

Spirituality The New Marketing Gadget

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Abstract

Spirituality has been studied and discussed in management and other disciplines. In the recent years, the significance of spirituality cannot be ignored in marketing of products as consumer's belief influences his buying behaviour. Today's new age spiritual consumer seeks more than mere physical satisfaction of their needs. They seek to "transform" their life by consuming products that promise well-being of their soul and answers questions related to seeking higher meaning of life. The term spirituality here refers to the new age spirituality without referring to any religious contexts. Ranging from spiritual books, aromatherapy candles, to ayurvedic self-care products spirituality sells like hot cakes in the market. Marketing through spirituality is a wide gate for research, however this paper deals with how spirituality is used as a gadget to attract customer and alter their behaviour. Also the way in which spirituality is used as a misleading synonym for promoting religious goods and services.

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I. Introduction

1. Meaning of new age spirituality

In New age of Spirituality people choose to reject organized religions or to pick and choose the beliefs that they identify with. This method of developing one's spirituality draws from the idea that spirituality is innate and one must find his or her own path towards spiritual nourishment. New agers have no specified spiritual leader and no rigid belief system. As such, if you are looking to further understand your spirituality, you can adopt this worldview. Within the realm of new age spirituality you are free to believe what it is that you want to believe and engage in the religious traditions that help you to connect with God. Regardless of what you believe or what you may have been taught growing up, you're given the freedom to understand the world from a viewpoint that makes sense to you. Instead of conforming, you choose your own set of Religious guidelines.

Link between mental health and spirituality

Being spiritual to oneself can help boost self-confidence and mental outlook, which in turn can be helpful to manage stressful life events and improve your mental health. You may find it helpful to feel connected to something bigger than yourself. It will help you to make sense of your experiences in life. You will gain strength and hope from spirituality, this can be more important to you when you are unwell. Through Spirituality one may feel more at peace with themselves and other people around. There have been several books written by world renowned authors like John Swinton's book "Spirituality and Mental health care"

In today's world where Mental health and well-being has gained an enormous amount of popularity the linkage between Spirituality and Mental health has been used by the Marketers and Entrepreneurs to sell any type of goods or services under the title "SPIRITUAL" as the word has become a representative of mental peace and well-being.

Companies like ETSY.COM an E-commerce company sells handmade products including jewellery, clothing, candles, sprays, perfumes, boots, mugs, bath kits, etc under the title "Spiritual products". Amazon sells aromatic incense stick agarbatti, pooja thali, rudraksh bracelet, lockets, bells, Om swastika, aroma, candles etc Companies like ETSY.COM an E-commerce company sells handmade products including jewellery, clothing, candles, sprays, Candle making companies like Flicker Candles, Bilaspur, India are selling spiritual candles.

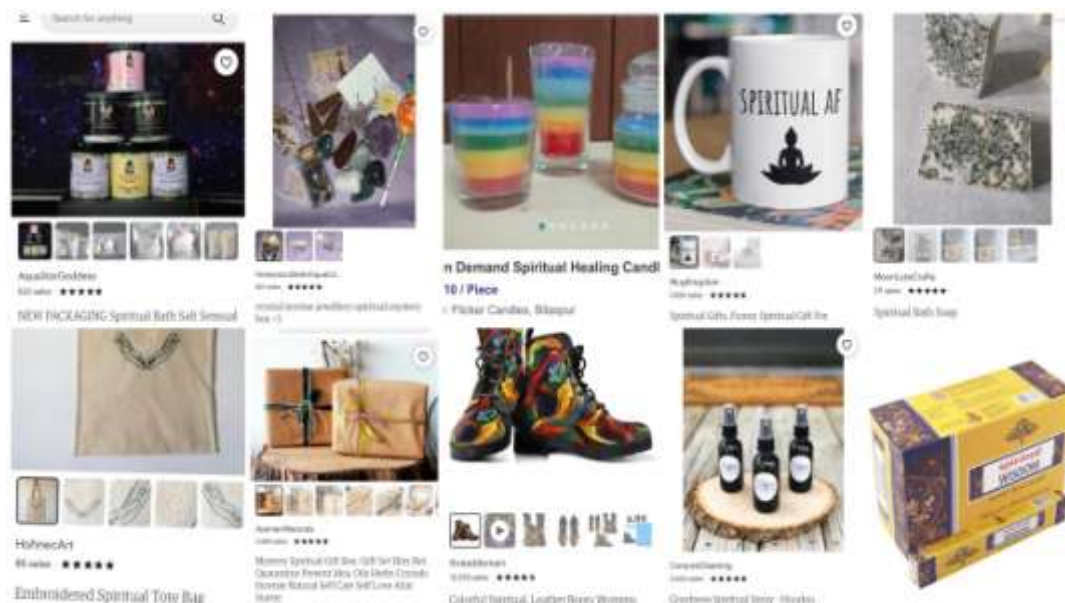


fig1.1

A few influencers and celebrities on social media and other platforms have been talking about how crystals have helped them improve their mental health and gain spirituality. Which in turn has given rise to the crystal selling start-ups on various social media platforms, websites etc. These crystals selling companies promise the attainment of spirituality with their range of crystals. Examples of such start-ups are

- ASANA HEALING CRYSTALS AND JEWELRY who claim “ Our Crystals come from sacred earth to your house, to your home and straight into your life. Immerse yourself in our full healing crystals and **spiritual** blog, filled with great meditations, **spiritual** tips, and tricks, and excellent content to satisfy your every desire in your quest for SPIRITUAL fulfilment.
- PLUS VALUE INDIA- who say “Ancient people valued crystals and gems for their magical and spiritual power. Rulers, Kings, Queens wore amulets and crown set with precious crystal and gems. Crystal can improve your health, balance your emotions, helps you with Abundance and access to Spiritual powers and many more things”.

Difference between Religion and Spirituality

RELIGION	Spirituality
A set of moral instructions given in a holy book.	About the inner joy, peace and bliss arising out of rediscovering one’s self (self- realisation)
God is the central figure.	Centralised on self-realisation, nature and the Universe.
Related to moral discipline, periodical prayers and distribution of blessed prasadam	Related to self-discovery, Self-discipline and liberty for happiness.
Related to faith, belief and trust in any one god	Related to faith, belief and trust in yourself and the universe.
Related to controlling the senses, the mind and the behaviour through religious instruction	Related to liberating one’s self which is above material body senses etc. through meditation

Despite of the differences the word religion and spirituality are often used interchangeably, especially in the Indian market. Religious rituals and Spirituality has always drawn people from across the world to India — and it’s now drawing entrepreneurs who see opportunity in using technology to connect devotees to their places of worship. The spirituality market in India, pegged at about \$40 billion a year, is a highly disorganised yet lucrative trove for entrepreneurs.

Start-ups like Online Prasad, Epuja, Salebhai, Smartpuja, Mahuratmaza, PujanPujari, etc have recognised the opportunities in the Indian market for rituals and customs, hence they have come up with goods and services to provide holy offerings to god (prasads) of famous pilgrimage, Prasad home delivery, travel to pilgrimage, online darshan, online priests (pandits) and rituals (puja’s)etc.

The conflict arises when companies like these who offer religious goods and services promote themselves under the concept of SPIRITUALITY.

For example, the description of these companies highlights spirituality more than the fact that they provide religious goods and services.

- Online Prasad Sumiran Spiritual Services Private Limited, Founded in 2012 Headquartered in Bengaluru aims to connect people to their faith by offering and home-delivering Prasad from various temple

locations across the country. This is one of the hottest start-ups in the country with their one-stop spiritual destination.

- Epuja Founded in 2014 by Shiva Kumar, the Bengaluru-based company provides its customers with a high quality and comprehensive portal through which users can book a prayer service to visit specific temples through a few clicks and fulfil their spiritual needs.

Link between Ayurveda and spirituality

Ayurveda, the traditional healing system of India, is often looked at as a way of optimizing the functioning of the body. Ayurveda is capable of assisting in the healing of many conditions as well as extending life itself. The knowledge of Ayurveda has its roots in the Vedas, the sacred texts of India from which many spiritual philosophies have sprung. Ayurveda is much more than a science of understanding what foods are right for you. It is a science of using health as the basis of one's journey toward enlightenment. Ayurveda keeps the physical body healthy so that one can pursue spiritual goals. It is a science that supports a person on their journey toward self-realization or the direct knowing of their nature as spirit or soul. The linkage between spirituality and Ayurveda has given opportunities to new entrants like Swami Ramdev, Sri Sri Ravishankar and Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev to offer products and shape their follower's base into the customer base to enter into the fast-moving consumer market (FMCG).

Swami Ramdev is the first spiritual leader who converted symbolism to real production, and Patanjali managed to get his story right and appropriately used his mass popularity. The success credit of Patanjali goes to Swami Ramdev and his aide Acharya Balakrishna, who is the Managing Director. With its increasing fortunes, unconventional growth narrative – it has disrupted the whole FMCG industry and aims to be the country's biggest FMCG Company in the upcoming years. He remains to be the face of the brand and promotes Patanjali products by teaching yoga and spiritual lessons, involved in TV news debates and other platforms for marketing.

Sri Sri Tattva (SST) is a consumer and wellness brand that is backed by India's very own spiritual and humanitarian leader Sri Sri Ravishankar. He is a well-known celebrity all over the world and has more than 370 million followers across the globe and proud founder of the Art of Living (AOL) foundation which undertakes numerous programs intended to uplift society and enhance the quality of life. Back in 2003, it was the first spiritual brand to jump in the FMCG market with their products that range from home to personal use in many categories including Ayurveda drugs, health care, vitamins, dietary products, personal care products, home care, incense, and fragrances. The firm currently has 1700 stores in India and is projected to double them over the next 2 years. The company sells its products even through digital space. Its official website www.srisritattva.com sells all its product selection throughout India.

Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudeva's Isha foundation runs Isha Shoppe online that not only sells food products, medicines, and home care but also offering incense sticks, yoga merchandise, books & magazines, clothing, fragrances, etc. They use spiritual intelligence which is defined to be as intellectual capabilities based on divine aspects of reality contributing awareness. Isha Foundation has more than 9 million followers and it has offices in many countries of the world. They are offering products to consumers using a spiritual marketing strategy leaving no stone unturned.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

In these turbulent times, everyone is craving peace, and consumers' belief that attaining spirituality is the way to help them stay grounded. The problem arises when spirituality is not fully comprehended by anyone but everyone wants to be 'spiritual'. Without having complete knowledge about spirituality, we rush to attain it. In order to reach that stage, people are trying out various products such as stones, incenses, threads and other products which are popularised tools to attain spirituality. The opportunist marketers and entrepreneurs have capitalised on this eagerness of people and manipulated consumers into buying products which are not backed up by facts. Soon these spiritual trends will give rise to a new religion. Hence it is important for a consumer to understand whether or not certain goods/services can help them attain spirituality for real, or is it merely a marketing gadget used by companies.

NEED OF THE STUDY

Our research will be able to set grounds for various upcoming researches in the future, as it touches upon the various aspects in which the term Spirituality has been used as a gadget to sell religious products previously and how it will further be used to sell other trendy products in the near future. It also highlights how marketers can use psychological tactics and play with consumers' beliefs to attract them. The study tries to understand how opportunist entrepreneurs come up with products and services to solve consumers' religious and spiritual problems but instead overwhelm them with too many products and trends.

RELEVANCE & IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

There have been various studies on consumer spirituality and marketing of spiritual products etc. but there are hardly any researches which actually point out the relationship between mental health and spirituality or the difference between religion and spirituality or the linkage between Ayurveda Spirituality and the spiritual leaders who are also new FMCG entrepreneurs. The researchers of this paper have tried to touch upon various uncommon topics, with in-depth study and examples for each. Hence our study is important and relevant in the study of Marketing, as it gives information regarding the new tool of marketing, Spirituality.

OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

- To understand how the term “spirituality” is used as a gadget to attract customers via various entrepreneurs and ecommerce goods and service providers.
- To know if according to the consumers, Spirituality is a misleading synonym for promoting religious goods and services.
- To understand consumers reaction towards Spiritual leaders becoming the new Ayurvedic FMCG entrepreneurs.

STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESIS

H0:Spirituality is not used as a marketing gadget by the ecommerce industry, marketers, religious service providers, entrepreneurs and Spiritual leaders turned to FMCG entrepreneurs.

H1:Spirituality is used as a marketing gadget by the ecommerce industry, marketers, religious service providers, entrepreneurs and Spiritual leaders turned to FMCG entrepreneurs.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The word spirituality comes from the Latin root *spiritus*, meaning breath—the breath of life. Benner (1989) esoterically characterises spirituality as a human response to God’s gracious call to a relationship with Him. Beck (1986) and Goldsmith (1992) characterise spirituality as an inner state of being; the heart or force within a person. Schneiders (1989, 684) defines spirituality as “the experience of consciously striving to integrate one’s life in terms not of isolation and self-absorption but of self-transcendence toward the ultimate value one perceives,” while Myers (1990, 11) describes it as “a continuing search for meaning and purpose in life; an appreciation for the depth of life, the expanse of the universe, and natural forces which operate; a personal belief system.”

Based on an exhaustive review of interdisciplinary literature, spirituality has been defined in this article as an individual’s endeavours to explore -- and deeply and meaningfully -- connect one’s inner self to the known world and beyond. This definition somewhat parallels Clark’s (1958) concept of religion, which he characterised as “the inner experience of the individual when he senses a Beyond.” We shall now briefly explore the key components of this definition. An elaborate description of these components appears in Kale (2004). Inner Self, key to most discourses on spirituality is the idea of an inner life or inner self. Zukav (1990) characterises the inner self as the invisible realm in which the origins of our deeper understanding are located. Bartunek and Moch (1994) suggest that the notion of inner self involves a sense of one’s being or consciousness, and how that being relates to other beings. The inner self could also be visualised as the core from which our most valuable thoughts and feelings originate. It is only when we are in touch with this core that we act with authenticity (Kale 2004).

It would be interesting to explore the correlates of spirituality with other variables such as personality, nationality, culture, and age. Several interesting issues could be researched. For example, does the incidence of spirituality increase or decrease with economic development? What are the global macro-trends in spirituality and how would these trends impact consumer behaviour and marketing practices? What is the relationship between spirituality and consumer identity? Is spirituality increasingly used as a means of identity preservation and as a reaction to de-territorialisation? To fully comprehend the spirituality phenomenon and to explain its dynamics in the marketplace would require considerable research. Market diversification activities of spiritual and religious organisations such as the Vatican, the Hare Krishnas, and the Mormons as well as those of New Age pundits such as Deepak Chopra and Wayne Dyer could be systematically studied to better understand market dynamics.

The concept of spirituality delimits its boundaries. Scholars will need to devise acceptable scales that measure spirituality. While attempts have been made in the management and social psychology literature to develop such scales, (cf. Ashmos and Duchon, 2000; Hays, Meador, Branch, and George, 2001; Sass, 2000, Hodge, 2001), the instruments appear lacking in analytical rigor and comprehensiveness. As of today, spirituality is still a slippery construct, and only a systematic program of inquiry will provide meaningful and actionable insights.

Marketing scholars are largely ignorant about what has brought about the resurgence of spirituality and how this development plays out in the marketplace. Spirituality is increasingly impacting the beliefs and

behaviours of consumers over the world. Spiritual motivations are not simply restricted to the choice of a particular sect, guru, or religion. Secular corporate firms are increasingly using spiritual appeals to identify and bond with consumers. The community of marketing scholars needs to urgently comprehend and research the role of spirituality in modern consumption. Management scholars have already taken cognizance of the significance of spirituality, as evidenced by the number of articles on workplace spirituality figuring routinely in contemporary management journals. Journal editors in the field of marketing could help accelerate theory development on spirituality and marketing by inviting and publishing papers exploring spirituality. Doing so will bring us closer to closing the gap between theory and practice.

WORKING DEFINATIONS AND TERMS USED

Spirituality- Spirituality is a broad concept with room for many perspectives. In general, it includes a sense of connection to something bigger than ourselves, and it typically involves a search for meaning in life. As such, it is a universal human experience something that touches us all. People may describe a spiritual experience as sacred or transcendent or simply a deep sense of aliveness and interconnectedness. Some may find that their spiritual life is intricately linked to their association with a church, temple, mosque, or synagogue. Others may pray or find comfort in a personal relationship with God or a higher power. Still others seek meaning through their connections to nature or art. Like your sense of purpose, your personal definition of spirituality may change throughout your life, adapting to your own experiences and relationships.

Spiritus- It is a Latin word which means breath, breathing, air, soul, life.

Ayurveda- a form of alternative medicine that is the traditional system of medicine of India and seeks to treat and integrate body, mind, and spirit using a comprehensive holistic approach especially by emphasizing diet, herbal remedies, exercise, meditation, breathing, and physical therapy

FMCG- Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), also called consumer packaged goods (CPG), refer to products that are highly in-demand, sold quickly, and affordable. Such items are considered “fast-moving” as they are quick to leave the shelves of a store or supermarket because consumers use them on a regular basis.

Incense Stick- Incense is aromatic biotic material that releases fragrant smoke when burned. The term is used for either the material or the aroma.

Art of Living- In the expression 'art of living' the word 'art' refers to skill and 'living' to a manner of life. Art-of-living is then the capability to live up to such principles. In the hedonistic view life is better the more we enjoy it. Art-of-living is then the capability to take pleasure from life.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

SCOPE OF STUDY

There is always a scope of future research and ours is no different. This research is limited to the sample size of 200 people. The information has been collected only from the people of Pune, India. Whereas, the impact of spirituality and the various ways of attaining it are practiced all over the World. Theresearch has touched upon a few examples for each way in which the term “spirituality” is used to promote goods/services. Some are relevant to spirituality whereas others are more towards religion or other aspects. Hence an in-depth research for each aspect can be done further.

CLASSES OF RESPONDENTS TO BE CONTACTED

The respondents contacted by the researchers are the consumers from all age groups and walks of life, situated in the Pune city. This was to identify the difference/similarities in the buying behaviour of each generation when it comes to Spirituality. The maximum respondents belong to the age of 18-25.

UNIVERSE

In this research paper the researchers have considered the population of Pune city, Maharashtra, India as the Universe for this study.

SAMPLE SIZE

The Sample size taken by the researchers for the research project is 200 people from Pune, who belong to various qualifications with a fair idea about the term Spirituality.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The method chosen by the researchers for their study is non-probability sampling. Further, the researchers opted for convenience sampling. A type of non-probability sampling method in which the sample is taken from a group of people easy to contact or to reach. In the process, the researchers requested the people from the population to fill the complete survey and further forward it to their contacts.

JUSTIFICATION OF THE METHOD AND PROCEDURE

The population of people trying to attain Spirituality and hence buying products/services for the same is massive, considering Pune individually as well as India and the World. Access to such a large user database is very expensive and time taking, thus the researchers have taken sampling as a method for conducting research effectively and efficiently. The researchers have further used non probability sampling as a method of sampling. Further the researchers have chosen convenience sampling as a method of non-probability sampling as it is much feasible and requires fewer resources.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is the framework of research methods and techniques chosen by a researcher. The design allows researchers to hone in on research methods that are suitable for the subject matter and set up their studies up for success. The Design for this research is to observe and solve the research problem via a survey.

SOURCES OF DATA COLLECTION

• PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION

Since the total target population of people trying to attain spirituality by consuming goods and services is massive. The researchers had to go with the sampling method. The researchers have further done their study by the method of probability sampling due to lesser amount of time consumed and fewer resources required by the method. The researchers used Google forms as online survey method of primary data collection. The surveys were sent to the target population until the researchers received the mark of 200 responses

• SECONDARY DATA COLLECTION

The researchers have used various online published research papers as a part of their study in the area. The secondary data was found very useful for the consumer buying behaviour towards goods/ services that were sold under the title “Spirituality”.

METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

The researchers for their study have done a descriptive research to find out how Spirituality is a subjective topic as it is perceived differently by everyone. Everyone has their own unique way to attain it. Hence researchers have used quantitative methods of data collection. Quantitative research involves information that deals with quantities and numbers. That is different from a qualitative approach which is known for observation and description. You can measure quantitative research but you cannot do this for qualitative research. The researchers collected the primary information by using online questionnaires. The questionnaire was prepared on Google forms. Further the Google form was circulated to the target demographic population and the researchers promoted it till they were able to fill the mark of 200 responses. The researchers also went through various literatures from related research papers as a part of their secondary source of data collection.

TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES DATA ANALYSIS

The researchers have used simple statistical analysis tools such as ‘percentage’ for interpretation of data collected from the respondents. The data collected from respondents is converted into graphs and charts and analysed accordingly.

IV. Data Analysis And Interpretation

From the following study it was found out that-

The researchers started the study by asking the respondents if they felt Spirituality is gaining more popularity than before due to mental health awareness. 82% of the respondents identifies a link between spirituality and mental health hence, they voted for “Yes, Spirituality is an important aspect of mental health” The other 18% felt there was no relationship between Spirituality and mental health.

Further 31.5% Consumers said YES and 36% for buying goods/services if it promised them Spirituality/Spiritual awakening/Spiritual calmness/Spiritual Peace/Happiness, etc. This means that 67.5% respondents are willing to buy products which can help them attain spirituality. Hence as previously discussed this eagerness of people trying to attain spirituality has led them into the hands of opportunist marketers and entrepreneurs.

In understanding consumers’ perspective towards religion and spirituality the following results were found. 25% of the respondents believed that religion is the same as spirituality where as 75% were able to identify the difference between the two terms. This was shocking as the people who believed spirituality and religion are the same were between 18-25.

Further in the study 88.5% agreed to the difference between religion and spirituality with respect to the following statement “Religion is a specific set of organised beliefs and practices, usually shared by a community or group. Spirituality is more of an individual practice and has to do with having a sense of peace and purpose.”

This statement was able to enlighten respondents who felt that religion and spirituality was the same and hence agreed to the difference between the two terms.

Researchers then asked people if they would buy some of the products sold by an ecommerce, website called etsy.com. The products shown in the image of the question included candles, sprays, perfumes and oils namely “Karma Kleaner Spiritual cleansing spray” “Spiritual awakening intention candle” “Handmade Spiritual candles” “Spiritual spark spell oil”.

32% of the respondents felt products like these can help one attain spirituality. Whereas the other 68% felt spirituality cannot be attained by such products as it starts from within.

The next focus point for the researchers was the popularity of crystals being used by people for spiritual awakening. Hence the researchers asked their respondents whether they think if one can attain spiritual awakening by the use of crystals/other such stones. 22.5% of people believed that crystals do have spiritual energy. The respondents who believed in crystals having spiritual energy were mainly from the age group of 18-25. This response can be a result of various social media influencers as well as the stars that have been promoting the use of crystals and selling them online for attaining happiness, peace and spirituality.

Upcoming area of focus for the researchers were the ecommerce start-ups in India who have been selling religious goods and services like Prasad offerings with global home delivery from 50 famous temples, high quality zevotion, branded rudraksh, yantra, gem stones and other religious items, They also offered other services like a variety of online puja, as well as travel services to various temples. These start-ups were selling their goods and services by calling the products offered as spiritual rather than religious. Hence the researchers asked their respondents by showing them one such example, whether according to them the following company was selling religious, spiritual or both goods and services.

38.5% respondents felt the products and services offered were both religious and spiritual whereas 50% felt the services were religious, the remainder 11.5% of people went with the taglines mentioned on the website and hence categorised the services as spiritual.

The research was further extended to the next topic with regards to spiritual leaders and their rise as the new FMCG entrepreneurs. The respondents were asked if they followed any of the 3 spiritual Indian leaders namely, Swami Ramdev, Sri Sri Ravishankar, SadhguruJaggi Vasudev. 74% of the respondents followed none of the leaders, whereas 17.5% followed SadhguruJaggi Vasudev, 5% followed Swami Ramdev and 3.5% followed Sri Sri Ravishankar.

In the next question 45% of respondents showed interest in buying FMCG products offered or promoted by their respective Spiritual leaders.

The researchers further showed an image of the brand owned by the respected Spiritual leaders along with the products offered, to know which brand has been consumed the most and if the respondents would be interested in consuming products from any of the following. To this 58% of the respondents said they have used products by Patanjali a brand by Swami Ramdev, only 1% had used isha shoppe products by SadhguruJaggi Vasudev, 1.5% for Sri Sri Tattva products by Sri Sri Ravishankar, the remaining 5% showed interest in buying the products via these brands in the future and 34.5% were not interested any of the products. The results from these prove that Swami Ramdev has been able to market his products the best by being on the TV and other platforms as mentioned above in the introduction.

When the respondents were directly asked if the Spiritual leaders have used Spirituality as a gadget to become successful FMCG entrepreneurs, 76.5% said YES. This helps the research meet one of its objectives.

In the end the respondents were asked directly if they think whether marketers and entrepreneurs use spirituality as a gadget to manipulate consumers into buying their goods. As a result a majority of 88% of the respondents said YES, the consumers are being manipulated by the term “Spirituality” in order to buy products.

TESTING OF THE HYPOTHESIS

H0. Spirituality is not used as a marketing gadget by the ecommerce industry, marketers, religious service providers, entrepreneurs and Spiritual leaders turned to FMCG entrepreneurs.

After the study H0 has been nullified as mentioned above and in the fig_____ below, a majority of 88% of respondents feel Spirituality is being used as a gadget by the ecommerce industry, marketers, religious service providers, entrepreneurs and Spiritual leaders turned to FMCG entrepreneurs to influence consumer buying behaviour.

H1. Spirituality is used as a marketing gadget by the ecommerce industry, marketers, religious service providers, entrepreneurs and Spiritual leaders turned to FMCG entrepreneurs.

H1 has been proved to be true.

LIMITATIONS

Due to time constraints and several other issues the researchers were unable to take a big enough sample size. The data and interpretations might not be a true representation of reality. This can be because of the personal and subjective nature of some questions as well as the fact that the respondents had to disclose their name; the respondents might not have been completely honest.

V. Conclusion

In today's world where mental health awareness has gained a lot of popularity one of the aspects towards having a better mental health is believed to be Spirituality. The study has been able to prove that majority of people today feel spirituality is an important aspect of mental well-being. Hence the term "spirituality" is being added to various products in order to increase their demand. Our study here proves that "Spirituality" is being used as a gadget, because a majority of respondents in this study said yes for buying goods/services in order to attain Spirituality.

This research contains examples of various goods and service providing start-ups, which have centred their offerings to the Hindu religion and its rituals. But have taglines like "One step destination for all your Spiritual needs". Hence this can make one think if there is no difference between spirituality and religion. As a result of this study the researchers were able to understand that the majority of respondents believe religion and spirituality are different and hence cannot be used as synonyms. But still when asked whether the start-up's providing goods and services are selling religious/ spiritual products, only 50% voted for religious where as 38.5% believed both and 11.5% voted for spiritual.

Hence we understand even though people identify the difference between religion and spirituality they still don't think spirituality is a misleading synonym for promoting religious goods and services, as some believe that spirituality can be attained by following a specific religion.

With respect to understanding consumers reaction towards Spiritual leaders becoming the new Ayurvedic FMCG entrepreneurs, the study has found out even though majority of respondents have used or are willing to buy products promoted by their respective spiritual leaders, they do feel that the Spiritual leaders have used "Spirituality" as a gadget to become successful FMCG entrepreneurs.

As a final verdict from the research the researchers were able to understand that even according to the consumers the term "Spirituality" is being used as a marketing gadget by the ecommerce industry, marketers, religious service providers, entrepreneurs and Spiritual leaders turned to FMCG entrepreneurs.

VI. SUGGESTIONS

The researchers would suggest companies like ETSY.COM an E-commerce company which sells handmade products including jewellery, clothing, candles, sprays, perfumes, boots, mugs, bath kits, etc under the title "Spiritual products", to use words like relief, calmness, relaxation, comfort, soothing, easing, liberating stress, benefit etc. As these words are the true representation of the value these products provide to the consumer.

For the applications that provide religioncentred services under the title spirituality the researchers would like to give an example of a mobile-first platform company named Times Internet who acquired a startup called the House of God. The start-up earlier provided "live darshan" from the holy shrines discourses of spiritual leaders and other devotional content. In addition to helping users in their daily rituals, the app leverages technology to connect devotees with gurus and shrines. Apart from video content and live darshans, House of God provides users with access to lectures, puja offerings, horoscopes, panchang and offline commerce services across all religions, including Hinduism, Sikhism, Islam, Jainism, Buddhism and Sufism. But all the services were provided under one title "One stop for all spiritual experiences". Later when Times Internet Acquired House of God they sectioned the Spiritual and Religious content separately which was more appreciated by the users.

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The Questionnaire used for this research along with its answers.

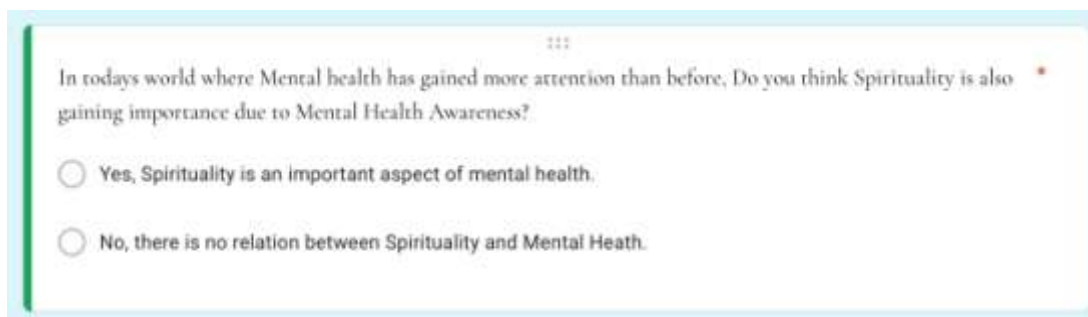


Fig 1.2

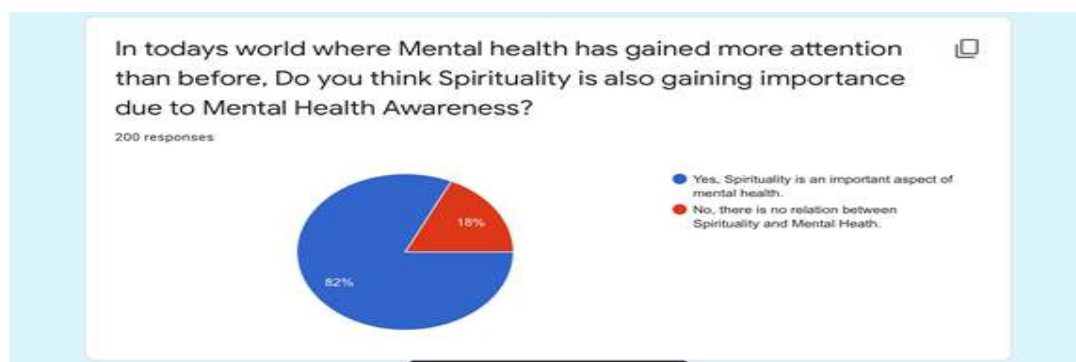


Fig 1.3

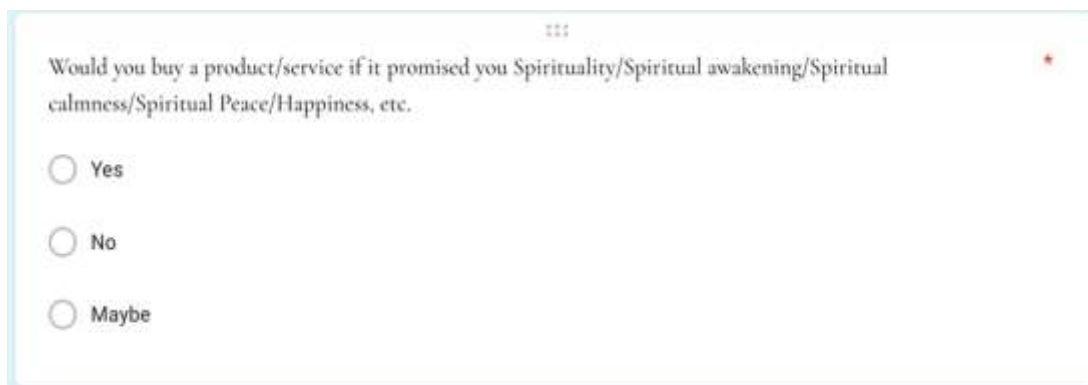


Fig 1.4



Fig 1.5

Do you believe spirituality is the same as religion. *

Yes

No

Fig1.6

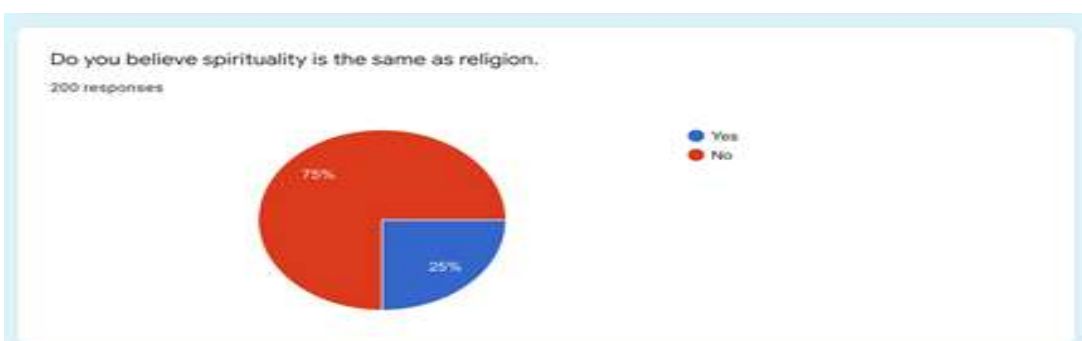


Fig1.7

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement "Religion is a specific set of organised beliefs and practices, usually shared by a community or group. Spirituality is more of an individual practice and has to do with having a sense of peace and purpose" *

Agree

Disagree

I believe one can attain spirituality only by following a specific religion.

Fig 1.8

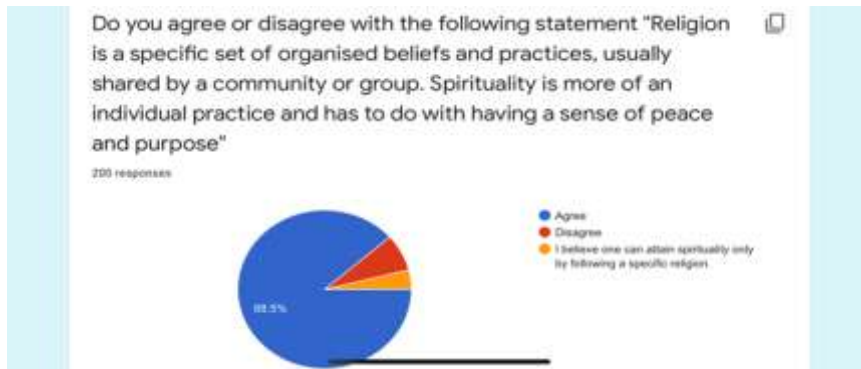


Fig 1.9

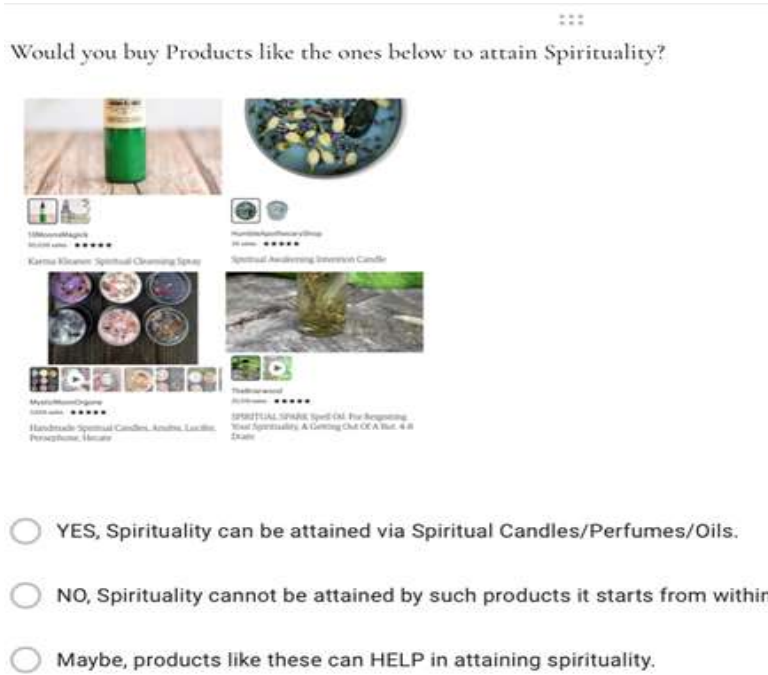
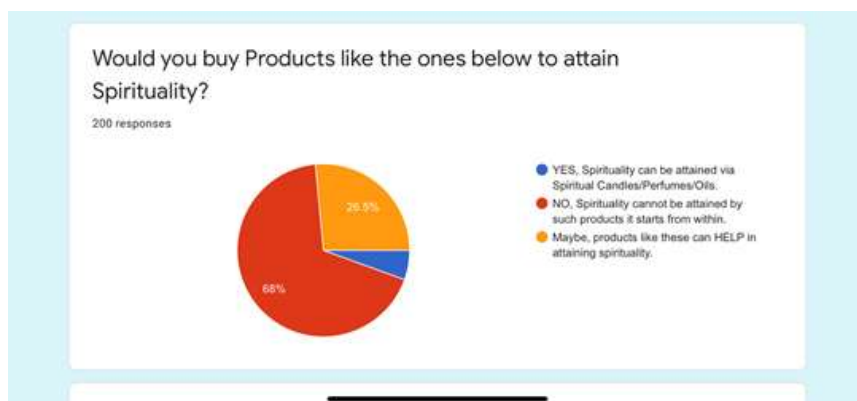
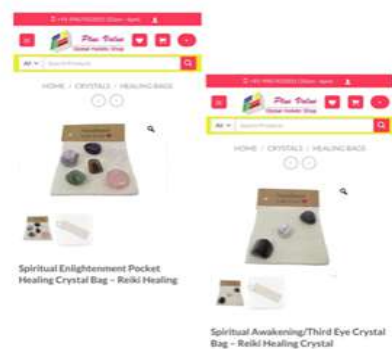


Fig 1.10



Do you think one can attain Spiritual Awakening by the use of Crystals/ other stones?



- Yes Crystals do have a spiritual energy.
- No Crystals, don't help. It is all about human psychology and what you believe in.

Fig 1.11

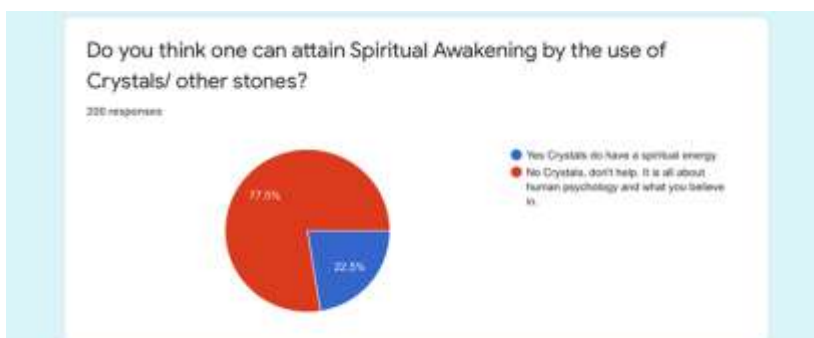
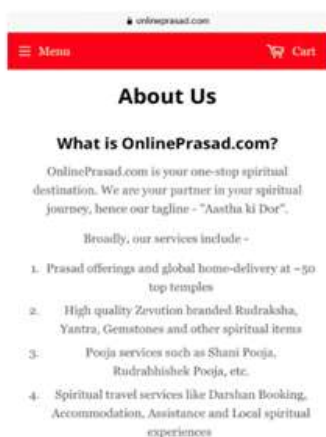


Fig 1.12

According to you, the company below is providing SPRITUAL services or RELIGIOUS service?



- Spiritual service
- Religious Services
- Both

Fig 1.13

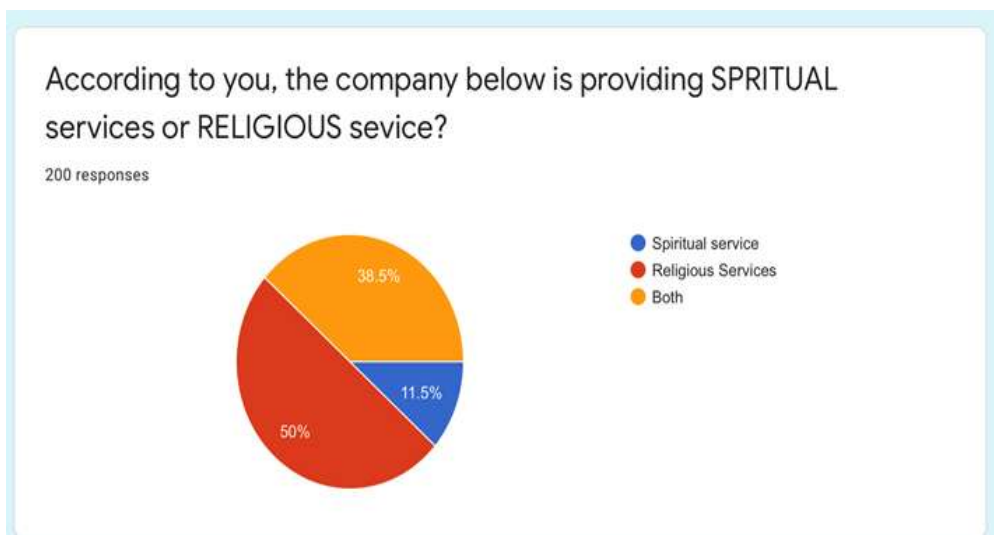


Fig 1.14

Do you follow/like spiritual leader? Please vote/mention your Spiritual Guru below.

- Swami Ramdev
- Sri Sri Ravishankar
- Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev
- NONE

Fig 1.15

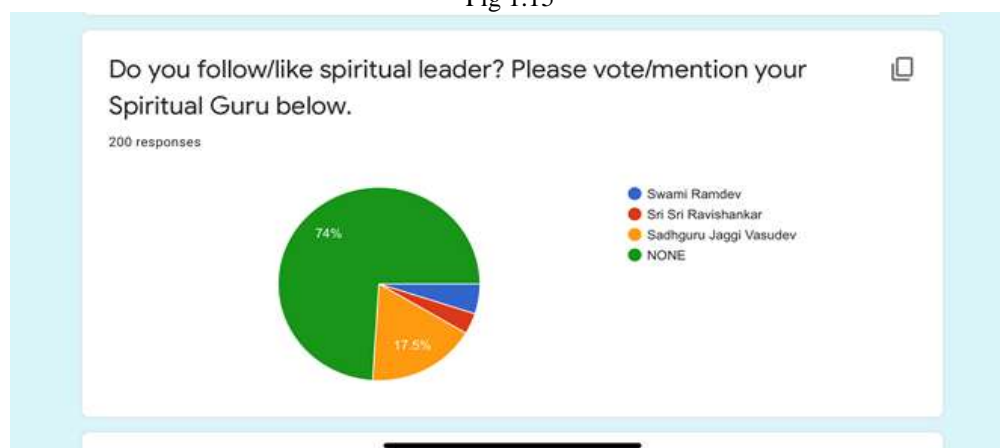


Fig 1.16

Would buy a FMCG product intouced/developed/promoted by your Spiritual guru

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

Fig 1.17

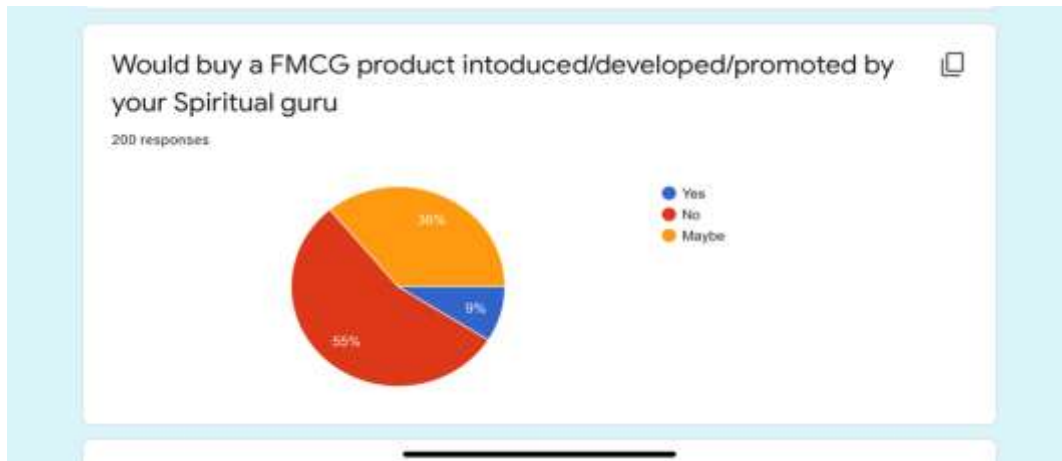




Fig 1.18

Have you consumed Products by any of the following?


Patanjali Products by Swami Ramdev



Isha Shoppe Products by Sadhguru Jaggi Vaudev



Shri Shri Tattva Products by Sri Ravishankar



I have not used any of the above but I would like to.

Not interested in any of the products.

Fig 1.19

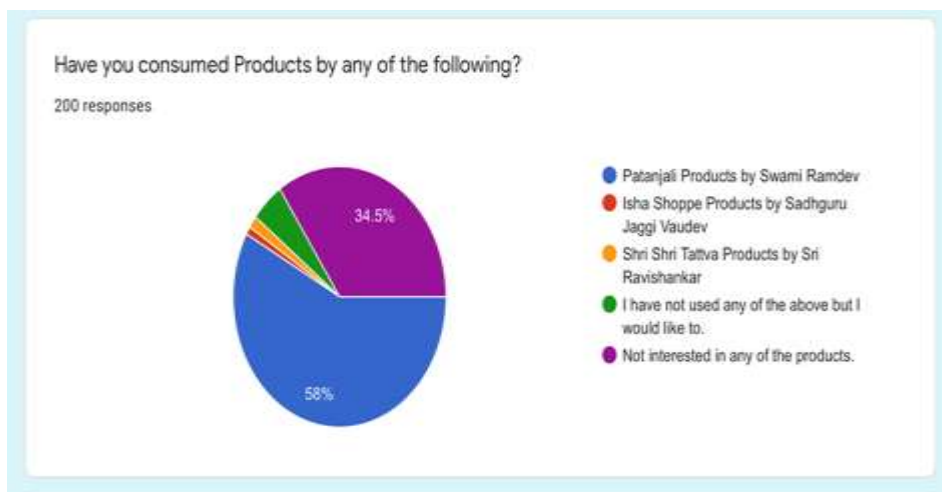


Fig 1.20

Do you think the above Spiritual leaders have used Spirituality as a Gadget to become successful FMCG entrepreneurs?

Yes

No

Fig 1.21



Fig 1.22

Do you think Marketers/Entrepreneurs use Spirituality as a gadget to manipulate consumers (users) into buying* their goods?

- Yes
- No

Fig 1.23

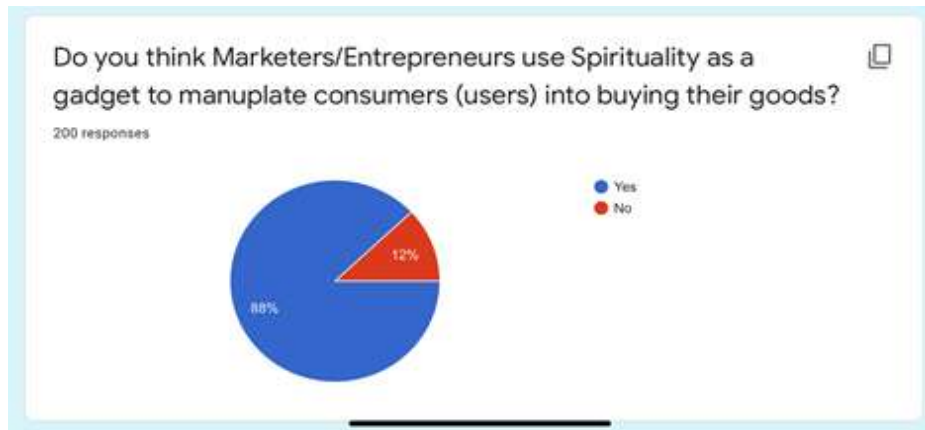


Fig 1.24

Karneet Kaur Gurvinder Singh Narang, Navraj D Chandrus "Spirituality The New Marketing Gadget." *IOSR Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM)*, 23(07), 2021, pp. 15-30.