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

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

Approved by AICTE, Govt. of India | Affiliated to BPUT, Odisha | NAAC Accredited | ISO 9001 : 2015

SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROJECT2025

REPORT TITLE

A Study On Consumer Buying Behaviour For Cement Products In Bhubaneswar

SUBMITTED BY

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MBA Batch: 2024-26

University Regn. No.: 2406258007

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CERTIFICATE OF FACULTY/INTERNAL GUIDE

This is to certify that Mr. Abhisek Sahu, bearing university registration no. 2406258007 of 2024-26 batch, has completed his summer internship at My Home Industries Private Limited (Maha Solid HD Cement) from 5th June 2025 to 31st July 2025 under the supervision of Mr. Sanjeev Gupta (Joint President) 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: Signature of the Faculty/Internal Guide

Place: Bhubaneswar Name: Mr. Kamesh Chivukula

Asst. Prof. (Marketing & Soft Skills)

DECLARATION

I, Mr. Abhisek Sahu Bearing university registration no. 2406258007 (2024-26 batch), hereby declare that the project report titled “A Study On Consumer Buying Behaviour For Cement Products In Bhubaneswar” is based on my internship at My Home Industries Private Limited (Maha Solid HD Cement), during the period 5th June 2025 to 31st July 2025 and is an original work done by me under the supervision of Mr Sanjeev Gupta (Joint President) and Mr Kamesh Chivukula (Internal 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: Bhubaneswar Signature

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The study titled "A Study on Consumer Buying Behaviour for Cement Products in Bhubaneswar" was undertaken by **Abhisek Sahu** as part of Summer Internship Project at **Maha Solid HD Cement (My Home Industries Private Limited)**.

Established in 1981, **My Home Group** is a reputed South Indian conglomerate with business interests in cement, power, and media. **Solid HD Cement**, one of its flagship products, is recognized for its quality, strength, and durability, and is currently expanding its footprint in Eastern India.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To analyze the factors influencing retail consumer buying behavior for cement in Bhubaneswar.
2. To identify the most preferred cement brands in the retail segment.
3. To provide actionable recommendations for cement companies based on consumer insights.

METHODOLOGY

Primary data was collected from **110 retail consumers in Bhubaneswar** using a structured questionnaire, supplemented by insights from dealers, masons, and contractors to capture influencer roles in purchase decisions. A **convenience sampling method** was employed, and responses were analyzed through charts, graphs, and brand-wise comparisons.

KEY FINDINGS

- **Influencers matter most**: Mason/contractor and dealer recommendations were identified as the primary drivers of consumer purchase decisions.
- **Quality and reputation over price**: Product quality and brand trust outweighed price considerations.
- **Brand preference**: Ultratech, Ramco, and Dalmia emerged as the top choices among consumers. Solid HD Cement demonstrated **growth potential**, provided stronger marketing and engagement strategies are implemented.

INTERPRETATION & RECOMMENDATIONS

Cement buying decisions in Bhubaneswar are **influencer-driven rather than consumer-driven**. For Solid HD Cement to strengthen its market presence, the following strategies are essential:

- Enhance **dealer engagement** and provide attractive support schemes.
- Introduce **mason/contractor loyalty programs** to build long-term advocacy.
- Invest in **localized marketing and branding initiatives** to increase visibility and trust among retail buyers.

CONCLUSION

The study highlights that cement purchases in Bhubaneswar are primarily influenced by dealers and masons rather than direct consumer choice. For Solid HD Cement, building stronger influencer relationships, enhancing dealer support, and investing in localized branding will be key to gaining consumer trust and expanding its market share.

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INTRODUCTION

The cement industry in India is widely recognized as one of the foundational pillars of the nation's progress, playing a pivotal role in the realization of large-scale infrastructure projects and the built environment that defines modern India. Since independence, the sector has grown from a handful of small plants to a robust, technology-driven industry with hundreds of producers, both large and small. As of today, India stands as the world's second-largest producer and consumer of cement, contributing significantly to GDP, generating direct and indirect employment, and supporting the construction ecosystem that powers urbanization. The integrated presence of multinational companies alongside leading Indian firms has driven progress in terms of both production capacity and industry innovation.

The growth of the cement industry has invariably been linked to wider trends in the Indian economy—government-led infrastructure initiatives such as highways, rural roadways (Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana), large commercial and residential developments, and smart city programs have all fueled the demand for cement. Real estate booms in metro cities and tier-2 urban centers have only accelerated this growth. Moreover, public policy efforts like the 'Housing for All' mission and schemes aimed at affordable rural housing have compounded the need for quality cement, right down to the retail consumer level. The industry's remarkable expansion has thus created opportunities, but it has also fostered intense competition, prompting cement companies to look for nuanced ways to sustain market share and build long-term brand equity.

Within this dynamic ecosystem, the decision-making process of retail consumers—that is, individuals purchasing cement for residential construction, renovation, or small-scale projects—has emerged as a key area of interest for marketers and business strategists. Unlike bulk buying driven by government or institutional tenders, retail buying is shaped by a complex interplay of personal preferences, social influences, and local market dynamics. It is no longer sufficient for firms to focus solely on engineering excellence or pricing strategies; rather, success depends on understanding the deep-seated motivations and behavioral patterns that drive the end-user. This includes not only conventional factors such as price, product quality, and availability, but also the power of brand reputation, trust built by years of consistent performance, and the impact of word-of-mouth recommendations.

A unique feature of the Indian cement market is the outsized influence exerted by intermediaries—dealers, sub-dealers, and masons—who serve as trusted advisors between the company and its customers. Masons and contractors, in particular, play a dual role: they are both technical experts and relationship managers, guiding customers in product selection, building trust in the brand, and often determining the final purchase decision. This informal but highly effective network has its roots in India's community-driven construction environment, where interpersonal relationships and face-to-face recommendations carry substantial weight.

Bhubaneswar, the vibrant capital city of Odisha, exemplifies a fast-developing urban market where these dynamics are on full display. Over the last decade, Bhubaneswar has transformed into a major commercial and educational hub, with substantial investment in infrastructure, housing, and transportation. The presence of modern amenities, IT parks, universities, and a diverse population has contributed to a building boom, making the city a microcosm of broader trends in India's urban development. The proliferation of retail construction activity—ranging from independent houses and apartment buildings to small business establishments—has led to increased local demand for cement and heightened competition among top brands.

Despite having a product that is highly technical in nature, most retail purchase decisions in Bhubaneswar remain sensitive to a combination of tangible and intangible factors. While buyers assess cement based on durability, price, and packing, their perceptions are shaped equally by factors such as prior positive experience, the persuasiveness of dealers, and the reputation built over time by the manufacturer. Understanding the subtle variations in these preferences across consumer segments, and mapping how they interact with dealer and mason inputs, is therefore essential for brands seeking sustained competitiveness.

The current research was conceptualized and executed during my summer internship at Maha Solid HD Cement, a growing brand under the umbrella of My Home Industries Private Limited. My internship provided an unparalleled opportunity for hands-on exposure to real-world market conditions, firsthand interaction with both primary and secondary data sources, and deep engagement with the key stakeholders comprising the cement retail value chain. By conducting field visits, administering structured questionnaires, and analyzing consumer responses specific to Bhubaneswar, I have sought to shed light on the factors shaping purchase decisions, the hierarchical order of influences, and the relative brand perception among retail buyers.

Beyond direct commercial implications, research in the area of consumer buying behavior for cement has significant policy-level and societal relevance. It can reveal patterns that help companies refine customer engagement, optimize distribution strategies, and deliver better value to the end-user. At a broader level, these insights can enhance consumer satisfaction, support the adoption of better construction practices, and contribute to the growth and modernization of India's building materials sector.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The research objectives were carefully formulated in alignment with the core topic and practical realities observed during fieldwork. The objectives are as follows:

1. To analyze the factors influencing consumer buying behavior for cement in Bhubaneswar.

This objective aims to identify the key factors that shape purchasing decisions among retail consumers. It includes aspects such as price, brand image, quality, mason/dealer recommendation, and past experience.

2. To identify the most preferred cement brands among retail consumers.

This objective focuses on determining which cement brands are most favored in the market. It highlights consumer brand preferences and reveals how loyalty or switching behavior affects purchasing patterns.

3. To Provide actionable recommendations to cement companies based on consumer insights.

This objective is to derive practical suggestions for cement companies by analyzing consumer behavior data. The insights will help improve marketing strategies, brand positioning, and customer engagement.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the present study is firmly anchored in the retail cement market of Bhubaneswar, Odisha. It focuses primarily on understanding the key factors that influence purchase decisions among individual consumers who buy cement from retail outlets for personal or small-scale construction purposes. Although Maha Solid HD Cement serves as the context for this research, the study encompasses other major players operating in the market, such as UltraTech, Dalmia, ACC, Ramco, Ambuja, JSW, and others, to provide comparative insights.

Geographically, the study is confined to different localities within Bhubaneswar, ensuring a mix of urban, peri-urban, and developing areas for comprehensive data coverage. The investigation revolves around consumer interactions at dealer points, mason recommendations, and brand perceptions, primarily relying on primary data collected through structured questionnaires. Key stakeholders considered in this study include retail consumers, dealers, and to an extent, masons whose influence is pivotal in shaping consumer choices.

The findings are intended to offer actionable recommendations for cement marketers and industry stakeholders wishing to deepen their understanding of the end-user market segment in Bhubaneswar.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

While this study aims to provide valuable insights into the buying behavior of retail cement consumers in Bhubaneswar, certain limitations must be acknowledged:

1. Geographical Limitation: The study is limited to Bhubaneswar and may not reflect consumer behavior in other regions or states.

2. Sampling Technique: The use of convenience sampling may not fully represent the entire population of cement buyers.

3. Time Constraint: Due to the limited duration of the internship, the data collection and analysis were restricted to a short time frame.

4. Respondent Bias: Some responses may be influenced by personal bias or lack of full awareness of available cement brands.

5. Limited to Retail Segment: The study focuses only on retail consumers and excludes large institutional or government buyers.

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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research	**Quantitative**
Research Design	**Descriptive Study**
Data Collection	**Primary Data**
Sample Area	**Bhubaneswar City, Odisha**
Sample Size	**110 Retail Consumers**
Sampling Technique	**Random and Convenience Sampling**
Research Approach	**Survey Method**
Research Instrument	**Structured Questionnaire**
Sampling Tool	**Field Visits and Telephonic Interviews**
Analytical Tool	**Multi-response Analysis, Microsoft Excel**
Data Collection Period	**June 5, 2025 - July 31, 2025**

Research:

This study adopts a quantitative approach, focusing on measurable data regarding consumer buying behavior.

Research Design:

A descriptive study was chosen to accurately profile and analyze the nature of retail cement purchases in Bhubaneswar.

Data Collection:

The findings are based entirely on primary data obtained by personally visiting retail points and through direct interaction with buyers and dealers.

Sample Area:

Research was conducted at multiple retail locations and neighborhoods across Bhubaneswar city, Odisha, to represent the local consumer market.

Sample Size:

Data was collected from a robust sample of 110 retail consumers, providing statistically significant insights into market dynamics.

Sampling Technique:

Both random sampling (to ensure unbiased respondent selection) and convenience sampling (to maximize response rate during field visits) were used.

Research Approach:

A survey method enabled standardized data gathering using questionnaires, ensuring consistency in collected information.

Research Instrument:

The principal tool was a structured questionnaire designed to capture factors such as influences on brand choice, brand perceptions, quality ratings, and more.

Sampling Tool:

Actual field visits to dealers and telephonic interviews with respondents enhanced both the reliability and reach of data collection.

Analytical Tool:

Microsoft Excel was used for data entry, cleaning, and tabulation, while multi-response analysis enabled the breakdown of key influencing factors and brand preference trends.

Data Collection Period:

The primary research was conducted during my internship—from June 5, 2025, to July 31, 2025—ensuring coverage of the summer construction peak season.

CHAPTER-II

- **Company Profile**
- **Industry Analysis**

COMPANY PROFILE

1. Company Overview

My Home Group is a large and fast growing company with a turnover in excess of **Rs. 4000 crore** based out of Hyderabad. The group has presence across the nation with interests in an entire value chain comprising of Construction, Cement, Power, Consultancy and Education.

My Home Industries Private Limited is a leading manufacturer of quality cement, with its brand ‘Maha Cement’, well known across the country, that caters to the various needs of construction in different geographies and has various sub-premium brands under its umbrella. All the products surpass the standards set by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS). At My Home Industries, every process is closely monitored and controlled, starting from the selection of raw materials to the finished product. The entire process is monitored cautiously until it’s packed and dispatched. The product ensures easier workability, lesser permeability, guards all the structures against nature’s fury, shields against corrosion and promises a long life. The company has been awarded a 5-star rating for outstanding work in the field of mining and the ‘Golden Peacock Award’ for sustainability, occupational health and safety.

The expansion at MCW Unit by 1.75 MTPA and the setting up of a grinding unit in Odisha of 1.5 MTPA have further enhanced our production capacity, which helps strengthen our position in the market. Maha Cement reaches its customers through a network of 5000+

dealers. The company is spread all over the country, with 29 Regional Offices and 170+ depots. Maha Cement has achieved phenomenal success in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, Odisha, Maharashtra, Bihar and Chhattisgarh. With the premium brands MAHA HD+, Solid HD+ and Solid Concrete Special Cement being added to its crew of warriors, My Home Industries has become a one-stop destination for all construction-based cement needs.

Committed to reducing carbon emissions and dedicated to a greener future, all our blended cement products have achieved a Maha green milestone with a Green Pro Certification from the CII (Confederation of Indian Industry).

My Home Group Chairman, Dr. Jupally Rameswar Rao, was presented with the distinguished CII Lifetime Achievement Award on May 18, 2023. This esteemed recognition was awarded during the CII Green Cementech conference at the HICC, Novotel Hotel. Mr. Jupally Ramu Rao, the Vice Chairman, received the award.

Vision

Our vision is to continue to develop solutions that make ‘living better’, be it through the construction of ‘World Class’ living and working spaces, illuminating households through the generation of power, manufacturing products like quality cement to build dream homes or enriching lives through imparting quality education.

The group balances its commercial interests with a commitment to innovation in engineering. From the homes we build to our growing investments in renewable energy, every action we initiate comes from our vision for the future.

Mission

Our mission is to contribute to building the future by social and capital infrastructure development by providing all kinds of cement that are environmentally efficient, enhance our competitive position and bring value to our customers, shareholders and employees through creation of an environment of empowerment with respect for company’s values.

2. Type and Structure of the Firm

MHIPL is a private limited company. It operates under the larger umbrella of My Home Group, which has diversified business interests in construction, power, education, and media. MHIPL functions as an independent cement manufacturing unit with state-of-the-art production facilities.

3. Capital Structure

Being a private limited entity, MHIPL's capital is raised through equity and internal accruals. The company has strategically reinvested its profits into expanding production capacity and upgrading technology. It also attracts private investments and loans for infrastructure development.

4. HR Policy and Organizational Structure

The company follows a decentralized organizational structure with clear departmental roles and responsibilities. MHIPL promotes talent development through training, welfare schemes, and a strong performance appraisal system. Safety and compliance are integral to its HR philosophy.

5. Financial Performance

Over the years, MHIPL has recorded steady growth in revenue and profits. The total revenue in FY 2023-24 crossed INR 4,500 crores with an operating margin of approximately 18%. Net profit was around INR 550 crores. The company maintains a healthy debt-to-equity ratio and strong cash flows.

6. PRODUCT MIX

1. Maha Cement

A. Maha Cement – OPC 43 Grade

It is manufactured by grinding the high-quality clinker with superior quality gypsum in optimum quantity. This is the most common type of cement used for construction purpose. It is ideal for RCC, PCC, all types of masonry work and finishing work like plastering etc.

B. Maha Cement – OPC 53 grade

Maha Cement – OPC 53 grade cement, is a high strength, best quality cement designed to suit the modern construction practices. It is manufactured with excellent quality clinker, containing high percentage (56-60%) of Tri-calcium Silicate (C3S), and optimum quantity of gypsum. This cement is ideal for designing high strength, high performance concrete used in high rise buildings, bridges, flyovers, pre-stressed concrete applications, under water concreting, concrete roads etc.

Due to its uniform and consistent 28 days' compressive strength 60 MPa. It is the most preferred brand by Ready Mix Concrete manufacturers and infrastructure project engineers.

C. Maha Cement PPC

Maha Cement – Portland Pozzolana Cement (PPC) is premium blended cement manufactured by inter-grinding the high quality clinker with superfine processed fly ash. The clinker used here is specially made with high percentage of Tricalcium Silicate C3S (58-60%). Only high quality fly ash from select chambers of Electrostatic Precipitators (ESPs) are extracted and transported in closed bulkers is used to manufacture Maha Cement. Clinker and fly ash with desired proportion of gypsum is inter-ground in high efficiency closed circuit Ball Mills. The "O-Sepa"and SKS separators used in the mills enable us to maintain high fineness (about 350 m2/kg) and good particle size distribution (PSD).

Maha Cement thus manufactured surpasses the compressive strength requirement of OPC 53 grade at 3, 7 and 28 days while enabling you to get excellent durability in concrete.

D. Maha Cement PSC

Maha Cement PSC is conforming to the IS 455-1989, is manufactured from high quality clinker and superior quality granulated blast furnace slag. The slag used contains more than 95% glass content – the most desired parameter to manufacture PSC. The unique feature of our Grinding Units used for manufacturing this cement is the Vertical Roller Mills (VRM) – the most modern technology imported from Loesche GmBH, Germany. The clinker and slag are separately ground to reach high fineness level and then blended in a high efficiency mechanical blender. This has not only enabled us to achieve high fineness (Blaine 3700+ cm2/g) but also steep particle size distribution (PDS) which helps Maha Cement achieve high early strength and excellent durability properties in concrete.

E. Maha Cement CC

Maha Composite cement is manufactured from specially prepared clinker of high C3S (Tricalcium Silicates) content and carefully selected high glass content GGBS. Owing to the advanced technology of "separate grinding and blending", Maha Composite Cement has high fineness and optimum slag and clinker content, which ensure excellent early strength and durability properties.

2. <u>Maha HD + Cement</u>

A. Maha HD + OPC 53 Grade

Maha HD+ OPC 53 is a top-tier, high early-strength cement meticulously crafted to meet modern construction standards (IS 269-2015). Expertly manufactured by grinding high-quality clinker with Tricalcium silicates and superior gypsum, it achieves exceptional fineness.

This cement is the preferred choice for high-strength concrete in skyscrapers, bridges and infrastructure projects, thanks to its uniformity and consistent strength, which make it a standout in the ready-mix concrete &infrastructure sector.

B. Maha HD+ PPC

Maha HD+ PPC Cement is a specialized concrete product crafted at our cutting-edge manufacturing facility. It is produced using top-quality clinker rich in high Tri-Calcium Silicate (C3S) and meticulously chosen fly ash with high reactive Silica. At Maha Cement, quality assurance is an inherent aspect, meticulously upheld through the application of advanced QA methods and precision control equipment.

Thanks to these technological advancements, Maha HD+ PPC attains high early strength and exhibits superior durable properties. High fineness and uniform Particle Size Distribution (PSD) contribute to creating highly workable and cohesive concrete, resulting in a smooth surface that allows for the design of aesthetically pleasing homes.

3. Maha Solid HD+ Cement

For a strong and durable construction, you need super strong cement. My Home Industries Pvt. Ltd. (MHIPL) brings to you SOLID HD+ SUPER STRONG CEMENT, which is manufactured with the latest "Separate Grinding and Blending" technology. In this technology, specially prepared clinker contains high Tri-Calcium Silicate (more than 58%) and carefully selected mineral additives like granulated slag with high glass content and superior quality imported mineral- gypsum and separately ground in 220 tonnes per hour Vertical Roller Mill (VRM) imported from Germany. High Fineness and Uniform Particle Size Distribution.

Unlike the combined grinding in "Ball Mill", the Vertical Roller Mill gives high fineness and uniform Particle Size Distribution. Due to very high fineness, SOLID HD+ SUPER STRONG cement reacts fast, giving "HIGH EARLY STRENGTH"

4. Solid Concrete Special Cement

Solid CONCRETE SPECIAL is a composite cement manufactured as per IS 16415. It is a new variety of cement introduced in the market, mainly to benefit the customers by offering various application advantages over other cements. Since it is manufactured by mixing Ground Granulated Blast furnace Slag (GGBS) and Fly Ash (FA), it has the beneficial properties of both **Portland Slag Cement (PSC)** and **Portland Pozzolana Cement (PPC)**.

Solid CONCRETE SPECIAL Cement in comparison to other cements exhibits high durability and high strength in harsh environment. The excellent properties make this the preferred choice of cement for all types of residential and infrastructure projects. It is very useful where concrete is exposed to harsh chemicals such as waste water treatment and marine applications.

7. Marketing Mix

Product: High-durability, moisture-resistant, fine-quality cement used in both residential and infrastructure projects.

Price: Competitive pricing strategy with region-specific discounts.

Place: Strong distribution network across South and East India, with over 3,000 dealers and sub-dealers.

Promotion: Focus on mason loyalty programs, dealer incentives, local media ads, and community outreach.

8. Customer Segments

- Retail customers (individual house builders)

- Contractors and masons

- Institutional clients (government and private projects)

9. Positioning and Branding Strategy

Maha Solid HD Cement positions itself as a symbol of strength, longevity, and reliability. The brand promotes its "HD" (High Durability) advantage through both digital and on-ground campaigns, using field experts (dealers, masons) to endorse its quality and performance. Its branding leans on trust, technical superiority, and consistent quality across different geographies.

INDUSTRY ANALYSIS

1. Industry Overview

India is the second-largest cement producer in the world. The cement industry is a key component of infrastructure development and a significant contributor to GDP. The total market size of the Indian cement industry is over 550 million metric tonnes per annum (MTPA) as of 2024.

2. Structure and Nature of Competition

The cement industry in India is oligopolistic in nature. A few large firms like UltraTech, Shree Cement, Ambuja Cements, Dalmia Bharat, and My Home Industries dominate the market. These players compete on pricing, distribution strength, and brand loyalty.

3. Barriers to Entry and Exit

Barriers include high initial investment, complex regulatory requirements, and the need for a vast distribution network. Exit barriers include sunk costs and long-term contracts.

4. Emerging Trends

Product Innovations: Blended cements, eco-friendly ("green") cements, OPC/PPC variants with additives for durability.

Marketing Trends: Increasing use of digital platforms, loyalty programs for dealers/masons, focus on technical education.

Growth Drivers: Urbanization, government housing schemes, highway/building projects.

Challenges: Price wars, fluctuating raw material costs, need for continuous upgradation and sustainability compliance.

CHAPTER-III

- **Competitor Analysis**
- **Porters 5 Forces Analysis**

Competitive Landscape:

Companies are actively engaging in a multitude of strategies to navigate challenges, seize opportunities and maintain their competitive edge. Efforts to reduce carbon emissions, optimize energy consumption and enhance waste management practices are becoming integral components of their operations. Investments in research and development have led to the development of alternative cementitious materials with lower carbon footprints, demonstrating their commitment to environmentally responsible production. Companies are also expanding their product portfolios to cater to diverse market needs. They are introducing specialized cement variants designed for specific applications, such as high strength cement for critical infrastructure projects and blended cements with added durability for coastal regions. This flexibility allows them to address varying customer requirements and seize niche markets. Furthermore, market leaders are focusing on enhancing their distribution networks to ensure the availability of their products across the country. Strategic collaborations, partnerships, and investments in infrastructure are enabling them to penetrate both urban and rural areas efficiently.

The report has provided a comprehensive analysis of the competitive landscape in the market. Detailed profiles of all major companies have also been provided. Some of the key players in the market include:

1. **ULTRATEACH**
2. **DALMIA**
3. **RAMCO**
4. **SHREE**

1. ULTRATECH

UltraTech Cement Limited is the cement flagship company of the Aditya Birla Group.
A USD 8.9 billion building solutions powerhouse, UltraTech is the largest manufacturer of grey cement and ready mix concrete (RMC) and one of the largest manufacturers of white cement in India. It is the third largest cement producer in the world, excluding China. UltraTech is the only cement company globally (outside of China) to have 175+ MTPA of cement manufacturing capacity in a single country. The Company's business operations span UAE, Bahrain, Sri Lanka and India.

UltraTech has a consolidated capacity of 192.26 Million Tonnes Per Annum (MTPA) of grey cement. UltraTech has 34 integrated manufacturing units, 34 grinding units, one Clinkerisation unit and 9 Bulk Packaging Terminals. UltraTech has a network of over 1.4 lakh channel partners across the country and has a market reach of more than 80% across India. In the white cement segment, UltraTech goes to market under the brand name of Birla White. It has two White Cement units and three Wall Care putty units, with a current capacity of 2.6 MTPA. With 395 Ready Mix Concrete (RMC) plants in 155 cities, UltraTech is the largest manufacturer of concrete in India. It also has a slew of speciality concretes that meet specific needs of discerning customers. Our Building Products business is an innovation hub that offers an array of scientifically engineered products to cater to new-age constructions.

UltraTech pioneered the UltraTech Building Solutions (UBS) concept to provide individual home builders with a one-stop-shop solution for building their homes. This is the first pan-India multi-category retail chain catering to the needs of individual home builders (IHBs). The purpose of this initiative is to engage with home builders at all stages of the construction cycle, empower them with quality construction products and services, and assist in the completion of their dream homes.

UltraTech works to actively contribute to the social and economic development of the communities in which it operates in. The Company's social initiatives focus on education, healthcare, sustainable livelihoods, community infrastructure and social causes. UltraTech reaches out to more than 1.8 million beneficiaries in over 500 villages in 16 states across India.

2. DALMIA

Founded by Late Shri Jai Dayal Dalmia – a pioneer, philanthropist and industrialist – in 1939, Dalmia Bharat Limited is the 4th largest cement company in India with an installed cement manufacturing capacity of 49.5 MnT per annum spread across 15 cement plants in 10 states. With a robust network of approx. 49,300 channel partners, the company presently services more than 23 states.

Over the last decade, Dalmia Bharat has emerged as one of the fastest growing cement companies with its capacity and revenue growth pegged at almost 14% and 17% CAGR respectively. Despite this extraordinary growth, Dalmia Bharat remains one of the lowest total cost producers of cement in India with a proven track record of operational and financial performance.

Dalmia Bharat is a pioneer in the area of sustainability as it is the first cement company to commit to become carbon negative by 2040. The DNA of every employee at Dalmia Bharat is ingrained with its operating philosophy – 'Clean and Green is Profitable & Sustainable'. The company currently has one of the lowest CO2 footprints amongst all cement companies globally. It has also been ranked No. 1 by the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) in 2018 for business readiness for the lowest carbon transition.

Dalmia Bharat is India's largest manufacturer of slag cement. Dalmia Bharat is also one of the First Triple Joiners of the Climate Group's RE100, EV100 and EP100.In addition to being a trusted brand in each region of its operation, Dalmia Bharat believes in a multi-faceted and inclusive growth, and values each of its employees dearly. The Company invests heavily in research and development – operating three R&D centers as robotic labs equipped with cutting-edge technology. As champions of sustainability, Dalmia Bharat takes pride in being an enabler of growth, green cities and a greener world for tomorrow.

3. RAMCO

Ramco Cements embarked on its journey in 1961 under the stewardship of Shri P.A.C. Ramasamy Raja. Over the years, we have established ourselves as one of the largest cement manufacturers in the country, producing cement, dry mix and concrete across 15 state-of-the-art production facilities located in India.

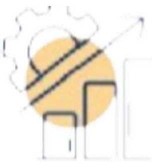
Ramco has come a long way

• From an initial capacity of 200 Tonnes Per Day (TPD) to capacity of 24 MTPA today.

• From operating the business in a single unit with single product in a heavily controlled era to becoming multi product, multi location company.

• From a team of few hundred people in 1961 to a team of more than 3,000 people today.

Vision Build. Strengthen. Nurture



Mission

Becoming the most trusted construction solution partner by creating innovative products which are market leaders for each type of application without compromising our commitment to ethics, environment, our people and our society and responsibly building long term relationships with every one of our stakeholders.

4. SHREE

Shree Cement Limited is one of India's Top cement producers and among the fastest growing, with an installed capacity of 43.4 million Tonnes Per Annum in India and 47.4 including overseas. Be it OPC/PPC/PSC, Bag packing or loose cement in bulkers- our products meet the requirements of different customer segments. Shree also has an installed Power Generation Capacity of 752 Mega Watts which includes Waste Heat Recovery Power, Solar Power, Wind Power along with others. Known for innovation in marketing by creating new segments, quick rollout of distribution networks closes to markets, Shree is consistently winning trust of customers.

Since our founding year in 1979, we have been committed to the cause of sustainable, inclusive growth and this has been possible by building a culture that promotes continuous improvement, innovation, care and collaboration, through which we drive operational excellence in products, processes and people. This has made us a company that cares for its customers and has enabled us to serve markets across India and the Middle East. Shree Cement has a consolidated Cement Production Capacity of 47.4 Million tonnes per annum (including overseas) and a Power Generation Capacity of 752 Megawatts. Our operations span across India and the UAE with 4 integrated plants in India, 1 in UAE and 9 Grinding Units. Shree Cement was also among the industry pioneers for the use of alternate fuel resources in the production of cement and today we have the highest installed capacity of Waste Heat Recover Power plants in the world, second only to China. While our past performance has been among the best in the industry, we don't believe in resting on laurels since it breeds complacency. Instead, we take pride in a culture that encourages taking opportunities as challenges and pursuing them to build a competitive edge. And that enables us to continue to break new grounds, create new synergies and set new benchmarks.

Our Vision

Lead in creating prosperity and happiness for all stakeholders through innovation and sustainable practices.

As an organisation, we spread happiness amongst everyone connected with our ecosystem and create wealth for investors, employees. business associates and communities where we operate by experimenting and implementing nev ideas for improving efficiencies and maximising the ratio of output product to input resources.

PORTER'S FIVE FORCES MODEL

Porter's Five Forces Analysis is a framework developed by Michael E. Porter that helps organizations assess the competitive forces in their industry, enabling them to make informed strategic decisions. This analysis examines five key factors that affect the industry's competitiveness. Let's apply this framework to the cement industry, which produces one of the most widely used construction materials.

1. <u>Threat of New Entrants:</u>

The cement industry typically has high barriers to entry. Establishing a new cement manufacturing plant requires substantial capital investment, access to raw materials, and compliance with various environmental and regulatory requirements. Furthermore, economies of scale are crucial in this industry, making it difficult for new entrants to compete with established firms.

2. <u>Bargaining Power of Suppliers:</u>

The cement industry relies on raw materials such as limestone, clay, and gypsum. The bargaining power of suppliers can be significant if there are limited sources of these materials. However, this power can be mitigated if there are multiple suppliers, and the industry players can easily switch between them.

3. Bargaining Power of Buyers:

The buyers in the cement industry are mainly construction companies and contractors. Their bargaining power can be high if they purchase in large volumes or have several alternatives for cement suppliers. This power can influence the pricing and terms of the contracts.

4. Threat of Substitutes:

In the cement industry, substitutes are alternative construction materials like steel, wood, or composite materials. The threat of substitutes depends on factors such as cost, performance, and customer preferences. A high threat of substitutes can affect the demand for cement.

5. Competitive Rivalry:

The cement industry is highly competitive. Numerous companies compete for market share, and the intensity of competition is often driven by factors like price, quality, and innovation. High competition can lead to price wars, reducing industry profitability.

CHAPTER-IV

Customer Analysis

INTRODUCTION

Understanding the customer is vital in any industry, especially in the cement sector where purchase decisions are influenced by a combination of technical knowledge, trust, and experience. This chapter analyzes the current and potential customers of Solid HD Cement and competitors in the Bhubaneswar market, based on the data collected from 110 respondents.

Who Is the Customer?

- The primary customers for Maha Solid HD Cement in Bhubaneswar are individual house builders, small contractors, and property owners engaged in residential or small-scale commercial construction.
- Secondary customers include masons and contractors who directly influence the buying decision of end-users.
- Competitors' customers are often loyal to legacy brands like UltraTech or ACC but may consider switching for better quality, price, or personal recommendation.
- Non-customers typically include large institutional buyers, infrastructure companies, or those purchasing alternative construction materials.

Customer Segments:

Current customers: Local home builders, renovators, small business owners.

Potential customers: New property buyers, upcoming residential project owners, and dissatisfied users of competing brands.

Who Buys, Influences, and Consumes the Product?

Buyers: Usually the house owner or the primary decision maker in the family.

Influencers: Masons, contractors, and local dealers play a crucial role.

Reference Groups: Family, friends, and neighbours also impact brand consideration and are sources of informal reviews and advice.

End User: The consumer is ultimately the end user whose construction work benefits from the cement’s quality.

Factors Influencing Consumer Behaviour

From the analysis of primary data, key factors influencing cement brand selection include:

Cultural: Local customs, usage practices, and the high standing of masons in decision- making.

Social: Reference from social networks, word-of-mouth from neighbors and relatives.

Personal: Past satisfaction, perceived product quality, and price sensitivity.

Psychological: Brand image, emotional trust established through field support, and fear of construction failures.

Customer Buying Decision Process

The cement purchase decision often follows a five-stage process:

Problem recognition: Need for construction or repair.

Information search: Consulting masons, friends, or dealer for advice.

Evaluation of alternatives: Weighing brand options, past experience, price, and visible quality differentiators.

Purchase decision: Finalized after discussion with mason/dealer.

Post-purchase behaviour: Satisfaction assessed post-construction, influencing future loyalty and recommendations.

Satisfaction and Repurchase Intention

Satisfied customers, particularly those who experience quality and timely service, tend to stick with the brand and recommend it to others. CRM activities, like dealer follow-ups and availability assurance, can improve retention.

Emerging Trends

Shift to branded cement due to quality concerns.

Increased role of influencers (mason/dealer).

Growing awareness of cement grade (e.g., OPC 53 vs PPC).

Urban vs rural divide in decision-making patterns.

Cultural and demographic shifts influencing preferences for well-known national brands.

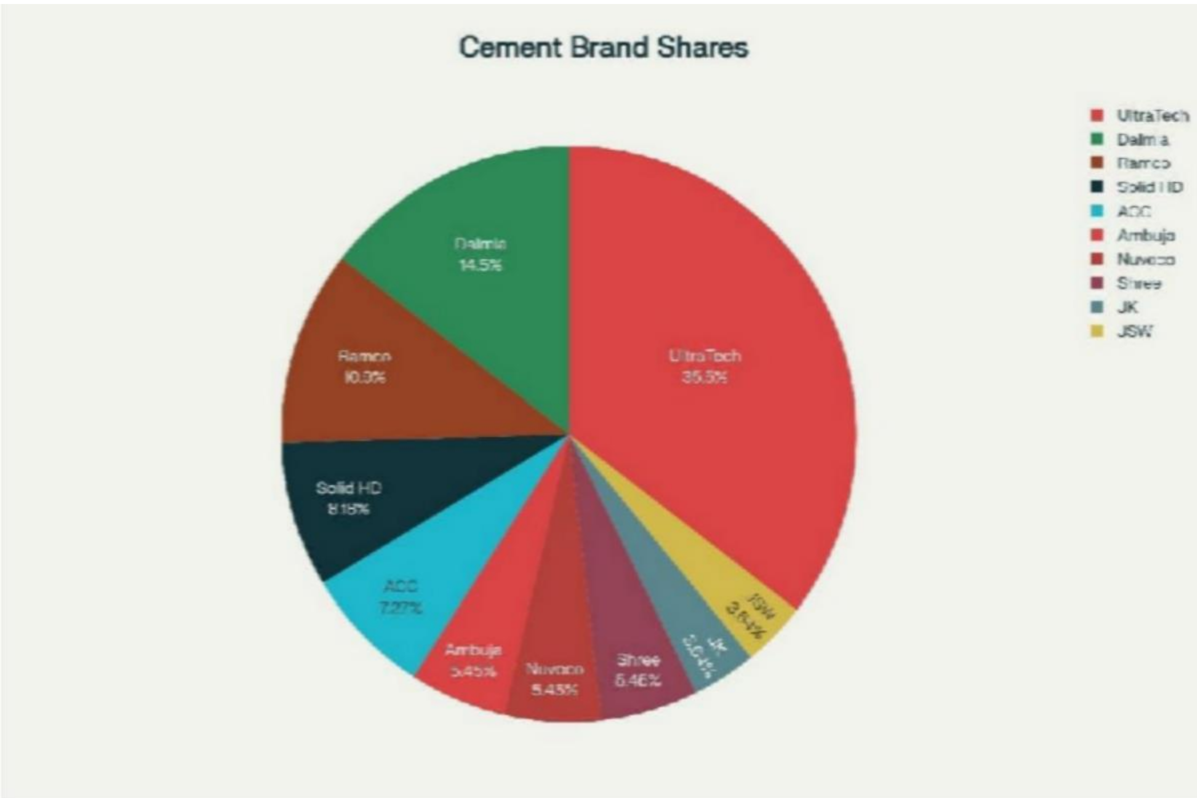
CHAPTER-V

- Data Analysis & Interpretation
- Findings

DATAANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

The primary objective of the research was to analyze consumer buying behavior while selecting cement in Bhubaneswar. A total of 110 retail consumers were surveyed using a structured questionnaire. The sample selection was based on convenience sampling, and the data collected was analyzed using graphs and interpretation.

COMPANY	RESOONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
ACC	08	7.27
AMBUJA	06	5.45
DALMIA	16	14.55
JK	04	3.64
JSW	04	3.64
NUVOCO	06	5.45
RAMCO	12	10.91
SHREE	06	5.45
SOLID HD	09	8.18
ULTRATECH	39	35.45



Retail Consumer Preference for Cement Brands in Bhubaneswar

INTERPRETATION

1. UltraTech is the Clear Market Leader:

UltraTech is preferred by the largest segment of retail customers in Bhubaneswar, accounting for 39 out of 110 respondents (35.45%).

2. Dalmia and Ramco Are Significant Contenders:

Dalmia holds the second-largest share with 16 respondents (14.55%), followed by Ramco at 12 respondents (10.91%).

3. Solid HD Shows Moderate Market Presence:

Solid HD is chosen by 9 respondents (8.18%). While not among the top three brands, Solid HD commands a respectable segment.

4. ACC, Ambuja, Nuvoco, Shree Hold Small but Steady Shares:

ACC: 8 respondents (7.27%)

Ambuja: 6 respondents (5.45%)

Nuvoco: 6 respondents (5.45%)

Shree: 6 respondents (5.45%)

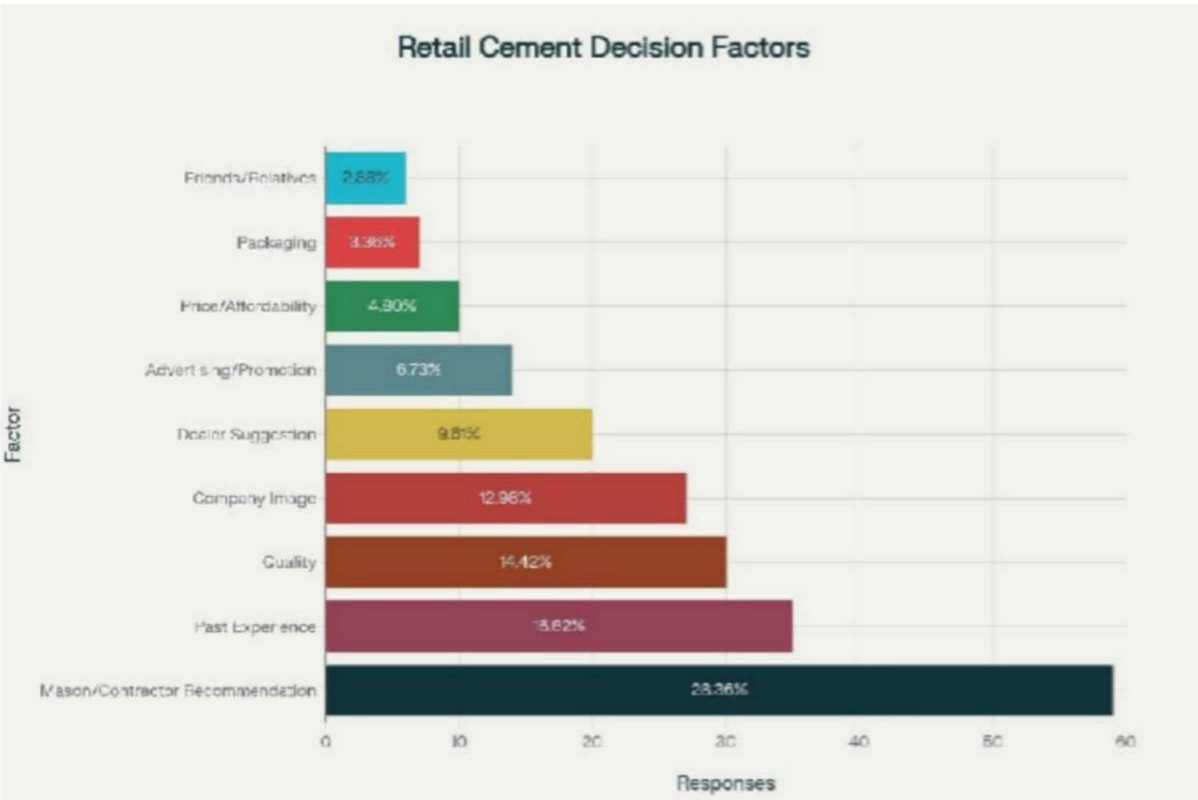
5. JK and JSW Have Limited Penetration:

Both JK and JSW were selected by just 4 respondents, each (3.64%).

Retail Consumer Cement Brand Preference – Multi-Response Analysis

Out of 110 total respondents, each consumer was asked to select multiple reasons for choosing a particular cement brand. This allowed for multiple factors to be considered in each brand's choice behavior, leading to a total of 208 responses across all brands. The overall responses received for each factor are as follows:

REASON	NO. OF RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Recommendation by mason/contractor	59	28.36
Company image	27	12.98
Dealer Suggestion	20	09.61
Past experience	35	16.82
Friends/relatives	06	02.88
Advertising/promotion	14	06.73
Price/affordability	10	04.80
Quality	30	14.42
Social media influence	0	0
Packaging	07	3.36
Others	0	0



INTERPRETATION

1. Mason/Contractor Recommendation (28.36%) is the dominant influence, clearly showing that retail customers in Bhubaneswar rely most on the advice of trusted technical experts when choosing cement.

2. Past Experience (16.82%) and Quality (14.42%) are the next most important factors. This highlights the market's emphasis on satisfaction from prior usage and confidence in the brand's product performance.

3. Company Image (12.98%) plays a significant role, confirming that a well-known, respected brand is more likely to be preferred.

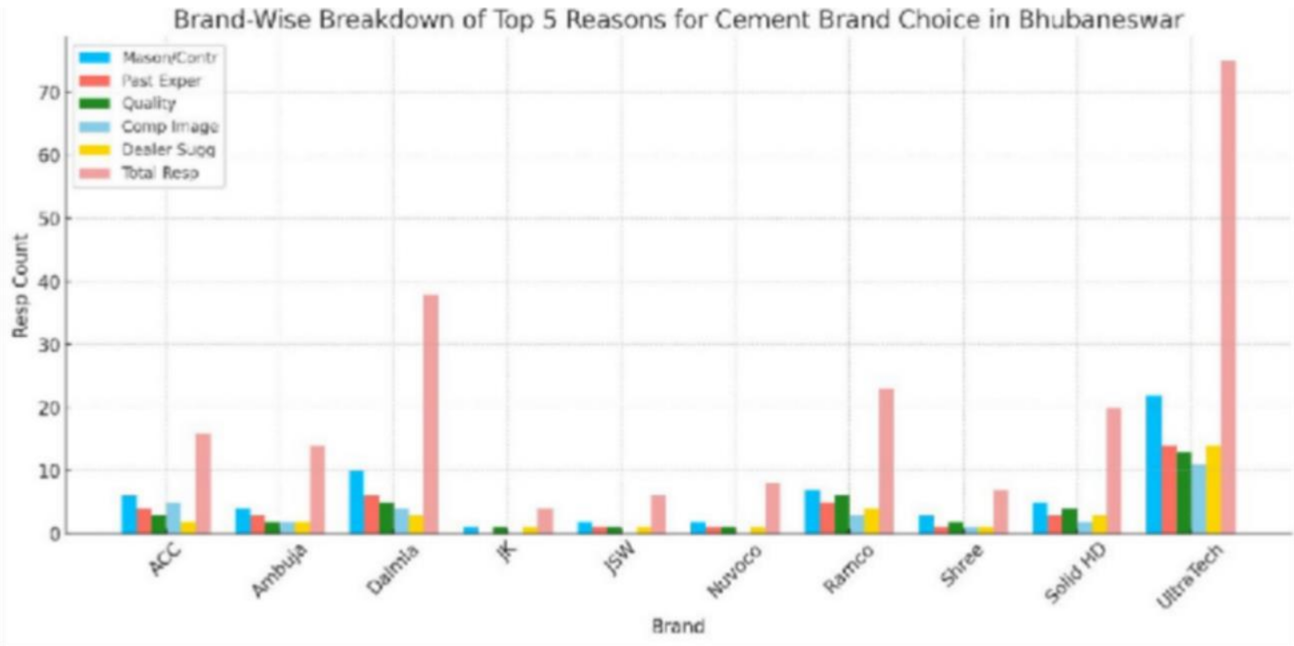
4. Dealer Suggestion at 9.61% is a notable influence, reflecting the importance of local retail relationships and the point-of-sale experience.

5. Advertising/Promotion (6.73%), Price/Affordability (4.80%), Packaging (3.36%), and Friends/Relatives (2.88%) all have lesser impact, indicating that personal, technical, and brand reputation factors heavily outweigh promotions or superficial features.

6. Social Media Influence and Others (0%) did not drive any buying decisions , highlighting a traditional, word-of-mouth driven buying environment in this sector and region.

Brand-Wise Breakdown of Top 5 Reasons

Brand	Mason/ Contractor	Past Experience	Quality	Company Image	Dealer Suggestion	Top 5 Total	Other Reason	Total Response
ACC	06	04	03	03	0	16	0	16
Ambuja	04	04	01	04	0	13	0	13
Dalmia	10	04	07	03	03	27	11	38
JK	0	02	0	0	02	04	0	04
JSW	0	04	0	02	0	06	0	06
Nuvoco	02	0	02	0	02	06	01	07
Ramco	08	04	03	04	02	19	04	23
Shree	02	01	0	0	02	05	02	07
Solid HD	06	03	01	03	01	14	06	20
UltraTech	21	09	13	08	08	59	15	74
Total	**59**	**35**	**30**	**27**	**20**	**169**	**39**	**208**



INTERPRETATION

ACC (16)

ACC shows strong performance in mason/contractor recommendation (6) and past experience (4), indicating a loyal customer base that trusts prior usage and seeks professional endorsement. Quality (3) and company image (3) also contribute, suggesting a balanced perception of reliability and brand identity. Dealer suggestion had no influence.

AMBUJA (13)

Ambuja is mainly chosen due to mason/contractor recommendation (4), past experience (4), and a strong company image (4), showing that brand legacy and long-standing market presence drive consumer trust. Quality plays a smaller role
(1), and dealer influence is negligible.

DALMIA (38)

Dalmia stands out with high influence from mason/contractor recommendation (10), quality (7), and past experience (4). It also holds decent value in company image (3) and dealer suggestion (3). This reflects a well-rounded brand perception supported by product performance and field-level push.

JK (4)

JK Cement relies primarily on past experience (2) and dealer suggestion (2). This shows that brand recall from previous use and dealer relationships are its main strengths. However, absence in mason recommendations and other quality perceptions signals a limited ground-level presence.

JSW (6)

JSW is driven by past experience (4) and company image (2). The brand appears to leverage its industrial reputation but lacks field-level influence such as mason recommendations or dealer push. Consumers selecting JSW likely have prior exposure or trust the brand's legacy.

NUVOCO (7)

buying behavior is shaped by a mix of mason recommendation (2), quality (2), and dealer suggestion (2), indicating a practical combination of influencer and retailerdriven purchases. While it lacks strong past experience or brand image recall, its ground network seems active.

RAMCO (23)

Ramco performs well across all key areas: mason recommendation (8), past experience (4), quality (3), company image (4), and dealer suggestion (2). This welldistributed influence profile indicates a robust brand reputation both in terms of product satisfaction and field presence.

SHREE (7)

Shree Cement shows moderate preference due to mason recommendation (2) and

dealer suggestion (2). It lacks significantly in brand image, quality, or past experience scores, suggesting room for improvement in long-term consumer perception and product recall.

SOLID HD (20)

Solid HD shows a healthy number of mason recommendations (6) and company image (3), past experience (3), reflecting effective field engagement and growing market recognition. However, lower scores in quality (1) and dealer suggestion (1) indicate potential areas to strengthen. Building long-term user trust and enhancing dealer partnerships can help solidify its market position.

ULTRATECH (74)

UltraTech dominates with strong scores in every key factor: mason recommendation (21), quality (13), past experience (9), company image (8), and dealer suggestion (8). Its widespread trust, product reputation, and comprehensive presence at all purchase-influencing levels make it the top consumer choice in Bhubaneswar.

FINDINGS

From the detailed data analysis and interpretation, the following key findings have emerged regarding the retail consumer buying behavior for cement in Bhubaneswar:

A. Consumer Decision Drivers

1. Mason/Contractor Recommendation (28.36%) is the single most influential factor shaping purchase decisions, highlighting a highly **influencer-driven market.**

2. Past Experience (16.82%) and **Quality (14.42%)** are the next important factors, signifying the role of satisfaction from previous usage and product trust.

3. Company Image (12.98%) influences consumer preference, with brands having long-standing market presence gaining trust.

4. Dealer Suggestion (9.61%) has a moderate influence, primarily at the point of sale.

5. Advertising, Price, Packaging, and Peer Influence (Friends/Relatives) play a minor role in the buying process.

6. Social Media Influence (0%) had no impact, indicating a traditional, word-of-mouth-dominated market.

B. Brand Preference and Market Share

1. UltraTech Cement is the clear market leader, chosen by 35.45% of respondents. It performs strongly across all key purchase drivers — mason recommendation, quality, experience, image, and dealer presence.

2. Dalmia (14.55%) and **Ramco (10.91%)** show balanced strength and serve as strong competitors, driven by consistent performance across multiple influencing factors.

3. Solid HD Cement (8.18%) reflects **moderate market penetration**, with good scores in mason recommendations and past experience but weaker in quality and dealer suggestion.

4. ACC (7.27%) and **Ambuja (5.45%)** benefit from strong brand legacy and past experience but lag behind in field-level visibility.

5. Shree, Nuvoco, JK, and JSW hold smaller market shares, largely driven by isolated strengths (like past use or dealer linkages) rather than comprehensive brand equity.

C. Brand-wise Insights

- **UltraTech** leads due to a **well-rounded brand presence** and field-level engagement.
- **Dalmia and Ramco** demonstrate **balanced consumer and influencer-based trust.**
- **Solid HD** shows **potential for growth** with improved quality perception and dealer relationships.
- **Brands like JK and JSW** have **low visibility**, relying mainly on past usage or image without ground-level reinforcement.

CHAPTER-VI

- Suggestions
- Conclusion

SUGGESTIONS / RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following strategic recommendations are proposed for Solid HD Cement and the broader cement marketing approach in Bhubaneswar:

A. For Solid HD Cement

1. Strengthen Dealer Network: Dealer recommendations were recorded in only 1 out of 20 responses for Solid HD. Increasing dealer-level incentives, training, and awareness programs can boost retail push.

2. Enhance Product Communication: Invest in marketing activities that highlight product quality and performance, as current perceptions are weak compared to competitors.

3. Build Consumer Trust through Testimonials: Showcase successful case studies, satisfied customer experiences, and endorsements from reputed contractors to enhance brand credibility.

4. Mason Engagement Programs: Since mason influence is the top decision driver, organize regular technical seminars, loyalty schemes, and incentive-based programs for masons and site contractors.

5. Improve Brand Visibility: Expand the use of wall paintings, site hoardings, branded dealer boards, and attractive point-of-sale materials in high-traffic areas to increase recall.

6. Run Targeted Local Promotions: While advertising's overall impact is low, focused hyperlocal campaigns (radio spots, mobile van branding, street banners) can increase visibility in specific markets.

B. For the Cement Industry at Large

1. Prioritize Influencer Marketing: Position masons and contractors as primary marketing partners, offering them training and incentives to recommend the brand to end consumers.

2. Enhance Consumer Education: Conduct awareness drives to educate buyers on cement grades, usage suitability, and the long-term benefits of quality cement.

3. Segment-Specific Marketing: Brands with low recall should target niche segments (specific housing projects, rural markets, institutional buyers) before expanding presence.

4. Leverage Digital Tools Strategically: Begin investing in digital engagement (WhatsApp updates, YouTube tutorials, mason-focused mobile apps) to build long-term brand familiarity despite current low digital influence.

CONCLUSION

Based on the detailed analysis of consumer buying behaviour , several key insights emerged:

1. Mason and dealer influence remain the most significant factors in shaping retail consumer choices for cement brands. Personal recommendations are trusted more than advertisements or promotional campaigns.

2. Product quality and brand image play a major role in brand preference. Consumers associate well-known brands with durability and reliability.

3. Solid HD Cement enjoys recognition in certain pockets but lacks a strong dealer and mason push compared to leading competitors.

4. Advertising impact is relatively limited in influencing purchase decisions; however, local-level brand visibility through wall paintings, hoardings, and point-of-sale displays shows potential.

5. Many consumers have **low awareness about cement grades** and technical specifications, relying heavily on influencers like masons and contractors for decision-making.

6. Past experience with a brand builds long-term trust, indicating the importance of consistent quality and customer satisfaction.

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https://openai.com
https://www.perplexity.ai

QUESTIONNAIRE

CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR QUESTIONNAIRE

Section A: Basic Information

1. Name of the Consumer: ______________________

2. Contact Number: ______________________

3. Site/Project Address: ______________________

4. Type of Construction:

   Individual House [ ] Commercial Building [ ] Apartment [ ] Others:

5. Total Cement Required (in bags): ______________________

Section B: Cement Purchase Details

6. Which brand of cement do you intend to purchase?

ACC [ ]	AMBUJA [ ]	DALMIA [ ]
JK [ ]	RAMCO [ ]	SHREE [ ]
SOLID HD [ ]	ULTRATECH [ ]	Other

7. Please choose your top 5 reasons for choosing the brand

Advertising/Promotion [ ]	Company Image [ ]	Dealer Suggestion [ ]
Friends/Relatives [ ]	Packaging [ ]	Past Experience [ ]
Price /Affordability [ ]	Quality [ ]	Social Media Influence [ ]
Recommendation by mason/contractor	[ ]	Other

8. Are you open to buying a new brand if better reason available?

Yes [ ] No [ ] Maybe [ ]

Section C: Feedback

9. Any suggestions or feedback related to cement brands or the purchasing process? ______________________

____