SPIN SELLING CONCEPT & ITS APPLICATION IN THE BUSINESS PERFORMANCE OF SACHET PRODUCT IN BANGLADESH

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Abstract:
Bangladesh is lower middle income oriented country (LMIC) in South Asia where sachet product has become more popular than other scaling products. SPIN selling is an approach of consultative selling or presenting an offer to the potential clients considering their pain-points using a powerful questioning process. This study attempts to find out the reasons of gaining popularity of sachet product in Bangladesh. SPIN Selling concept is the age-old concept used in this respect. A sample size of 120 was collected from the salespeople of 15 different companies that are co-integrated sachet product in their product line. A self-administered questionnaire is applied for data collection and This study reveals hat the existence of the applicability of SPIN concept in a moderate format in Bangladesh. The findings of the study postulate that in Bangladesh, sachet product is introduced as follower product and it will be helpful for the marketing executives, R&D officers or decision makers of concerned firms in re-considering their strategic thinking aiming to gain sustainable competitive advantage in the product market of Bangladesh for sachet product.

Key words: SPIN, Sachet Product, Situation Analysis, Problem Identification, Need Pay-off.

JEL classification: M30, C25, C42, E30, D74

1. INTRODUCTION

'Selling' is the conventional wisdom of business in the world. This concept is widely used in different approaches in different countries for comparatively better business in the 21st century. Since, fulfillment of unlimited and scattered demand is the basic function of business executives considering well scared inadequate wealth. Considering the demand-wealth relationship, business prime objective is determined on the basis of sound distribution proceedings. In order to accomplish the prime objective of a business, diversification of product and product line and adaptation of an energetic pool of sales force are required. Therefore, diversification of product or product line should be innovated or upgraded or modified and sales force should be effective and efficient in their skills and experiences to transfer the ownership of goods or services from producer to other channel of distributors i.e. wholesaler, retailer etc. Salespeople are used as the driven force by which, a business firm accomplishes its strategic goals from the market. Salespeople use various selling approaches to achieve the strategic goals of a firm. For successive business performance, SPIN selling concept is one of the most useful, value added, decisive, and highlighted approach (Rackham, 1988).

2. SACHET PRODUCT

Sachet, the word is from French dictionary which means mini or small. The concept sachet is used as a specialized form of product with respect to price, size, packaging, usage and cost effectiveness (Sen, 2001; Jardine, 2006; Banik, 2010). Generally sachet is used in the area of Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) (Sen, 2001). Therefore, sachet is defined by tiny form of product category-offer to the market for faster growth of business performance. In Bangladesh, sachet is more popular category product (Banik, 2010). Both national and Multinational companies use sachet products as diverse product strategy to get better competitive advantage from the market (Shohrowardhy, 2015). Generally, Soap (lux mini), biscuit (mini pack), aerated drinks (junior pack), toothpaste (mini size), chocolate, tea (tea bags), detergent (wheel 50 gm), wheat flour (Atta,200 g), oil (50ml bottle, parachute tuny), bread mini size and grocery items are treated as span of sachet products in Bangladesh. A total of 15 different categories of sachet products are considered in this study.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

General proposition of strategic marketing is that marketers must respond to consumers' changing buying habits and service requirements (Cravens, 2003) which are defined as 'increased incidence of centralized purchasing' (Rackham, 1998). Consumers are encoding-decoding devices of internal information systems in integrated marketing system (IMC) (Kotler, 2011). Marketers use selling mixes to gain and secure competitive advantage considering the consequential changing attitudes of the customers. Thus, diversification of products or services becomes too significant as competitive missile. Moreover, marketers must adopt new dimensional comprehensive support system i.e. new selling techniques, to secure their relationships with customers (Shapiro & Moriarty 1984). The little bit literatures were found in Bangladesh about sachet product and SPIN perspectives in this regards.

Sing (2009) examined the Indian product market exclusively. He defined sachet product as specialized mini product on the basis of size, Wight, and use pattern. It is mentioned on the paper that sachet is more powerful strategic diversification of product to get competitive advantage in the market.

David (2010) expressed the product acceptability in the developing countries that he compared with developing countries, and found that mini product (sachet) is highly popular in the developing countries than the developed ones due to the low level of income and restricted expenditure pattern.

Banik (2010) conducted an experimental research work in Bangladesh for identifying the relationship of price flexibility with the performance of sachet product. He found that sachet has a sound growth due to it price subscription.

Shohrowardhy at el. (2015) recently has conducted an exploratory research regarding the impact of marketing strategies on business performance of sachet products in Bangladesh. He found that sachet market share is better than other products as far as sales in volume and amount; as well as profit per gram and per unit are concentrated. He also noted that 4Ps of marketing have significantly positive impact on the performance of sachet product in Bangladesh with promotional strategy's effect being the highest followed by pricing strategy.

Considering these minute scope of literatures, it is clear that sachet has sound market position in Bangladesh considering its size, price, use etc. Now, specific question gap is raised, in what perspectives, sachet form of product has been launched in Bangladesh?

4. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Bangladesh is the Asian giant due to fleeting opportunity for business globally. Sales expansion is the basic objective of any sorts of business (Daniel, 2011). Therefore, modernization

of a product or product line is the basic strategic aim of a business (Cravens, 2003). Considering the business modernization, sachet product is the new dimension (David, 2010) performing better in Bangladesh (Shohrowardhy, 2015). In Bangladesh, Sachet has been achieved an outstanding popularity and its market share is better than other products. There ha been a little bit researches found in the field of sachet products. So far as, 'SPIN Selling Approach' is a more powerful strategic tool used to introducing new dimensional product in any innovative market (Rackham, 1998). Now, the question arises, which component of SPIN selling is influencing the performance of sachets product in Bangladesh? Hence, the present study aims to explore the effectual relationship of the four dimensional techniques of SPIN on the business performance of sachet products in Bangladesh.

5. OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

This study examines the effect of the components of SPIN selling approach on the business performance of sachet product in Bangladesh. Two research questions were proposed: (1) Is there any application of SPIN selling approach? and (2) which dimensions of the SPIN selling approach is/are more influential for successive adaptation of sachet products in Bangladesh? The participants in this study were selected from a population of sales people of different companies. The sample companies were selected on the basis of sound involvement of sachet product in their product line. The respondents of this study were selected from 15 companies in Bangladesh. The ultimate objective of this study is to identify the impact of SPIN selling concept on the business performance in Bangladesh. This objective is expressed by the following specifications:
1. To understand the theoretical concept of SPIN selling
2. To identify the existence of constructs of SPIN selling on the business performance of sachet products in Bangladesh.
3. To explore the effect of S, P, I, N on the business performance of sachet product in Bangladesh.

Considering the objectives of the study, the following working hypotheses have been developed and tested:
1. H_0: There is no application of the SPIN constructs on the performance of sachet product in Bangladesh.
2. H_0: The constructs of the SPIN selling approach have no effect the existing performance of sachet products in Bangladesh.

6. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

In this study, data were collected through a self-administered questionnaire consisting of two parts. One is called demography and socio-economic section where respondent's (sales people) demography and socio-economic outline were registered using descriptive statistics for formatting the responses towards perceptual understanding of SPIN selling approach. Part-two of the questionnaire was used to finding the usage pattern of the questioning contents of **S**ituation analysis, **P**roblem identification, **I**mplication and **N**eed pay-off constructs and the respondents' level of agreement of complying to these contents using Likerts five-point non-comparative scale on the range of attitude; from 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree. SPSS version 21.0 was used to analyze the factors involved in this study. Finally, Multiple Regression Model (MRM) was used to determining the consequential effect of S, P, I, and N on the business performance of sachet products in Bangladesh.

A total of 165 questionnaires were provided for measuring the effect of SPIN selling components on sachet product and out of them 120 questionnaires were received where 73% response rate is calculated. Basically, questionnaires were provided to the selective salespeople considering the working hour (Usually from 12PM-2PM and 7PM to 10PM or their convenient time) of the respective distribution centers or depots. There are 15 categories of sachet products of

15 different companies were considered in this study. However, data were collected from Dhaka and Chittagong metropolitan areas.

7. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS OF SPIN SELLING APPROACH

The former president and founder of Huthwaite Corporation, Neil Rackham launched a strategic development of sale approach, SPIN in 1988. According to his thought, SPIN selling is defined as a key principle of selling by which, customers are revolutionized high-end selling. SPIN selling approach explains the science behind consultative selling or presenting an offer to a potential client considering his/her pain-points using a powerful questioning process. The questions of SPIN selling concept is structured by four different constructs i.e. **S**-Situation Analysis**, P**-Problem Identification, **I**-Implication, and **N**-Need-payoff. All forms powerful questioning sequence is used to the customers for successful sales call. Sometime, it is defines as investigating stage of sales call for providing a road map for the seller, guiding the call through the steps of need development until explicit needs have been reached. Therefore, SPIN is age-old modified sales techniques which strength comes from putting a simple and precise description to a complex process.

7.1 Situation Analysis:

'Situation Analysis' based questions are used to discover facts about the buyer's existing situation. Successful salespeople use these questions to set the stage and gather important context, but they use them sparingly to avoid interrogating or annoying the buyer. The question under this stage is constructed by using customers' or consumers' demography and socio-economic characteristics i.e. background, requirements, culture, social status, income level, hospitality, personality, and motivation into the generation (child-young-old).

7.2 Problem Identification:

'Problem identification' based questions are designed on the origin of the predisposition of the consumers or customers i.e. problems, difficulties, or dissatisfactions. In that stage, it is assumed that customers are experienced with the existing situation. Basically, the questions in this stage are used to focus the customer's problems, thus the salespeople try to solve those problems with their existing or upcoming products or services or up coming. The question under this stage is manifested considering the generic expression of human needs i.e. sources and difficulties of problems, pros & cons of existences, suggestive talking, enough time base process, handle carefully, know your customer (KYC) and multiple options for solution.

7.3 Implication:

These types of questions are used to inquire about the consequences or effects of a buyer's problems, difficulties, or dissatisfactions. These are the most powerful types of questions, and the best salespeople ask a lot of these. They can be the most difficult questions to ask since they are designed to induce a certain degree of discomfort for the buyer. The questions that have been asked at these level included contract, delegation of authority, company policies, instruction for salespeople, price flexibility, product incentives, home delivery, cash back, querying, after sales service etc.

7.4 Need-Pay Off:

The final technique involves asking questions about the value or usefulness of a proposed situation. These questions help buyers focus on situations and how the product or service can help them solve problems. The idea is not to tell the buyer how a product can solve her problems, but rather to use skilled questioning that results in the buyer coming to this realization herself. Here, following facts related question are asking to the customers i.e. premium price, payment period, easy payment system, cash payment order and free warranty/guarantee etc.

8. FINDING AND ANALYSIS

8.1 Respondents' Demographic and Socio-Economic profile:

The responses of the respondents are always significantly affected by the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics (Elangovan and Sabitha, 2011). The demographic data shows that men are (91.52%) very much preferred to get involved to sell sachet product rather than women (8.48%). This indicates that the little bit involvement of feminine sector is existed in the FMCG market in Bangladesh. Among them most of the people are Muslim (71.52%). In this study, youth salespeople were participated (Up to 30 Years -63.64%) having strong literacy level (SSC and below SSC-61.82%). Experienced salespeople were involved in this study (79%) having minimum 3 years length of service and average income level of these sales people is BDT 25,000 as double to the limit of Lower middle Income (LMI) i.e. $1095 (more than 85,000 BDT) (Prothom Alo, 2015).This demography and socio-economic status in this study is too fair to evaluate the respondent's responses in this study existed.

8.2 Reliability Test:

In this study, data have been collected from opinions of the salespeople who are involved to offer sachet product in different outlets in Bangladesh. The demographic information indicates the factual scenario of sachet product potentiality in its market. To find the impact of SPIN concept on existing performance of sachet product, the study uses questioning components based 31 (thirty one) statements with 4 (four) constructs using a 5-points Likert non-comparative scale. The study has found that average mean scores is raging from 1.717 to 4.467. Due to this low score, factor analysis is required. The skewness does not shoe extreme value over ±3 (-0.952 to 1.656) and kurtosis is between -2.051 to 1.648 not exceeding the value of rule of thumb ±8. The descriptive statistics show the normality of the respondent's responses.

Cronbach's coefficient is used as an estimate of the reliability of a psychometric test (Cronbach, 1951). The reliability test of the self-administrative questionnaire is wide-ranged to measures the impact of respondent's perception of the dimensions of SPIN concept on the performance of sachet product (Wei and Nair, 2006). Cronbach's alpha coefficient of four constructs i.e. situation analysis, problem identification, implementation, and need pay-off are 0.583(4), 0.612(5), 0.836(6), and 0.792(7) respectively. The overall Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the 21 dimensions (after factor analysis) of this study is 0.862 that indicates the fair estimation of the respondents responses(Fin and Lamb, 1991).

8.3 Factor Analysis:

Factor analysis is a statistical method used to describe variability among observed, correlated variables in terms of a potentially lower number of unobserved variables (Bartholomew, et al., 2008). In this study, Factor analysis has been conducted. KMO and Bartlett's Test have found the accuracy level of factorized 21 dimensions in a significant level (KMO= 0.730, χ^2 =699.66, p=0.000) where extraction level is 73.12%, highly standardized level in Principle Component Analysis. Table-1 explores the factor loading value of accepted dimension in four constructs.

Table-1. KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.			0.730
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square =		699.664
	df =		210
	Sig. =		0.000

Factor Loading			
	Situation Analysis	Problem Identification	Need Pay-off	Implementation
Requirements	0.560			
Hospitality	0.683			
Personality	0.776			

Difficulty of PI	0.638		
Pros & Cons	0.683		
Enough Time	0.534		
KYC	0.620		
Multiple Options	0.695		
Cash Back		0.746	
Premium Price		0.717	
Payment Periods		0.638	
Easy Payment System		0.656	
Cash Payment Order		0.751	
Free Warranty/Guarantee		0.536	
Comply DOA			0.745
Company Policy			0.813
Instruction			0.535
Price Flexibility			0.856
Product Incentives			0.779
Home Delivery			0.631
After Sales Service			0.655

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Source: Calculated by Authors

9. ANALYSIS

9.1 Existence of the constructs of SPIN Selling Approach:

SPIN Selling Approach is constructed by four variables i.e. situation analysis, problem identification, implementation, and need pay-off. In Bangladesh, salespeople are complying one or more components of SPIN to offer sachet product using their experience and learning from training. Figure-1 expresses the usage pattern of SPIN to speed out the firm's business.
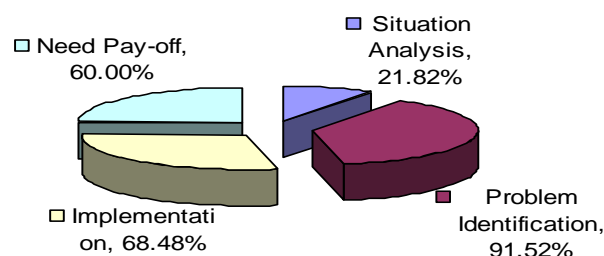

Figure 1. Using pattern of SPIN in Bangladesh for Sachet Products
Source: Calculated by Researchers

Above figure shows that 'problem identification' component is more applicable (91.52%) followed by policy implementation (68.48%) and need pay-off (60%). But, it is also shown that all constructs are consequentially used by those firms that offer the sachet product in Bangladesh.

9.2 Preference of the dimensions of SPIN:

On the basis of conceptual framework of SPIN, thirty one 31 questioning based dimensions have been used in this study. Considering the means score of the respondent's responses, it is considered to preference value of mean scores are more than 3.00. Figure-2 expresses the preference dimensions of SPIN that are highly comply in the market for getting more business from sachet products.
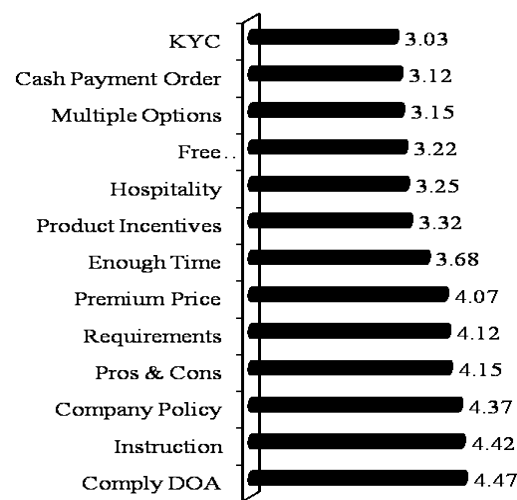
Figure 2. Preference Dimensions of SPIN Selling Approach

From figure-2, it is shown that compliance of the delegation of authority is the most powerful dimension where know your customer (KYC) is the lowest. This finding actually contradict with the general principle of marketing is that consumer is the king of marketing (Kotler, 2011).

9.3 Correlation among the Constructs:

Correlation expresses the linear relationship between two variables considering direct causation, indirect causality, or statistical chance (Ferdousi, 2009). In this study, there are five parameters (one dependent and four independents) are incorporated. Correlation coefficient (ſ) usually explores the degree of association of defined variables. Theoretically, high positive value of coefficient of correlation is justified the variable for analyzing the dependency. Table-2 explores the result of Karl Pearson Coefficient of Correlation.

Table-2. Pearson Coefficient of Correlation (r)

	BPSPIN	S	P	I	N
BPSPIN	1				
S	0.41**	1			
P	0.71**	0.45**	1		
I	0.62**	0.25	0.50**	1	
N	0.79**	0.20**	0.60**	0.49	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Source: Calculated by Researchers

From above table, coefficients of correlation (r) of the constructs are found positively significant except the relationship between implementation and situation. Very interesting fact is that relationship of need pay-off with sachet performance is stated in the highest position followed by problem identification and implementation.

9.4 Impactuality of the Components of SPIN Selling Approach on the Business Performance of Sachet Product

Basically, the survey was designed to determine the impact of SPIN Selling Approach on the business performance of sachet product in Bangladesh. Hence, multiple regression modeling is used in this study to determine the impactual relationship (dependency). For justifying model, respective parameters are considered to run the model. On the basis of research framework, the following function has been developed

$$BPSP = f\ (SPIN) \dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots (1)$$

Where:

BPSP = Business Performance of Sachet Product

S= Situation Analysis

P= Problem Identification

I= Implementation

N= Need Pay-off

Thus, the linear equation is assumed fit for the regression as

$$BPSP = \alpha + \beta_1\ S + \beta_2\ P + \beta_3\ I + \beta_4\ N + e \dots\dots (2)$$

Where α, β_1, β_2, β_3 and β_4 are the constants and e, refers to the standard error term of this model. Table-3 represents the regression output of equation-2.

Table-3. Impact of SPIN on the Business Performance of Sachet Product in Bangladesh

Component of SPIN Selling Concept	Standard Weight	S.E.	t-Value	p-Value
Constants	0.082	0.340	0.240	**0.811**
S-Situation Analysis	0.148	0.076	1.995	**0.051**
P-Problem Identification	0.222	0.094	2.369	0.021
I-Implementation	0.223	0.079	2.803	0.007
N-Need Pay-off	0.515	0.061	5.990	0.000

F-Statistics =	43.549 (0.000)
R^2 =	0.760
Adjusted R^2 =	0.743
D-W =	2.338

Source: Calculated by Researchers

Sachet product is the new dimensional form of existing product categorized by its nature 'mini'. Sachet is performing better in Bangladesh. In this better business performance of sachet product in Bangladesh, the study has found that the three major components of SPIN selling i.e. problem identification, implementation of organization strategies, and need pay-off have significant effectual relationship. High values of t-statistics with low level of p-values (less than 0.005) indicate the significant relationship among the constructs except situation analysis ($\beta_S = 0.148$, t = 1.995, P = 0.051>0.05). The values of F-statistics (43.549, p=0.000), R-squire, the explanatory power of the model (R^2=0.760) and D-W= 2.338 indicate the standardization of the goodness of fit of the model run in this study. The output of the model is expressed in the equation-3,

$$\textbf{BPSP} = 0.082 + 0.148\ \textbf{S} + 0.222\ \textbf{P} + 0.223\ \textbf{I} + 0.515\ \textbf{N} \dots (3)$$

10. RESULTS

SPIN selling approach is age-old concept applied in Bangladesh. The dimensions of SPIN expressed in the conceptual framework express that SPIN components and dimensions were generally used but structurally it is new. For fruitful business of sachet in Bangladesh, need pay-off is the most preferably used by salespeople followed by policy implication and problem identification.

In the stage of impactuality, very interestingly, 'situation analysis' component has insignificant impact on the business performance of sachet product in Bangladesh. This finding is contradicted with the general proposition of organization mission development. Situation is the basic factors that should be analyzed by every business firm to sustain in the market considering SWOT, PEST or PESTLE Model. Therefore, it should be mentioned here that sachet product is generally a follower product in Bangladesh.

11. TEST OF THE HYPOTHESES

Two basic hypotheses are considered this study. One is related to the existence of the components of SPIN selling in the consumer market of Bangladesh respective with the performance of sachet products and another is linked with impact of the same. Table-4 explores the results of the test of hypotheses of the study.

Table-4. Testing Hypotheses

	Hypotheses	Value	Comments
H1: H_0	There is no existence of the SPIN selling Approach on the business performance of sachet product in the consumer market of Bangladesh.	S=21.82%, P=91.52%, I=68.48%, N=60.00% Figure-1	H_0=R H_1=A
H_{2a}: H_0	There is no impactual relationship of situation analysis questioning components of the SPIN selling Approach on the business performance of sachet product in the consumer market of Bangladesh.	β_S =0.148 (t = 1.995, P = 0.051)	H_0=A H_1=R
H_{2b}: H_0	There is no impactual relationship of problem identification questioning components of the SPIN selling Approach on the business performance of sachet product in the consumer market of Bangladesh.	β_P =0.222 (t = 2.369, P = 0.021)	H_0=R H_1=A
H_{2c}: H_0	There is no impactual relationship of policy implication questioning components of the SPIN selling Approach on the business performance of sachet product in the consumer market of Bangladesh.	β_I =0.223 (t = 2.803, P = 0.007)	H_0=R H_1=A
H_{2d}: H_0	There is no impactual relationship of need pay-off questioning components of the SPIN selling Approach on the business performance of sachet product in the consumer market of Bangladesh.	β_N =0.515 (t = 5.990, P = 0.000)	H_0=R H_1=A

Source: Registered by Authors

12. CONCLUSION

The study has examined that questioning components of SPIN selling are existed in Bangladesh performing sachet product in its consumer market. It is worth mentioning here that situation analysis, problem identification, implication and need pay-off questioning components of SPIN selling are significantly correlative with business performance of sachet products in Bangladesh. The results of this study also found that the need pay-off questioning components is the most effective factor for the better performing product as sachet in Bangladesh followed by policy implication and problem identification. But most significant factor situation analysis has insignificant impact on the business performance of sachet product in Bangladesh that defines the sachet product as follower product in Bangladesh. For suitability of the performance of sachet product, the marketing executive or R&D department should be taken strategic steps to renovation of sachet product that are co-integrated situation happened in Bangladeshi consumer market.

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