

Capturing Pilgrims Mind Space in India: A Study of Sales Promotions at Maha Kumbh Mela Allahabad 2013 & Kumbh Mela Ujjain 2016

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Abstract

Kumbh Mela is held once in twelve years in India and is being hailed as largest congregation on earth. Kumbh Mela held in Allahabad in 2013 provided unprecedented learning opportunity and seminal scholarship for multi-disciplines spanning public health, business, religious expression, temporary infrastructure, and the makeshift economy among other subjects. Harvard university book 'Kumbh Mela - Mapping the Ephemeral Megacity', claims that Maha Kumbh Mela held in 2013 was better organized than FIFA world cup held in Brazil in 2014. This bears a testimony to the 'Globalizing Indian management thought'. The sheer size is indicated by the fact that as an estimate 120 million people visited the Kumbh Mela at Allahabad in 2013. These events made multinational and Indian companies to mull over sacred calendars and promote their wares and services. There were innovate sales promotions such as 'Lifebuoy se haath dhoye kya' to 'Kya apne dant snan kiya' by Dabur among others. Kumbh Melas as an event represents harmonious existence of religious beliefs and business. This also provides unique opportunity for the Marketers to contribute to the society for social responsibility, while demanding business leadership and cultural sensitivity from managers. The research article makes modest attempt to elucidate various sales promotions of select brands in the context of Kumbh Mela as religious events, and develops conceptual frameworks for understanding of sales promotions at religious events in India for the marketers.

Keywords: Maha Kumbh Mela, Ujjain Kumbh Mela, sales promotion, conceptual framework

Introduction

Hindu scriptures state that every human being should pursue the four aims of life i.e., "Purushartha"s namely dharma, (righteousness), artha, (wealth), kama (desires), and moksha (salvation); and being an instrument of god, live and experience life to the fullest level. It has to be carefully noted that dharma precedes all the other aims and is a guiding force. In the quest for moksha, human being needs to go several cycles of birth and rebirth, and needs a path for salvation. Pilgrimage or Tirtha -yatra is meant for inner purification and brings him closer to god and moksha. The term 'Tirtha' is used to describe the sanctity of the rivers and 'yatra' meaning pilgrimage. The rivers Ganga, Jamuna and Saraswati have been endowed with special benefits by gods. The Vishnusmirthiequates Tirtha

-yatra' to ashwamedha (Horse sacrifice) prescribe it as effective method for amends of all sins. Hindu religion gives great importance to pilgrimage and strongly believe the existence of god in pilgrimage. Kumbh Mela is regarded as sacred religious events which ascribe divinity to rivers and considered as great opportunity for pilgrimage. Scriptures recommend dip in these rivers at this places would wash away of the all sins and clears the path for Moksha (salvation). These events promote Satva Gunas and may also lead to self-transformation and self-purification.

Kumbh Mela is held at each of the four places viz. Haridwar, Allahabad (Prayag), Nasik, Ujjain and held once in every twelve years. The location of the places is determined by the positions of planets Sun, Moon, and Jupiter in different zodiac signs which are given below:

- a) Kumbh in Haridwar : Sun is the Aries and Jupiter in Aquarius
- b) Kumbh in Prayag: sun in Capricorn and Jupiter in Taurus
- c) Kumbh in Nasik: Jupiter enters Leo
- d) Kumbh in Ujjain: Sun is in Aries and Jupiter in Leo

According to Harish Bijoor a Bengaluru based brand expert “*Religion and size is a fantastic combination and Kumbh has both. Imagine Woodstock or soccer leagues in Brazil and the UK, and multiply the scale by 10. That's Kumbh for you.*”

The word Kumbh -- literally meaning 'pitcher' in Hindi and a powerful and complex symbol in Hinduism; and Mela, meaning “fair.” The Kumbh Festival is marked by the fact that it is held at the banks of holy rivers every 12 years. Maha Kumbh Mela in Allahabad is a route to salvation for many as they come to pray and take a dip in the holy waters of the Ganga. The land area is 1936.56 hectare and 14 sectors in 2013 and about 4,784 acres of land. The Kumbh Mela this time generated overall business of up to 150 billion rupees, according to ASSOCHAM, one of India's largest business lobbying groups and apart from generating employment for airlines, airports, tour operators and a host of other sectors. Fifty two companies participated in the event and around 100 million people attended the event.

Over the past 10 years, there is increasing importance of religion as factor in influencing the consumer behaviour in emerging markets. The landscape is changing, with consumers becoming more aware of the need to apply the guidelines of their faith to their lifestyles, such that they mix local values and material consumption practices with sacred symbols (Jafari and Suerdem, 2012). The dynamics between religion and the marketplace thus far has remained understudied (Muhamad and Mizerski, 2010). As brands gain cultural meaning, the interaction between brands and consumers shifts from static to collaborative ;

consumers become dynamic participants in this co-creation process through their consumption, allowing for identity co-construction as consumers and brands interact in the social space (Cova, 1997; Holt, 2002).

Brands increasingly are considered as living entities, and consumers become more communal in their pursuit of social identification, so literature has shifted from individually collaborative relationships with brands to communal identity co-construction (Cova and Cova, 2002). Essentially, the consumption act has become social (Badot et al., 2007).

Religiosity can be lived at a personal and intimate level, as a core value of the self (intrinsic religiosity), or it can be a source of social connection and personal benefit (extrinsic religiosity). Brands and religion function as substitutes in expressing self-worth (Shachar et al., 2011). In addition, religion and brands might both foster individual self-expressions, such that they serve as substitute routes for satisfying the desire for self-expression. Coherent with their argument, Shachar et al. (2011) confirm this effect for product categories in which brands have an expressive role (e.g., clothes, apparel) but not for functional product categories (e.g., batteries).

Marketers use sales promotions to boost sales. Sales promotion tools vary in their effectiveness to elicit different sales responses. Companies have a specific goal when they choose to use any promotional tool. Sales promotion tools vary in their effectiveness to elicit different sales responses. Growing number of marketers and academics argue that sales promotions have a detrimental impact on brand equity, increase consumer sensitivity to price, and are inefficient and frequently unprofitable in the short term.

Palazón-Vidal and Delgado-Ballester (2005) adopting a consumer-based brand knowledge perspective of brand equity, conducted a study which shows that non-monetary promotions are

more appropriate as a brand-building activity and that the product type exerts a moderator effect on the relationship between sales promotions and brand knowledge. Chandon et al. (1999) suggest that sales promotions actually offer consumers multiple benefits, both utilitarian and hedonic. The authors proved by conducting experiments that a promotion's effectiveness is determined by the range of benefits it delivers and the congruency these benefits have with the promoted product.

Mittal and Sethi (2011) observed that unlike in the West, in India brand loyalists outnumber price buyers by 200%. The study reveals that sales promotions, in India, do not help in category expansion. They are effective measures for inducing brand switching, stock piling, and purchase acceleration.

Kopalle et al. (2010) conducted study to study the effect of belief in karma on consumer expectations and found that karma does moderate (decrease) the effect of disconfirmation sensitivity on expectations.

Banerjee, (2009) observed that promotion type influences the rate of increase in market demand and is product category dependent. Promotional offerings which can be readily converted into monetary terms are more preferred to freebies but in the long-run, they can affect the overall value of the product. Retailer discount is preferred over advertised discount but has a negative perception. Hedonic freebies are least preferred; but have a higher perceived value.

Affiliation with a specific religion and the level of the religious intensity (i.e., religiosity) in turn affect consumer behavior through related but different paths (Wilkes et al., 1986). For example,

religious beliefs and religious commitment affect consumer ethical judgments and activism consistently but through empirically distinct pathways (Swimberghe et al., 2011a). Sales promotions offer Hedonistic and Utilitarian benefits. Hedonistic benefits include value and self-expression, exploration and entertainment and Utilitarian benefits (monetary savings, product quality and shopping convenience).

To our limited knowledge, the examination of sales promotion strategies in the context of religious congregation like Kumbh Mela has been unexplored in the Indian context. Given the intense religiosity (degree of faith and sanctity of the event) and diversity among the consumers of spirituality (demographic, socio-economic, age, gender, geography) and nature of the climate, it becomes imperative to understand the kind of sales promotion tactics employed by different organizations to be in sync with the customer, who has come for higher purpose. Historically, marketers have been using Kumbh Mela but Kumbh Mela held in 2013 was perhaps more complex and gigantic in nature. India has about 25,000 rural fairs each year and companies use around one-tenth of them to expand their rural presence.

The article has used secondary data to examine the sales promotion strategies at Kumbh Mela held at Allahabad (2013) and Ujjain (2016) and develops a conceptual framework to understand the marketing application of religious events and discusses the practical implications.

Analysis of Sales Promotion Activities and its Impact

The table 1 analyses the various promotions and its probable impact:

Table 1: Sales promotion at Maha Kumbh Mela 2013 at Allahabad

Brand	Strategy	Rationale	Impact
1.Lifebuoy	<p>The company hired 100 promoters, who took charge of 100 kitchens spread across the Kumbh Mela grounds and distributed impressed fresh rotis with the message 'Did you wash hands with Lifebuoy?' (Lifebuoy se haath dhoye kya?).</p> <p>The company created heat stamps to maintain the hygiene factor.</p> <p>Free sample distribution.</p>	<p>Opportunity to further the cause of handwashing with soap to prevent the spread of infection.</p> <p>Danger of spreading infections.</p> <p>Out of the box and unique branding of Lifebuoy through rotis at the moment of consumption.</p> <p>Generate trial.</p> <p>CSR Activity</p>	<p>Brand trial and usage.</p> <p>Huge brand recognition and recall.</p>
2.Vodafone	<p>Branded musical earmuffs and a message that instructed people to 'Dial 123 to listen to devotional songs'. Free passes for the movie.</p>	<p>Company is sensitive to the mood.</p>	<p>Usage, brand recognition.</p>
3.Revital	<p>Free samples and free distribution of Hanuman Chalisa</p>	<p>Company is sensitive to the mood.</p>	<p>Generate trial</p>
4. Coca-Cola	<p>Khushiyo ka sangam .</p> <p>Reduced price of 150 ml at Rs 5.</p> <p>Use of technology to connect with Gen Z.</p>	<p>Offering at affordable price.</p> <p>Connecting with younger tech savvy generation.</p> <p>In line with open happiness campaign.</p> <p>Leveraging on happiness as big idea.</p>	<p>Brand consumption or usage. Increase in sales.</p>
5. Emami	<p>Cross promotion , distribution of 'aarti sangrahas'</p>	<p>Brand trial and usage.</p> <p>Company sensitive to the needs of devotees</p>	<p>Sales</p>
6. Telecom brands	<p>Ferry to carry people</p>	<p>Making it free for the people to go the ghat provide free service as part of CSR.</p>	<p>Brand recognition and recall.</p>
7. Dabur	<p>Hajmola branded eateries.</p> <p>Free sample distribution at eateries</p>	<p>Free sample distribution at right place or moment of consumption.</p>	<p>Brand trial and recognition.</p>

8. Coca-Cola	Wi-Fi services at 12 of its 16 stalls for downloading free coke music and branded content	To connect with tech savvy generation	More than 11,000 downloads
9. Taaza tea	Free distribution of tea	As the temperatures are cold, the tea refreshes the pilgrims.	Brand trial and recognition. Earn goodwill of the consumers.
10. JCB	Demo of agricultural equipment	Majority of Rural audience visit.	Brand visibility and education.

Ujjain Kumbh Mela 2016 was held from 22nd April to 21st May. Simhastha Kumbh Mela is one of the four Kumbh Melas that is celebrated taking dip in the river Kshipra in Ujjain city of Madhya Pradesh. The sacred event is also eco-friendly with banning of plastics and allowing battery driven vehicles and use of bio –fuels, promoting CNG, e-rickshaws for transportation. Around 60 Million

people attended the event and area of over 3,000 hectares of land was prepared to host the massive crowd. Technology was integral part as GIS map of entire area was prepared and six zones of the township had 101 Wi-Fi centres and also enabling video-conferencing. Table 2 provides summary of sales promotions at Ujjain Kumb Mela held in 2016.

Table 2: Summary of brand sales promotions at Ujjain Kumbh Mela 2016

Brand	Strategy	Rationale	Impact
1. Dabur	Automatic tooth paste dispenser at hotel rooms and dharmashalas with tag line Kya apne dant snan kiya? Dabur Vatika branded merchandise on mirrors, combs and lights. Offering beauty advice to women pilgrims by advisors	Ease of usage and leverage event for consumer education. Leverage event for consumer education.	Brand usage and trial. Attract new customers. Positive impact on existing users. Brand recall and recognition
2. Airtel	Beautification drive at major ghats, installed over 500 recharge outlets for the convenience of the pilgrims. Provided 250 traffic barricades.	As part of social responsibility	Consumer goodwill and brand recall and recognition.
3. Vodafone	Special plans and providing technology helping people without being lost	Leverage religious occasion for short term sales. Fulfil social responsibility	Attract new customers. Consumer goodwill and brand recall and recognition.
4. Coca-cola	New outlets for consumption and dispensers	Leverage religious occasion for short term sales	Attract new customers

5.PepsiCo	Beverage dispensers	Leverage religious occasion for short term sales. Ease of consumption	Attract new customers
6.PSU's and private banks	e- lobby and new branch by Punjab National bank ,mobile ATM's,special debit cards, coin vending machines by banks such as ICICI,SBI and HDFC	Ease of financial transactions to pilgrims	Attract new customers
7.Oyo-rooms	Easy and affordable booking	Ease of stay for pilgrims	Attract new customers
8.Red Bus	Social media to encourage people to experience the Kumbh Mela at Ujjain and to plan a trip with Red Bus.	Leveraging religious tourism and increase traffic.	Attract new customers
9.Kansi Nerolac	Suraksha Wrist Band'- which are water-proof bands with local emergency contact of the police printed on them for senior citizen and children visiting the event. Suraksha tube for divers and life guards who patrol to rescue the pilgrims who wander into the deep river. Established Suraksha lost and found centre managed by the police force,	Insuring safety of the pilgrims and facilities	Customer goodwill.

In nutshell, the event provided opportunity for offering unique sales promotions , generate trial among new consumers ,products and services at reduced or special prices, new products and

services, opportunity for corporate social responsibility (CSR). The estimated figures of the Kumbhmela are given in Table 3.

Table 3: Estimated figures of Maha Kumbh Mela held in Allahabad (2013)& Ujjain (2016)

Maha Kumbh Mela (Allahabad 2013)		Ujjain (2016)
Total budget	Rs 1200 cr	Rs 5000cr
Expected revenue and taxes for UP government	Rs 12000 cr	
Employment potential	Over 6 lakh people	
Area	50.83 sq km	30 sq. km
Total people who visited over 60 days	10 Crore	5 crore
Potoon bridges and toilets	18 and 35,000	
Water pipes	550 km	
Temporary roads	155 kms	

(Source:<http://www.bemoneyaware.com/blog/kumbh-mela/last-visited-on-9/10/16>)

The 2013 Kumbh cohort exchanged a total of 146 million (145,736,764) text messages and 245 million (245,252,102) calls, resulting in a total of 390 million (390,988,866) communication events.

Development of Conceptual Frameworks and Related Hypotheses

Several brands that participated in the Mela belonged to hedonistic and utilitarian products. But the analysis of various sales promotions revealed that brands offered mix of hedonistic and

utilitarian benefits to the target segment or customers. It is very interesting to note that Coca-Cola “open happiness campaign” was being rewritten as “Khushiyo kasangam” the word sangam denotes the meeting of three rivers and happiness is replaced with word khushiya to suit the context. Thus the brand sales promotion offered both hedonistic and utilitarian benefits. Therefore there is a relationship between the type of product and type of benefit offered by sales promotion. This has been given in Table 4. It has implication for message and development of hypotheses.

Table 4

	Hedonistic products	High utilitarian products
High hedonistic benefits of sales promotion	1.Coca-Cola – Khushiyo ka sangam 2. Emami cross promotion with aarati sangrahs.	1.Vodafone musical ear muffs, 2.Free distribution of Hanuman chalisa by Revital
High/dominant utilitarian benefits of sales promotion	1.Coca-cola price discounts 2.Taaza tea cup free distribution Horlicks free distribution of biscuits	1.Agri –equipment demo 2.Kumbh Mela packs, 3.Lifebuoy se hath dodhye kya, 4.Free samples 5.free water distribution by Tata swach

Babin et al. (1994) observed that hedonic and utilitarian outcomes influence customer satisfaction, hedonic value indicated higher influence on customer satisfaction compared to utilitarian value. Consumption activities produce both utilitarian and hedonic outcomes, hedonic benefit or value to the customer is more subjective, and affective in nature whereas utilitarian is more function, task oriented and cognitive in nature. Ramanathan & Muyltermans (2010) observed that sales may also be influenced by factors such as weather, holiday periods and festivals, which are sometimes discounted. This is in agreement with other research findings such as Cooper et al. (1999), Divaker et al. (2005) and Dube (2004). Batra and Ahtola (1991) observed

consumers buy goods and services primarily for utilitarian (functional and practical attributes) and hedonistic (aesthetic appeal, multisensory experience and enjoyment) reasons. Addition of hedonic or utilitarian attribute to hedonic and utilitarian base product affects its choice, attitude and evaluation (Gill, 2008; Lim and Ang, 2008). It was very cold during Kumbh Mela at Allahabad (2013) and free samples of Taaza Tea were distributed and during Ujjain Kumbh Mela, the climate was very hot and beverage dispensers were provided much to delight of the pilgrims and thus giving amplifying both hedonistic and utilitarian benefit (convenience). Vodafone distributed hi-tech musical earmuff which protects pilgrims from cold weather while providing devotional music (in

-built) which is again combination of utilitarian and hedonistic benefits. Tata Swach partnered with UP water board and distributed one million litres of waters using 300 water purifiers spread over 28 booths. This is an excellent platform for CSR and well utilized by Tata Swach. Emami had Boroplus gaming zones and talent hunt for women providing fun and entertainment (hedonistic benefits). Dabur joined with restaurants to give free samples of Hajmola. Telecommunication organizations like Aircel, Airtel, and Idea sponsored dip at the sangam and also launched special Kumbh Mela packs. GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) Consumer

Healthcare had a basketball ring at its stalls where children can shoot the hoops and earn free cups of Horlicks and biscuits. Brands like Boroplus and Revital had free distribution and of aarathis and hanuman chalisa (unique association with strength). Coca-Cola had fifteen outlets and sold 150 ml at discounted price of Rs 5. Emami had Navratna massage parlours to give much needed relief to pilgrims.

Based on literature review, the following conceptual frameworks are proposed in figure 1 & figure 2

Figure 1: Conceptual Model for impact of sales promotions and CSR at religious event

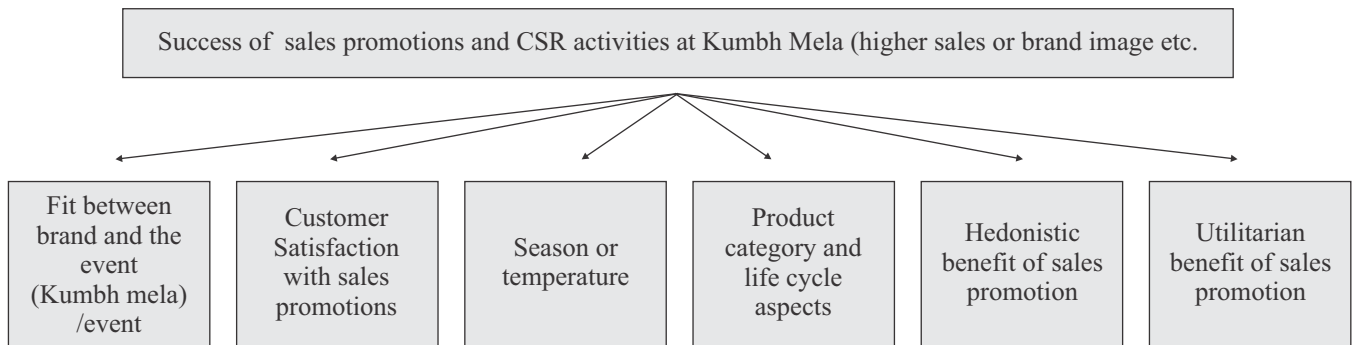
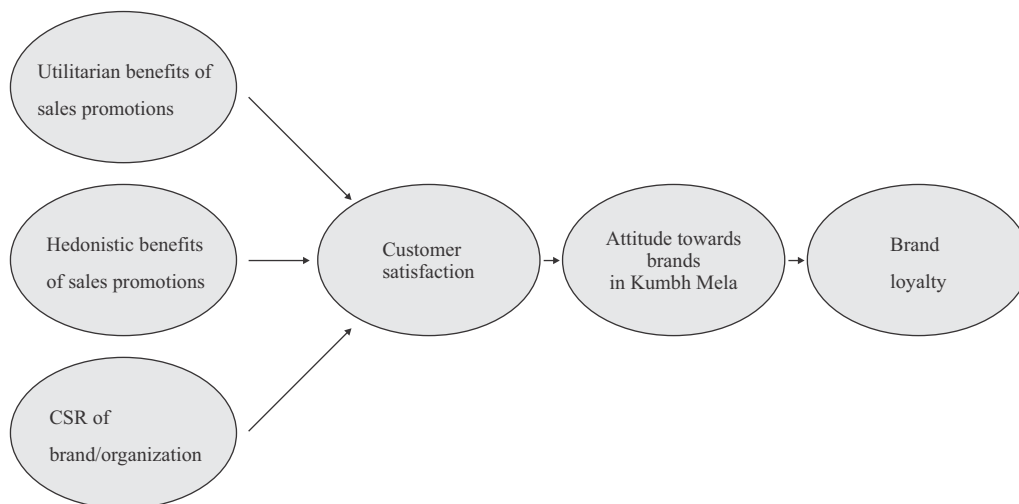


Figure 2: Conceptual framework for understanding sales promotions at Kumbh Mela



Sales promotions deliver hedonistic and utilitarian benefits leading to customer satisfaction. The customer post purchase would develop positive attitude towards brands and organizations participating in Kumbh Mela and eventually leading to brand loyalty (intention to buy again and positive brand advocacy).

Development of Hypotheses based on the literature review and conceptual framework:

H₁ – Consumers prefer sales promotions which offer hedonistic benefits.

H₂: Consumers prefer sales promotions which offer utilitarian benefits.

H₃: Consumers prefer sales promotions at religious events compared to regular sales promotions

H₄: Good Fit between brand and religious event enhances brand salience.

H₅: A sales promotion at Kumbh Mela (or religious events) increases the brand loyalty and brand salience.

H₆: consumers who try these brands are likely to

become potential buyers

H₇: Consumers respect the brands/organizations which participate in social responsibility

H₈: Brand trust and loyalty increases for the brands/organizations participating in social responsibility.

Sales promotion benefits: High involvement products can gain brand visibility and educate consumers with respect to product usage and lead generation. Low involvement product (FMCG) can generate trail and gain brand experience. These brands can also offered at reduced special prices (discounts). Brands can use the events for CSR activities. Thus based on sales promotion objectives and summarized in the Table 5

Table 5: Sales promotion objectives and degree of involvement

	High Involvement Brands	Low Involvement Brands
Non sales objective	Experience and visibility and consumer education. lead generation by agri equipment by JCB .Vodafone ferrying people from one ghat to another	Trial for free brand experience and free sample distribution.Ex- Revital, Hajmola , Hanamunachalisa,aaratisangraphas, welcome and map areas pamphlets by various FMCG brands . Kiosks to experience Navratana oil. Free downloading of music
Sales objective	Limited edition products or products like mobile phones at reduced price.	Ex- Free kumbh mela packs

Use of similar religious events by Marketers

In India many festivals are celebrated and temples have their annual rituals. The events like Kumbh Mela and Pushkar are based on the divinity ascribed to rivers and happen after long gaps in time period. One of the biggest tribal festivals of Asia, the Samakka-Sarakka Jatara started on February 10, 2016 with the arrival of Sarakka at Medaram. Sammakka Saralamma Jatara or Medaram Jatara is a tribal festival of honouring the goddesses celebrated in the state Telangana, India. The Jatara begins at Medaram in Tadvai Mandal in Warangal district. It is believed that after Kumbha

Mela, the Medaram jatara attracts the largest number of devotees in the country. It attracted 10 million in 2012 and 20 million in 2016.

The Godavari Mahi Pushkaram, the Hindu tradition associated with worship of River Godavari, got off to a devout start in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana with lakhs of pilgrims thronging the Pushkar Ghats along the over 1,000-km stretch of the river passing through the two States. According to legend, Pushkaram is a festival of rivers, 12 important ones in the country, occurring once in 12 years for each river. The river for each year's festival is based on the position of

Jupiter in the Zodiac, the pushkaram lasting for a period as long as the planet remains there. It is believed that Pushkarudu, or the Pushkar God,

who is so powerful as to make any river holy, travels with Jupiter. Figure 3 shows the typology of religious events with respect to Hindu religion.

Table 6: Typology of religious events in India wrt Hindu religion

	Annual events	Special Occasion events
National	Festivals (ex- Ugadi, Onam, Deewali, Dashera, Sankranti) (state wise)	Kumbh Mela (Allahabad 2013) ,Ujjain (2016)
Regional	Annual temple rituals (ex- Brahmotsavam) Jatara (ex-Samakka and Sarraka in Warangal)	Pushkaralu (Ex- Godawari Puskaralu held in 2015) (regional level)

Conclusions and Managerial implications

The religious congregations like Kumbh Mela offers enormous management challenges as well as marketing opportunities such as short term sales benefits but also for long term brand building. The marketers can explore various opportunities also from the angle of Cause related marketing and corporate social responsibility. Kumbh Mela is celebration of Indian diversity. Scope for cross promotions and tie in promotions. It is very challenging to design unique sales and advertising campaigns which call for out of the box thinking (ex- branding of rotis). Kotler opines the marketers pursue mind share, purse/valet share and heart share of the consumers. These kind of religious congregations act as perfect platforms to achieve these multiple objectives. Thus “Pilgrims mind space” is emerging as New P' of Marketing in India. Managers should be careful in highlighting utilitarian and hedonic attributes or values as for segments as they may give more weightage to utilitarian reasons. Given the fact that, large middle class and lower class as dominant segment , the sales promotions perhaps may be skewed towards utilitarian benefits. But innovative sales promotions like 'Lifebuoy se haath dhoye kya' to 'Kya apne dant snan kiya' by Dabur demonstrate combination of both benefits of sales promotions.

Unique brand sales and advertising opportunities:

These religious events offer life time opportunity for the marketers and brands as they attract huge and eclectic audience. Various organisations spanning Fmcg, BFSI, Agri equipment ,agri- inputs , consumer durables sectors can promote their brands for long term brand building and immediate sales in short term .These are given below

- a) Pilot testing of sales and advertising –Marketers can test various sales promotions offering hedonistic and utilitarian consumer benefits and advertising options before rolling out at regional and national level. Various co-promotions and cross promotions can also be tested quickly and also at very large scale.
- b) Consumer and Culture immersion – As part of studying culture and its influence on buyer behaviour executives operating and taking decisions at strategic and tactical level can visit these Melas and gain rich insights by observation and interacting with the customers. It is imperative for the executives from creative industry like advertising, sales and marketing, operations etc. to get first-hand knowledge of “real India” at these events by using observation and ethnography which can lead to insights, connections and perhaps

serendipitous discoveries in areas like product development and modification, pricing promotions, creativity, packaging etc.

- c) Brand salience - These events provide great opportunity for increasing brand salience, brand recognition and recall.
- d) Connecting with consumer in different context – The consumer is a pilgrim who has come for higher purpose but as a consumer still has unmet needs and wants. Brands also need to stay thick and thin with pilgrim.
- e) Social responsibility – These events offer excellent platform for fulfilment of social responsibility as they there are diverse needs (safety, food, hygiene, water, sanitation, communication and transportation etc.) which have to be provided to the pilgrims. This can be done either individually or in PPP (private public partnerships). They also offer opportunities for cause related marketing.
- f) Unique media options - These events also provide interesting outdoor advertising media such as Billboards, LED screens, arch gates, balloons, boats, t-shirts, caps, wall painting, huge posters and aerated booklets, bathing calendaretc. This gives great opportunity to leverage OOH (Out of home) media.
- g) Spike in demand – The short term sales promotion can cause sudden increase in sales of the product.
- h) On ground activations – Events can promote various games zones etc., providing fun and entertainment and indirectly promote brands. This can be very effective way for experiential marketing.

- i) Use of technology and green practices – The events given an opportunity to use technology (mobile, internet etc.) to address various needs. These events also provide chance to explore and implement green practices (transportation, lighting, waste disposal etc.) which act as precedence for all other religious events to be conducted in India. This can be further co-promoted as part of Swachh Bharat Campaign.

Limitations and scope for further research

Study is exploratory in nature and relies on secondary data. The study can be further extended by interacting with the brand managers. The hypotheses developed can be further tested by conducting descriptive study using survey and structural modelling.

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