	8	9

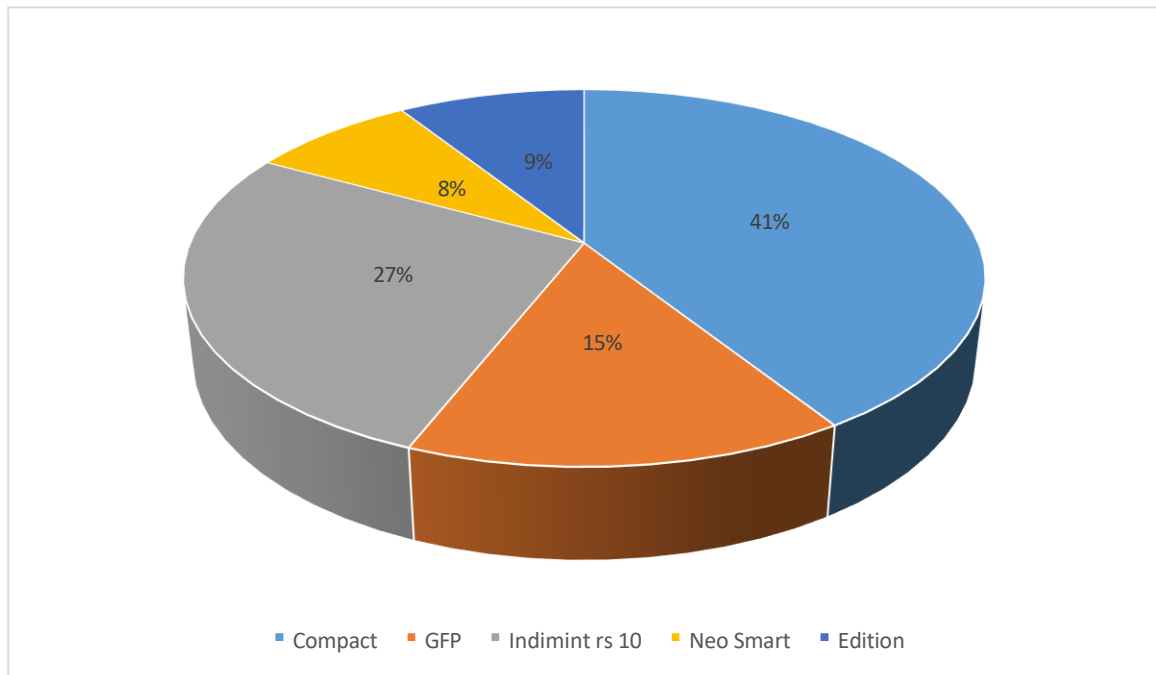


Figure-6

Interpretation: -

Data collection for project from 100 respondent in which 41% people are currently consume compact, 15% people are consume GFP, 27% people are consume indimint Rs 10, 8% people are consume neo smart and 9% people are consume edition. In total respondent I analyses that most of the people are consume compact.

7. Have you ever purchased the classic icon?

Yes	No
81	19

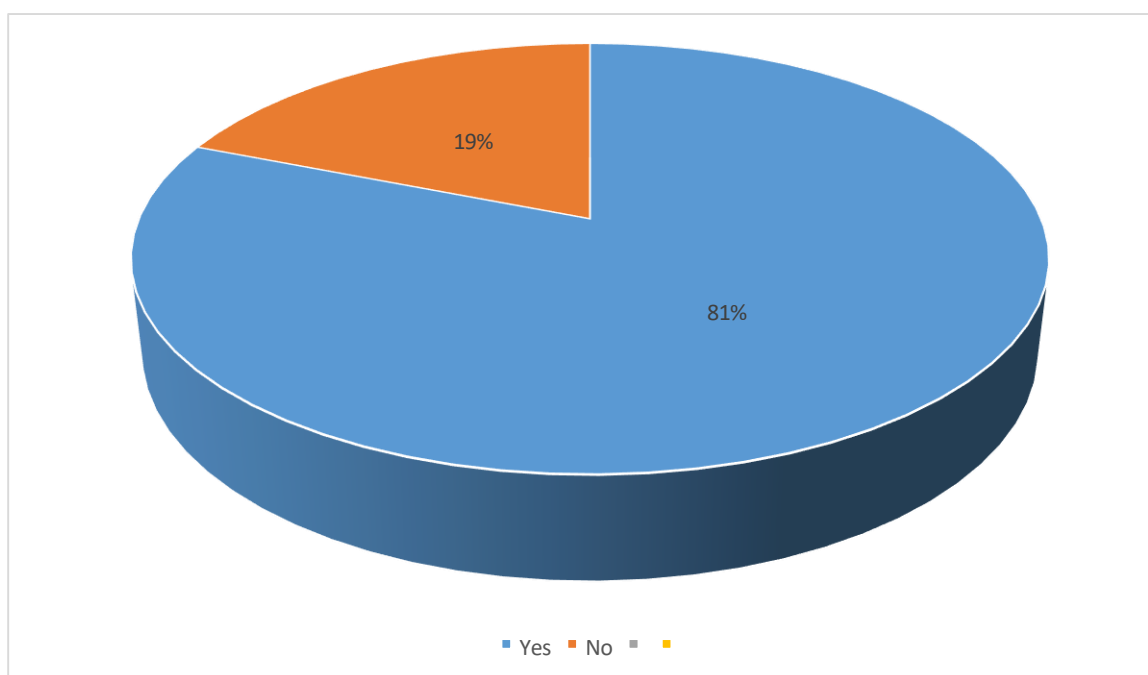


Figure-7

Interpretation: -

Data collection for project from 100 respondent in which 81% people are purchased the classic icon and 19% people are not purchased till now. In total respondent I analyses that most of the people are aware about the product and purchased that.

8. If yes, how often do you purchase it?

Weekly	Monthly	Occasionally	Only once
39	19	23	19

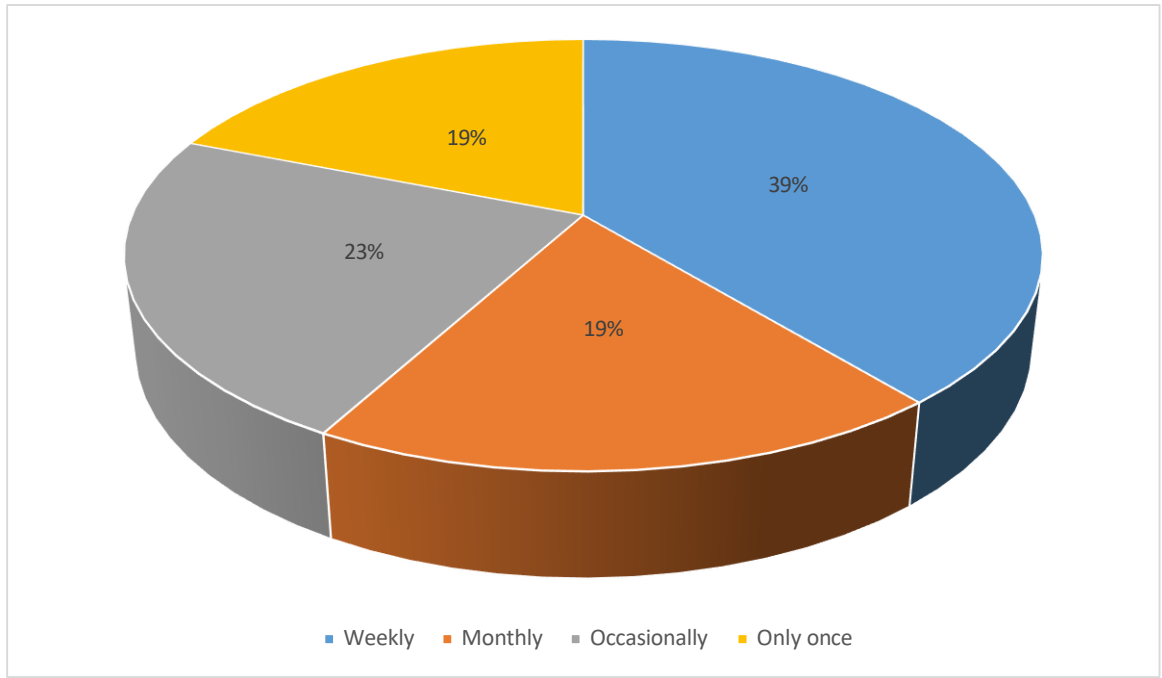


Figure-8

Interpretation: -

Data collection for project from 100 respondent in which 39% people are purchase the classic icon weekly, 19% people are purchase monthly, 23% people are purchase occasionally and 19% people are purchase only once. In total respondent I analyses that most of the people are purchase the product weekly.

9. What influenced your decision to purchase the classic icon?

Brand reputation	Price	Quality	Availability	Recommendation from others	Advertising
8	17	9	20	18	28

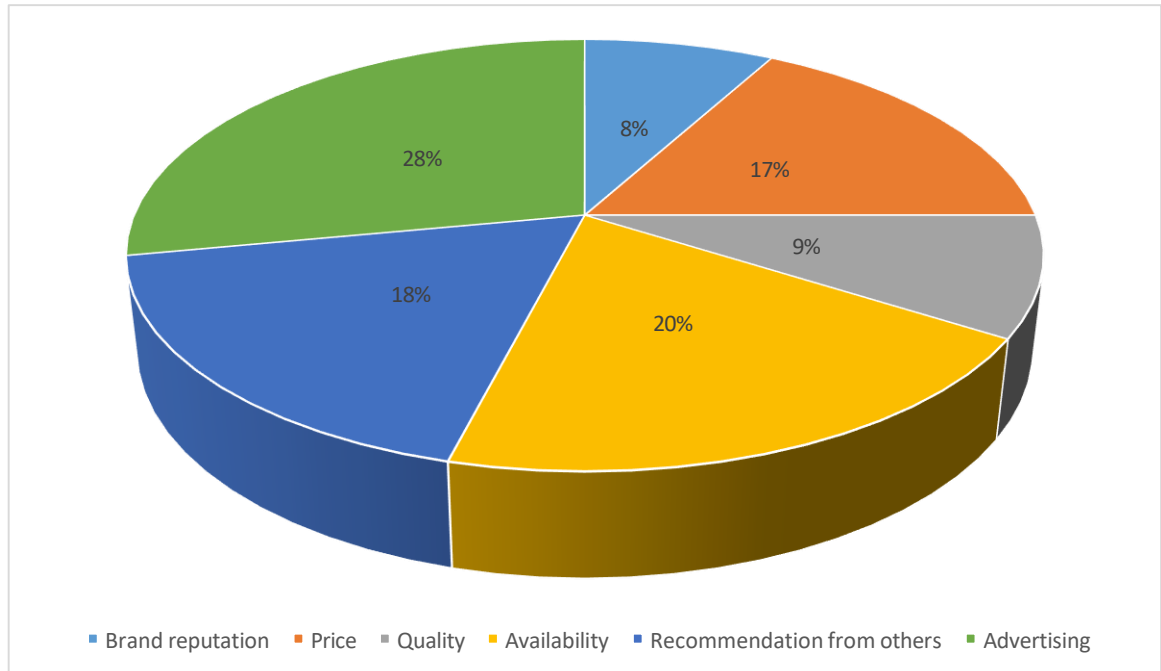


Figure-9

Interpretation: -

Data collection for project from 100 respondent in which 8% people are purchase the classic icon for the brand reputation, 17% people are purchase for the price, 9% people are purchase due to quality of the product, 20% people are purchased due to availability of the product, 18% people are purchase the product due to recommendation from others and 28% people are purchase due to advertising of the product. In total respondent I analyses that most of the people are purchase the product due to availability.

Section 3: Distribution and Availability

10. Where do you usually buy the classic icon?

Supermarkets	Local Grocery Stores	Online Platforms
9	91	0

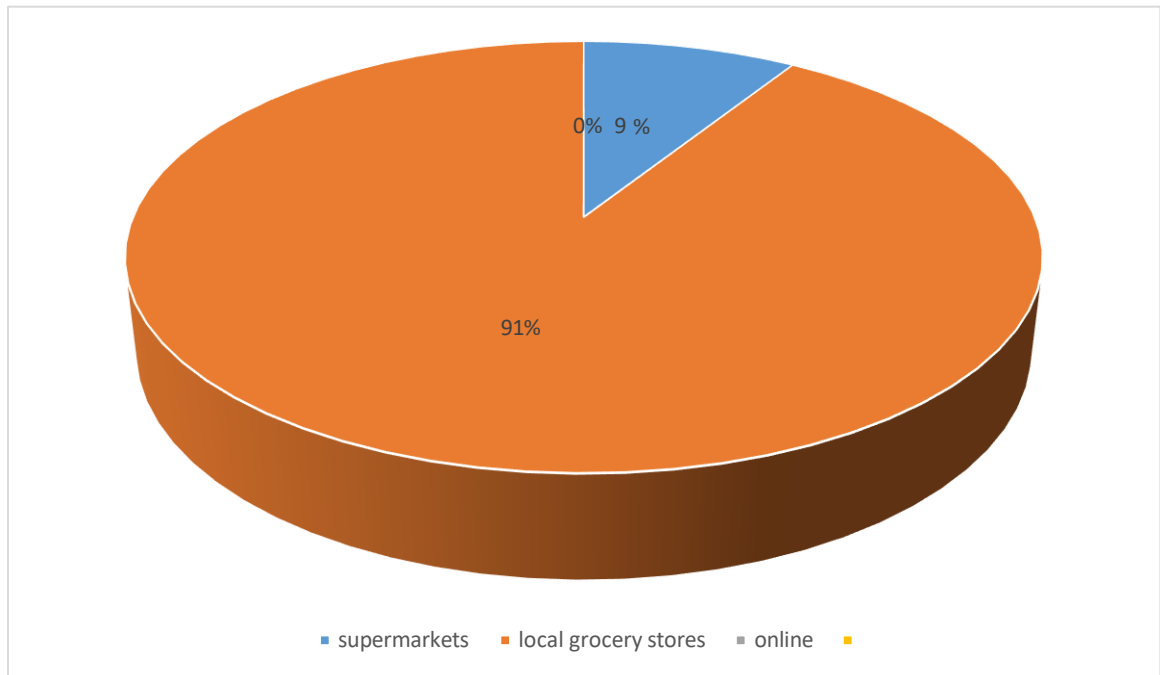


Figure-10

Interpretation: -

Data collection for project from 100 respondent in which 9% people are buy the classic icon supermarkets, and 91% people are buy the classic icon from local grocery stores. In total respondent I analyses that most of the people are purchase the product weekly.

11. How would you rate the availability of the classic icon in South Bhubaneswar?

Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
32	48	20	0

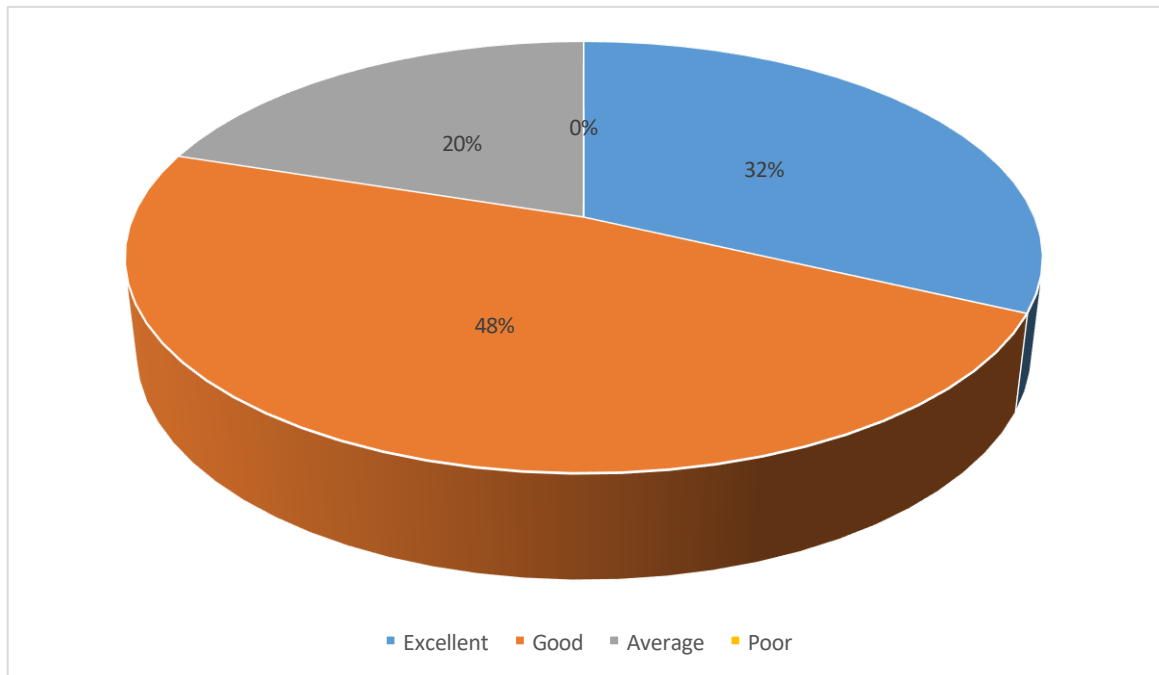


Figure-11

Interpretation: -

Data collection for project from 100 respondent in which 32% people are rate excellent for the availability of the product, 48% people are rate good and 20% people are rate average. In total respondent I analyses that most of the people are rate good for the availability of the classic icon in south Bhubaneswar.

12. Have you ever faced any difficulty in finding the classic icon in stores?

Yes	No
7	93

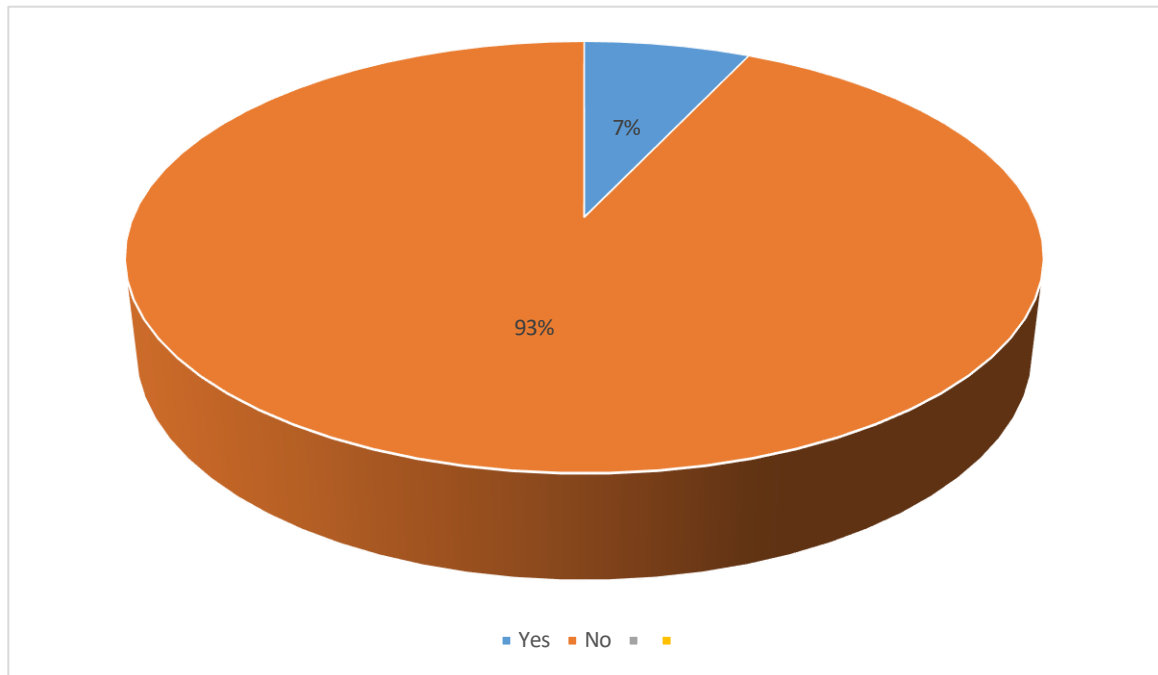


Figure-12

Interpretation: -

Data collection for project from 100 respondent in which 7% people are facing problem while purchasing the classic icon and 93% people are not facing any problem. In total respondent I analyses that most of the people are don't facing any problem while purchasing the Classic ICON.

Section 4: Customer Feedback and Suggestions

13. How satisfied are you with the taste of classic icon?

Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
10	65	22	3	0

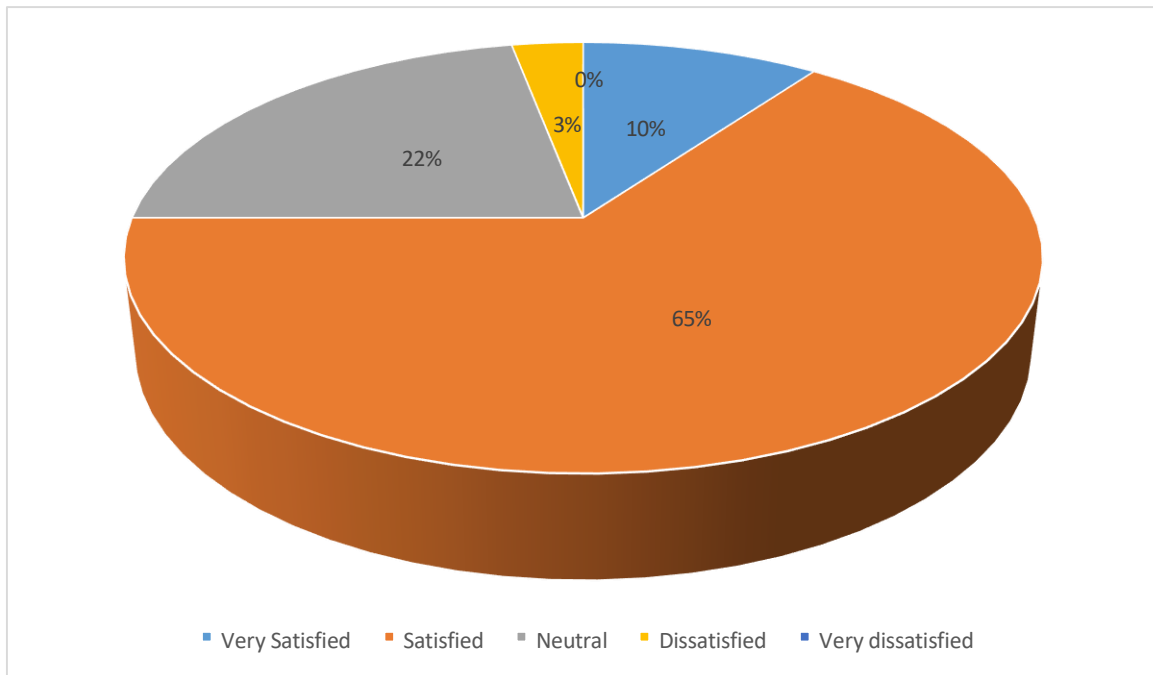


Figure-13

Interpretation: -

Data collection for project from 100 respondent in which 10% people are highly satisfied with the classic icon taste, 65% people are satisfied, 22% people are neutral and 3% people are dissatisfied with the taste. In total respondent I analyses that most of the people are satisfied with the taste the classic icon.

14. How satisfied are you with the classic icon Packaging?

Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
39	47	12	2	0

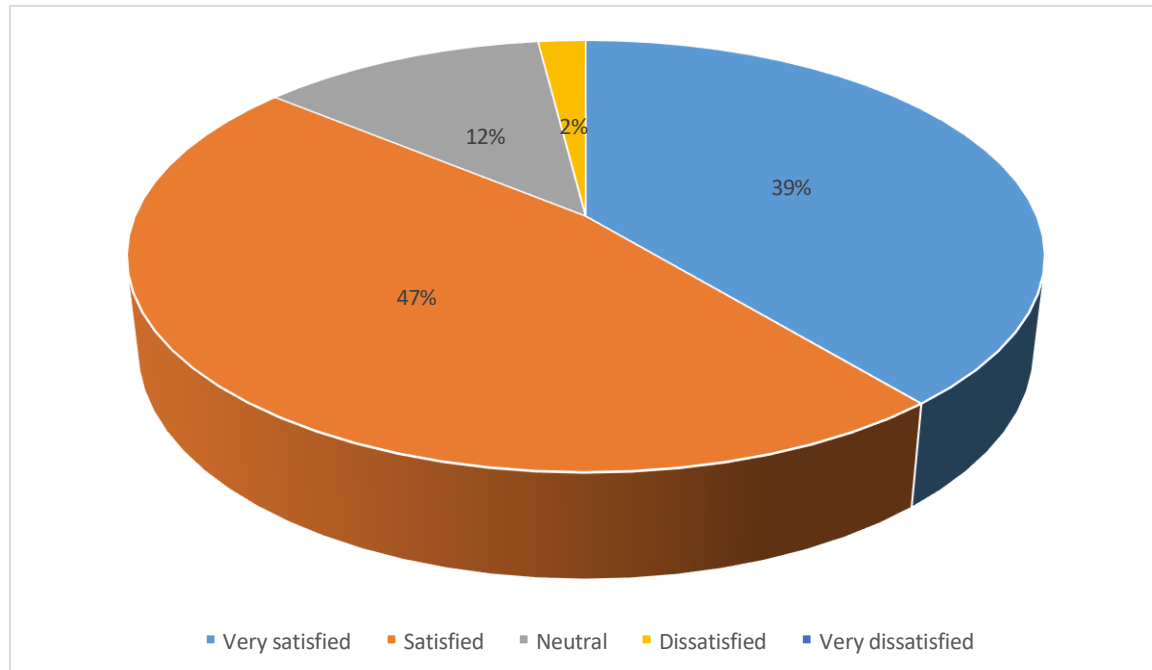


Figure-14

Interpretation: -

Data collection for project from 100 respondent in which 39% people are highly satisfied with the packaging of classic icon, 47% people are satisfied, 12% people are neutral and 2s% people are dissatisfied with the packaging. In total respondent I analyses that most of the people are satisfied with the packaging of the classic icon.

Findings

I do the survey of classic icon at south Bhubaneswar, for that I get some results.

1. I collect the data from 100 respondents from that 59% people are male and 41% people are female and most of the people are from the age group of 18-25. And most of them are students.
2. From them 87% people are aware about the classic icon cigarette, from these 87% people 82% people are get to know about the classic icon from retail store and other are from their friends.
3. From all the responded I get to know that 41% people's current consuming brand is COMPACT(MARLBORO) and other are prefer to consume GFP, INDIMINT, NEO SMART & EDITION.
4. Most of the people (81%) are purchased classic icon for consuming. But 39% people purchase weekly, 19% people are purchased monthly, 23% people are purchased occasionally and 19% people are purchased only once.
5. Most of the people are influenced by advertisement, recommendations of other and availability (56%) of classic icon for purchase and other are influenced by brand reputation, price & quality of the product.
6. 91% people are buying classic icon from local grocery store and other are from supermarket.
7. Most of the people rate the availability of classic icon at south Bhubaneswar is excellent and good which is 80%.
8. Only 7% people are facing some problem to find the product at store.
9. 75% people are satisfied with the taste of classic icon.
10. 86% people are satisfied with the packaging of classic icon.
11. Classic ICON has achieved around 81% market awareness in south Bhubaneswar.
12. And the project is available in 95% of the outlets.
13. Since the launch ICON has gradually gained popularity among cigarette consuming masses and its preference has grown ideally.

Suggestion

- **Strengthening Distributor-Retailer Relationships:**

ITC's relationships with retail outlets are viewed as less reliable compared to competitors. Many outlet owners report negative experiences with ITC sales representatives. To enhance sales, area executives must focus on improving salesperson behavior, as it plays a critical role in building trust and boosting performance.

- **Targeting High-Volume Outlets:**

To optimize sales efforts, prioritize outlets with higher sales of ITC products while scaling back efforts at lower-performing locations. Focusing on these successful outlets can lead to increased performance that naturally influences smaller outlets with minimal additional effort.

- **Reassessing Stock for Underperforming Brands:**

To elevate sales of ICON, consider temporarily reducing stock levels of average-performing products. This strategy involves consolidating these slower-moving items and encouraging sales representatives to promote ICON more vigorously to retail outlets.

Conclusion

Analyzing the market penetration of a product like cigarettes presents challenges due to the rapid switching behavior of consumers and the availability of numerous substitutes. The penetration and distribution of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) are highly volatile, necessitating robust methodologies for accurate statistical evaluation. However, it appears relatively stable in metropolitan areas, which is why this report focuses on Bhubaneswar.

The distribution process for cigarettes by ITC is complex and demanding, owing to the wide variety of products and intense competition. Given ITC's larger market share compared to its rivals, the marketing division must strategically manage both demand and supply.

Based on data collected through questionnaires and surveys, the project report indicates that awareness and product recognition in southern Bhubaneswar are notably high, largely due to the company's significant investment in promoting the ICON brand through posters, lightboards, and brand boards at every outlet. While the penetration and distribution are not flawless, they are built on a solid foundation.

Consumer acceptance of ICON has steadily increased since its launch, demonstrating great potential as a preferred cigarette brand. The company and its distributors have effectively managed supply, and the product quality suggests a promising future.

In conclusion, ICON can be regarded as a successful product within its category and is poised to emerge as a high-potential brand.

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Annexure
Question

Section 1: Respondent Details

1. Name (Optional):
2. Age:
 - a. Under 18
 - b. 18-25
 - c. 26-35
 - d. 36-50
 - e. 51 and above
3. Gender:
 - a. Male
 - b. Female
4. Occupation:
 - a. Student
 - b. Job Holder
 - c. Business Owner
 - d. Retired

Section 2: Awareness and Penetration of Classic Icon

5. Are you aware of the classic icon?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
6. If yes, how did you first learn about the classic icon?
 - a. Social Media
 - b. Retail Stores
 - c. Friends
7. Current brand used by the people?
 - a. Compact
 - b. GFP
 - c. Indimint Rs 10
 - d. Neo Smart
 - e. Edition
8. Have you ever purchased the classic icon?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
9. If yes, how often do you purchase it?
 - a. Weekly

- b. Monthly
- c. Occasionally
- d. Only once

10. What influenced your decision to purchase the classic icon?

- a. Brand reputation
- b. Price
- c. Quality
- d. Availability
- e. Recommendation from others
- f. Advertising

Section 3: Distribution and Availability

11. Where do you usually buy the classic icon?

- a. Supermarkets
- b. Local Grocery Stores
- c. Online Platforms

12. How would you rate the availability of the classic icon in South Bhubaneswar?

- a. Excellent
- b. Good
- c. Average
- d. Poor

13. Have you ever faced any difficulty in finding the classic icon in stores?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Section 4: Customer Feedback and Suggestions

14. How satisfied are you with the classic icon?

- a. Very Satisfied
- b. Satisfied
- c. Neutral
- d. Dissatisfied
- e. Very Dissatisfied

15. How satisfied are you with the classic icon Packaging?

- a. Very Satisfied
- b. Satisfied
- c. Neutral
- d. Dissatisfied
- e. Very Dissatisfied