Marketing Strategies of Foreign companies in a new market from consumer reach out perspective – the case of Harley Davidson in India

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Abstract

This research examined the marketing strategy of the American superbike company Harley Davidson in India before it decided to exit the market in September of 2020. This study aimed to examine the potential cultural dimensions that differentiate the US and India's national cultures and to examine the specific cultural dimensions of the Indian market that Harley Davidson needed to keep in mind while developing marketing strategies for India. the study also aimed to provide specific recommendations as guidelines to Harley Davidson for forming a successful marketing campaign for the Indian market in the cultural context.

The two constructs that were used in this research work was the model of national cultural differences and the marketing mix. Hofstede's model of national cultural differences and Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner model for national culture were used for identifying the cultural differences between India – Harley's host market and the United States - the home market of the company. The 7Ps of the marketing mix was used to examine Harley Davidson's marketing strategy in India.

The study used a quantitative approach and made use of a survey of consumers of bikes and bike owners in India. The specific aim of the survey was to find out the reaction of the participants – 100 in number, to the marketing mix that was offered by Harley Davidson in the Indian market prior to it quitting the country.

Using primary and secondary data, this study found significant differences between the national cultures of India and the US. This study also made identified issues of adapting to the national culture of India in terms of the marketing mix of the company in India which potentially resulted in its failure in the Indian market. Some suggestions were also made which Harley Davidson could use if it decides to return into the Indian market.

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Acknowledgement

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This initial section of this study introduces the readers to the topic and the purpose for which this study was taken up. This is achieved by providing a short background of the topic which helps the readers to identify the requirement of this research work and the potential gaps in the topic that were still left unattended or underserved in literature. This section also sets out some specific objectives that this study has strived to through a set of questions for which answers were sought. This section also sets out the scope of the study along with some of the limitations that created obstacles for the successful completion of this study. This initial section also provides a lead into the next chapter – a critical review of literature,

1.1: Study Background

One of the major considerations for any company that decides to set up a business in a foreign market is to consider the local culture of the foreign market. It is generally assumed that it is important for any foreign company to carefully consider and adjust its business strategies to the local culture of the host market. Hence strategies for cultural adjustments have to be taken into account by companies in addition to the usual ones of competition, regulations, networking, etc. (Guang and Borges, 2012).

This research examined how multinational companies (MNC)s need to adjust to a new culture of a foreign market to succeed in attracting customers through their marketing efforts. It means that MNCs need to take into account any differences in culture between their home country and that of a foreign market and devise marketing strategies that suit the local culture of the host market. In this context, this study examined the predicament for the United States-based super bike firm Harley Davidson and its business interests in India. This company was chosen because Harley – despite entering the Indian market quite some time ago, has not been able to leave a mark in the market. Further, the two countries - the US and India was chosen because of a marked difference in cultures of the two countries at the national level (Annavarapu, 2016).

But why does a different culture present a challenge for MNCs?

Because of the nature and business models, MNCs often end up doing business in a market that has a completely different culture compared to the home market culture of the company. While functioning in the home market for years, MNCs develop certain strategies and business practices that are aligned with and suit the culture of the home market and the dominant culture that impacts the customers of the home market or in markets or countries that have a similar

culture. Companies also build up strategies to cater to the dominant cultural demands of the customers of the market. But when MNCs decide to expand or set up business in a new foreign market that has a dominant local culture which can be completely different or even alien to the dominant culture of the home market of the MNCs (Yiwu, 2008).

When placed in such a situation, MNCs have to face the challenge of carefully considering the dominant local culture and adjusting to it. However, it is not enough to take note of any cultural differences between markets and adjust to them but to create business strategies and practices that are aligned to the local culture. This is important because the dominant local culture tends to also influence the thinking and behaviour of people in a society or country – including their purchasing behaviour and their outlook towards companies. While this alone may not ensure the success of a business in a new or alien market, this measure is certainly important for reducing the chances of business failure (Zhechev and Stanimirov, 2018).

This assumes importance because culture is that element that defines and often dictates people and their behaviours, their attitudes and values and interpretation of life in general (Tuleja, 2005). It is possible to trace this back to the concept of national culture which is argued to be made up of common or shared values and beliefs of individuals and groups of a particular society of a country which gets expressed in particular situations in the form of collective programming of the attitude of members of a national society (Song, et al., 2017).

Tayeb, (1994) described national culture as *"a set of historically evolved, learned and shared values, attitudes and means. The term nation refers to culture, social, economic and political institutions influence how organizations are managed in different environments"* (Tayeb, 1994).

However, researchers argue that culture, or even national culture, is not an easy term to define or describe. Culture typically can be interpreted in many ways by different people. But in order to generalize the behaviours of a country as a whole, researchers and practitioners have over the years attempted to identify behavioural and cultural traits that are common among the majority of people in a country and termed those traits as national culture. Some researchers have even segregated such wider cultural traits into different levels such as at the individual or the group level, the organizational or industrial level and national and geographical region levels (Akhter and Beno, 2011). And yet other researchers and practitioners have described national culture according to the inner human elements such as beliefs, values, and work view,

cultural activities such as the influence of arts and communication patterns on people, customs and traditions, technology adoption and material culture (Giles, Reid and Harwood, 2010).

But despite their efforts, most of the researchers and practitioners working on this topic have reiterated the difficulties in defining and describing culture because of its abstract nature and it not being always very evident in the behaviour of people (Robbins et al., 2010). Even though, culture, as well as national culture, has generally been viewed as being comprised of a number of attitudes and behaviours of the members of that particular nation.

And when there is a difference in the national cultures of two countries, it can also be assumed or expected that the manifestation of such cultures through the behaviour of people of the two countries would also be equally different (Snir, 2014). This leads one to rightly assume that there can be the existence of significant differences in the behaviour and attitudes of people from two different countries with significant national cultural differences. This can lead one to rightly conclude that there would be differences in the manner in which people from countries that have cultural differences behave, act and react to similar situations – which can also be extended to include how people as consumers of a particular market react (Carté and Fox, 2008).

During the initial review of literature for this study, this researcher noted that the scope of national culture is quite wide and varied and can include a number of elements that can be universally accepted as a complete set of attributes or traits. In order to avoid complications in this study not to sway away from the original focus of interlinking national culture with marketing by MNCs, this study chose to limit discussions of national culture to the national cultural models of Hofstede and Trompenaars.

These two models of national culture were chosen for this study because these are relatively contemporary – even though Hofstede's model is a bit older than that of Trompenaars' model of national culture. Another major reason for choosing these two models is that both the models have identified a host of national culture traits which can be compared between countries. Such comparison allows is users to easily differentiate or find similarities between the national culture of two countries based on the various dimensions of national culture as identified in these models (Hofstede, 1996). Hofstede's model of national culture attaches numerical values to each of the dimensions for every country which allows easy comparison between countries in terms of their national cultures. In the Trompenaars' model, a more qualitative value is

attached to each of the dimensions for each country which also allows comparison and contrasting between national cultures of two or more countries (Williamson, 2002).

At this point, it is also pertinent to discuss whether there exists any relation between national culture and cultural traits and marketing strategies for MNCs. To test this aspect, this research work considered the concept of the marketing mix or the '7Ps of Marketing' – which is considered to be a special marketing tool that is frequently used for the analysis of marketing strategies of a company as well as to create a guideline for the marketing strategy.

The seven elements of the marketing mix or the 7 Ps of marketing are Product (physical features), Place (sale channels or places where consumers can avail the products), Price (determinants of pricing and pricing strategies), Promotion (advertising and branding activities), People (the quality of employees of a company who come into direct contact with customers), Process (the planning and controlling strategies and activities) and Physical (decoration and cleanliness of store/outlets, the ambience, etc. of physical stores) (Keillor, 2007).

In marketing management literature, all of the above mentioned 7 elements are believed to have a relation to what customers want or desire. For example, the element products, or place to access products, promotional activities, etc. also are judged by consumers according to what they like and prefer (Cayla and Arnould, 2008). A host of researchers such as Tellström, Gustafsson and Mossberg, (2006) have also argued that what customers of a particular market like about the elements of the marketing mix or the 7Ps of marketing is shaped by societal and national cultures and the personal values and beliefs – which in turn are shaped by the dominant cultural traits of a society. Hence, it can be argued that for marketing strategies to be attractive and appealing to the customers of a particular market or country, they have to be aligned with the locally dominant national culture.

1.2: Rationale of the Research

Any business needs to be able to effectively reach out to customers and engage with them through marketing communication and marketing messages while also informing customers about products and services offered, the attributes of products like price and quality, and one or more of the 7 Ps of the marketing mix. It cabs, therefore, be said that marketing messages deliver what a company desires to convey about itself and its products to customers in a particular market. Such messaging can be direct or coded but have to be such that they are easily understood by customers and be appealing to them. That will ensure the success of a

marketing campaign. Ability to attract customers can help companies to establish themselves in a new market while also getting help in sales to generate more revenues in the case of companies that have been operating in a market for some time.

But it is also important to note that customers tend to comprehend marketing messages in their way – wherein such understanding or comprehension is typically influenced by the culture that a customer belongs to or influenced by. Therefore, the dominant national culture often dictates the manner in which customers understand and comprehend marketing messages. When there is a difference in national cultures between the home country and host country of an MNC. Here will also be differences in how customers of the two countries interpret the same marketing message. Therefore, MNCs need to understand and adapt local culture to appropriately appeal to customers through their marketing messages – which is the focus and the importance of this study (Srivastava, 2009)

During the initial reading up on the topic, this researcher noted several studies in the literature on the issue of cultural differences as well as those on the relationship between culture and cultural difference and marketing. But this researcher noted a dearth of literature on the automobile industry as well as those specifically address the potential cultural differences between India and the United States. Considering the case of Harley which has not been able to penetrate the Indian market to the extent it desired even after quite a few years of operations, this researcher wondered whether this had anything to do with the ability of the company to understand and adapt its marketing to the national culture of India. That prompted this researcher to take up this topic for this study.

Another very important justification for choosing Harley Davidson as the company to explore is the fact that after almost 11 years in the Indian market, it decided to exit the market towards the end of 2020 (Panday, 2020). However, at the beginning of the same year, the company had proudly announced that it had sold more than 25,000 motorcycles since it started business in Indian in 2009 (ETAuto.com, 2020). However, at the time of its exit, data showed that it had successively made and sold lesser bikes annually since 2016-17.

This makes it a good case to study as some experts and analysts identified price, type of bikes and its marketing or promotional strategies were at fault for it not making it big in the promising Indian market.

1.3: Research Objectives and Questions

This research attempted to achieve the following objectives:

➢ To examine the potential cultural dimensions that differentiate US and India's national cultures

➢ To identify the overarching global marketing strategy, if any, followed by Harley Davidson

➢ To examine the specific cultural dimensions of the Indian market that Harley Davidson needed to keep in mind while developing marketing strategies for India and

➢ To provide specific recommendations as guidelines to Harley Davidson that it could have used for a successful marketing campaign for the Indian market in the cultural context.

This researcher believes that the above research objectives can be achieved if answers to the following research questions were available.

➢ What are the cultural dimensions that differentiate US and India's national culture?

➢ What is the overarching global marketing strategy, if any, followed by Harley Davidson?

➢ What are the specific cultural dimensions of the Indian market that Harley Davidson needs to keep in mind while developing marketing strategies for India?

➢ What specific guidelines should Harley Davidson follow for forming a successful marketing campaign for the Indian market?

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1: National Culture and Consumer Behaviour

In the context of international business, the aspect of national culture is one issue that companies and firms are according much greater importance to than previously for developing and implementation of their various business strategies including those in marketing. Overseas business strategies are subject to influences of national culture and such cultural traits have the power to shape overseas strategies of multinational companies (MNCs) (Castro and Sáiz, 2019).

Emery and Tian, (2010) state that MNCs have been forced to undertake a close review of how they create and implement their national culture at the international stage or market because of globalization. The authors claim that the abilities of international companies to reshape their business strategies and activities – including those in marketing, to be able to reap the full benefits of a market by aligning with the needs and desires of the local market environment and customers is now considered to be one of the sources of competitive advantages. Therefore, it can be said that considering the aspect of national culture and national cultural differences is amongst the key areas of interest in international business and international marketing.

This has prompted many authors and researchers such as Barkema, Bell and Pennings, (1996) to assert that the success of international companies in foreign markets – especially in those where a significant degree of cultural difference exists with its home market, has come to be closely associated with the manner in which such companies handle issues of national cultural differences and addressing such differences in their overseas marketing and other business strategies.

Further, the way MNCs can identify and handle the effects and influences of national culture on marketing and other business strategies can also be linked to the multiple interdisciplinary fields related to marketing like online marketing, tourism marketing and consumer behaviour analytics (Sohaib and Kang, 2015). This consideration, therefore, leads one to conclude that there can be a significant influence of national cultures and it often also dictates consumer behaviour. Therefore, most of the overseas business strategies – including those in marketing, need to be oriented according to the local culture to satisfy the needs and desires of the consumer of the overseas local market. This makes it imperative to consider the national culture and national cultural differences in marketing strategy making and customer reach out programs of MNCs.

The culture believes to exert a profound influence on all aspects of human behaviour (Mukha, 2019). The way culture manifests in an individual can be hidden or subtle or pronounced, directly visible or oblique while also having an enduring impact or an ephemeral effect. Further, it has also been aptly stated that almost all facets of human existence are closely intertwined with culture in a manner that often makes it difficult to ascertain the ways and how the impact of culture gets manifested among individuals and groups (Leng and Botelho, 2010). Additionally, the inherent and dynamic nature of culture also makes it difficult to understand its impact. The manner in which culture influences people, groups and societies tend to get changed, and sometimes evolve, with changes in the cultural landscape due to political, social, economic and technological forces and changes (Milbank, 2010). However, it is widely accepted that the influence of national culture is pervasive and underlines all aspects of social behaviour and interaction. Manifestation of national culture happens through the exhibition of people and groups following values and norms – mostly unwritten, which also govern a particular society or nation. Further, national culture can also get manifested through objects used in everyday life as well as through the modes of communication used in society (Sułowska, 2019).

Individuals are affected or influenced as consumers by the traits of national culture and the values, beliefs and attitudes it propagates. And it is these cultural traits that often deter5moine how an individual consumer or a group of consumers react to new products and services or technological innovation or the way companies try to reach out to customers (Gladwin, 1981; Waarts and Van Everdingen, 2005). The meanings, values, ideas and beliefs of individuals and groups of customers in a market get manifested in the form of various artefacts of national culture like a particular type of products or services –and such artefacts are shaped by national culture (Hasan and Ditsa, 1999).

And since there are differences in national culture – to the extent of what the majority of the people of a particular country believes, values and exhibits, between countries, hence there will be differences in the manifestation of their meanings, values, ideas and beliefs for an event or situation that is similar (Kuo, et al., 2016). In the context of a consumer society, it can be said that differences exist between national cultures of countries in terms of how the meanings of messages related to products and/or services from companies are deciphered (McCort and Malhotra, 1993).

Therefore, what people want and desire, how they want it, the specific attributes of a product or a service, the interpretation of what a company says through its marketing messages, and indeed the overall perception of a company based on the above, is significantly impacted by national cultural traits.

2.2: National Culture's Influence on Consumer Behaviour and Marketing

The importance of the national cultural aspect for overseas business strategies – including in marketing, has been viewed by many as an element of the local macro-environment that may have an influence on a business (Brassington and Pettitt, 2006; Kotler and Armstrong, 2012), others believe that it has become an integral part of modern business that demands close and careful attention beyond a passing glance of being viewed simply as one of the many macro-environment elements (Arnould et al, 2009; De Mooij 2013). Some3 authors also claim that national culture and its constructs have been given importance for and serious consideration for over two decades within the marketing and consumer research paradigm which has rep[laced it being viewed as being only an external and antecedent variable to distinguish between national markets (Arnould, et al., 2009).

And some scholars and practitioners also believe that there has been a shift in the concept of marketing away from the single exchange mechanism it once was – where the focus was on the seller or the marketer. It has now become a business process that is socially oriented with aim of establishing relevant relationships with a market (Brassington and Pettitt 2006). This prompted Kotler and Armstrong (2012, p.29) to define marketing as *"The process by which companies create value for customers and build strong customer relationships in order to capture value from customers in return."*

This has also resulted in international marketing being identified and described as the efforts put in by MNCs and marketers to try and know and understand the needs and desires of consumers around the world and then satisfying these wants in a better way than competitors concerning customers in foreign markets (Terpstra and Sarathy, 1991, p.5). but in recent times a distinction has been made in an approach to explain global marketing concerning international marketing wherein the former was described as creating a standardized marketing strategy irrespective of the differences in countries or regions (Berry and Wilson, 2000).

Further refinement of this concept has led researcher and marketers to now stress on adaptation or customization of global marketing – a change process mostly in concepts and approach wherein changes and alterations are made in the global marketing strategy based on the

deciphering of the wants, demands and desires of customers of a local or regional market (Belch and Belch, 2003). This flows from a wider acceptance in general of the existence of differences between the process used and the activities used by consumers in different markets in their search, selection, purchasing using, evaluating, and disposing of products and services to satisfy their needs and desires (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012).

It is pertinent at this stage to discuss further the concept of national culture with relation to international marketing or marketing strategies opt to be deployed for overseas markets. According to Janiszewska and Insch, (2012), it is important for MNCs to target and try to fulfil the specific needs and expectations of targeted groups while developing marketing strategies. This can therefore be linked to a process of creation of well-motivated, and sometimes concealed, strategies that use the specific behaviour of target groups. However such behaviour of target groups can vary between markets and countries. Therefore this needs to be accounted for while making such marketing strategies.

On the corporate scale, marketing strategies and campaigns are created to offer value to customers or a specific consumer group in a market in a sustainable manner. But for such "value" to be actually valuable for consumers, it is important to develop those from the perspective of customers of that particular market. And to achieve this marketers and MNCs have to understand the dominant national culture of the market - which dictates the behaviour of consumer groups, and accordingly try and align strategies according to the specific behaviour of the target group (Rani, 2014). And since national cultures influence the views, beliefs, attitudes and reactions of people of a national market, therefore MNCs must analyze and incorporate national cultural traits in strategies.

Further, how consumers evaluate a product or its marketing messages is significantly influenced by the dominant culture (Song et al., 2017). Hence MNCs need to possess knowledge and adaptation to local national cultural traits – in their strategies including in marketing and customer reach out programs. This is the therefore the genesis of the concept of cultural marketing (Ndubisi, 2005) which suggests that the essence of cultural marketing is to bring together a marketing or communicating strategy that is suggestive and credible and in line with a proper cultural idea of a particular market (Holt and Cameron 2010).

This is because of differences in which consumers of different cultural backgrounds could react to the same marketing message of communication and hence the message that an MNC would want to get through to customers could be perceived differently by consumers of different

cultures (Foscht et al. 2008). This argument potentially led Cayla and Arnould, (2008) to call for a change in the ethnocentric approach for solving the complex issue of international marketing in a global marketplace. There are arguments in favour of reviewing the ethnocentric approach to international and global marketing to meet the theoretical and methodological challenges. Kapstein, (2007), while arguing in favour of such a change pointed out to use of culturally unique signifiers by different cultures for the representation of various meanings. Therefore one symbol that is communicated to consumers through marketing communications could have completely different meanings for consumers in different markets – depending on the cultural traits.

Therefore, a successful or popular marketing message or campaign of one country may not be perceived in the same way in a culturally different country.

2.3: Theories and Models of National Culture

2.3.1: Hofstede's Model for National Culture

The national cultural model that was developed by Gerhart Hofstede (1980) is amongst the older and the most widely used models used to explain national cultural differences. At the initial stage, this scholar had identified four specific cultural dimensions of national culture that were used for differentiating between national cultures. Two more dimensions were later added to the model (Hofstede and Bond, 1984). The researcher had created this cultural model after an extended and exhaustive survey which involved more than 117,000 employees of IBM who belonged to 40 different countries and hence were potentially from 40 different national cultures. The six dimensions of national culture as identified and used in this model are listed in the table below.
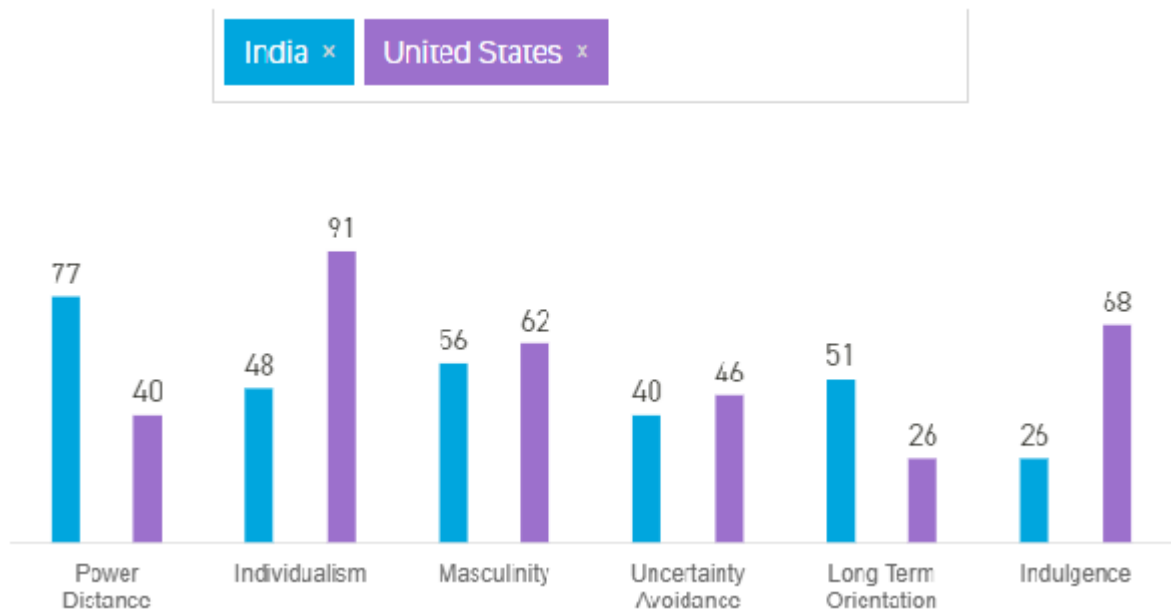
Table 1: *Hofstede's 6 Dimensions of National Culture*

Dimensions of National Culture	Content
Power distance	Low - power is dispersed in society and people see themselves as equal. High - society accepts (approve) the unequal distribution of power.
Uncertainty avoidance	Low- people are tolerant of risk and different/alternative options. • High - people feel fear and embarrassment when they find themselves in unusual situations
Individualism vs. Collectivism	Individualism - connections between people are weak; it is expected that everyone takes care of his/her own interests and the interests of his/her immediate family. Collectivism - people from the birth are integrated into cohesive groups which provide lifelong protection in exchange for loyalty.
Masculine vs. feminine values	Masculine values – there is a strong tendency for achievements; awards and recognitions are the main motivating factors of behaviour. Feminine values - the emphasis is on the quality of life, sustainable development of society, the balance between private and professional life; there are no differences between women and men in the same positions.
Long-term vs. short-term orientation	Long-term orientation - people values tradition, they are patience and persistence to achieve results that will be manifested in the long run. Short-term orientation - focus is on the present and the near future
Indulgence vs. Non-indulgence	Indulgence- a society that allows relatively free gratification of basic and natural human drives related to enjoying life and having fun. Non-indulgence - a society that suppresses gratification of needs and regulates it by means of strict social norms.

(Source: created by Author and adapted based on Hofstede and Bond, 1984)

Hofstede's model for national culture's uniqueness lies in the fact that it allows a user to compare and contrast national cultures of different countries based on numerical values attributed to the different dimensions of culture for each country. A specific value was attached to each of the national cultural dimensions for each country which easily allows a user to compared and contrast the difference between each of the dimensions between countries. This valuation of cultural dimensions is particularly useful because culture is an abstract element that is difficult to measure or quantify. Therefore, this model makes it possible to very easily identify the national cultural differences between countries while also gauging the extent of the differences (Hofstede and Bond, 1984).

The table below highlights the national cultural differences between the United States - the home country for Harley Davidson, and India - the host country being examined in this study. The table shows the score for each of the six dimensions identified by this model. A glance at the table below can help the reader to very easily identify the cultural differences between the two countries and the extent to which each of the national cultural dimensions differs.

Table 2*: Comparison of National Cultures of India and US*

(Source: Hofstede Insights, 2020)

The table above clearly shows that there are significant differences in all of the six national cultural dimensions between the U.S, and India. It is also possible to explain the implications of the differences in dimensions identified above by examining the meanings of each of the dimensions and relating them to the scores awarded each for each country.

Using the table above, it is, therefore, possible to interpret the meanings and implications of the differences in values for each of the dimensions for each country. This in turn can help to identify the specific national cultural traits that differentiate the national cultures of the U.S. and India. These differences can be used and incorporated by MNCs such as Harley Davidson in their marketing communication and customer reach out strategies in India. it can be guessed that the most appropriate strategies for MNCs for the Indian market would be different from those used in the U.S because of cultural differences.

The outcome of the analysis of the national cultural differences between the US and India is summarized in the table below.

Table 3*: National Cultural Differences between US and India and its Implications*

Cultural Dimension	Score Implication (India)	Score Implication (US)
Power Distance	*(77) society accepts hierarchy*	*(40) promotes equality*

Individualism	(48) mixed attributes for individual and group achievements	(91) society values and celebrates personal success and achievements
Masculinity	(56) mixed attitude to valuing personal and group success and towards people engaging in personal gratitude & quality of life	(62) mixed attitude towards valuing personal success, and people pursuing personal gratitude & better quality of life
Uncertainty Avoidance	(40) attitude to tolerate the unexpected and sometimes welcome uncertainty as a break from the monotony	(46) a little less tolerant to the unexpected and sometimes welcome uncertainty as a break from the monotony
Long term Orientation	(51) does not estimate the attitude	(26) falls back on time-honoured traditions & norms for solving issues
Indulgence	(26) denotes a more restrained society; does not value self-gratification	(68) mostly unrestrained in expressing joy & celebrating success and self-gratification

(Source: created by Author from Table 1)

The table above shows that there are significant differences in terms of the cultural dimensions of power distance, individualism, masculinity versus feminity, lone term versus short term orientation and self-indulgence.

2.3.2: The Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner Model for National Culture

Despite being well-used on, there have been criticisms of Hofstede's model over the years as it was argued that this model was not only older and does not incorporate the change in cultural traits over time but also missed out on a few important ones.

This led to the development of the Trompenaars' model of national culture which uses seven dimensions of culture and was created by management consultants Fans Trompenaars and Charles Hampden-Turner.

A number of the cultural dimensions used by Hofstede were used in this model while some new ones were added. The model was formed after a prolonged ten years of study and therefore was partially able to capture the changes in cultural traits over time. The researchers examined the preferences and values of people in dozens of cultures around the world during this period. The survey conducted for this study included more than 46,000 managers across 40 countries

from whom data for building this model was gathered (Trompenaars, 2018). This prompts many to consider this model to be a more robust one compared to Hofstede's model

The national cultural dimensions idnetifie3d and evaluated in the Trompenaars' model fall in one of the following seven dimensions:

➢ Universalism versus particularism

➢ Individualism versus communitarianism

➢ Specific versus diffuse

➢ Neutral versus emotional   (Trompenaars, 2018)

➢ Achievement versus ascription

➢ Sequential time versus synchronous time

➢ Internal direction versus outer direction (Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars, 2006).

The table below highlights a summary of the findings of the researchers:

Table 4: *Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner Modal for National Culture*

Dimension	Content
Universalism vs. Particularism	Universalism – a general belief that some rules and principles are best and therefore should be used in all situations or countries Particularism – focuses on uniqueness of situations and the need for considering specificities in all spheres
Individualism vs. Communitarianism	Individualism – self-interest and the interest of family lies above interests of groups Communitarianism – the priority is always the interest of the group
Neutral vs. Emotional	Neutral – refers to people always trying to control their emotions and to exhibit poise and composure whenever possible Emotional – no reluctance among individuals to exhibit and show their deepest emotions
Specific vs. Diffuse	Specific – different roles do not influence each other as well as the roles that they have in their lives wherein the differing roles do not influence each other Diffuse – no clear differentiation between private and public life; the different roles of people – in both private and public life, are hardly separated; an individual is viewed as an integral person
Achievement vs. Ascription	Achievement – the worth of an individual is ascertained on the basis of that individual's personal competencies and viewing results or outcomes as the result of the work and achievement of an individual Ascription – worth of people are based on evaluation of personal relationships and family heritage
Time Orientation	Sequential time culture – considering time as a resource and hence it put to use in the most efficient manner; generally no distinction is made between time allocated to work and for other activities Synchronic time culture – existence of a clear demarcation between work and pleasure; greater importance is attached to relationships between people than to strictly adhering to agendas, protocols, etc.
Internal Direction vs. Outer Direction	Internal Direction - belief that it is possible to control and influence their immediate environment and thereby their own destiny Outer Direction – belief that neither the environment nor one's destiny can be influenced or controlled

(Source: Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 2013)

Just like Hofstede's model, the above table can be used for identifying the implications of the above dimensions of the Trompenaars' model from marketing communication and customer reach out a perspective which is shown in the following table.

Table 5: *Behavioural Implications of the Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner Modal for National Culture*

Dimension of National Culture	Behavioural Implications
Universalism vs. Particularism	*Universalism* Marketing communication messages have to be clear and unambiguous with the promises made in messages needed to be kept with consistency; messages need to be objective *Particularism* Allow the customers a high degree of autonomy for making a purchasing decision; respect the needs of consumers as they expect flexibility; allow time for relationship building with customers and do not rush with aggressive strategies; consumers expect MNCs to follow rules and norms
Individualism vs. Communitarianism	*Individualism* People value self-praise and rewards; shows greater initiative in purchase decisions; marketing messages should be such that they are able to link an individual to a group; values creativity *Communitarianism* Messages should focus on group and group rewards and not very individualistic
Neutral vs. Emotional	*Neutral* Convey positive emotions in marketing messages; always "stick to the point" *Emotional* Be open in marketing communications; use emotions to build trust and relationships; consumers value high positivity and positive attitude
Specific vs. Diffuse	*Specific* Marketing messages should be direct and to the point; clear communications should be used; consumers tend to separate work and home lives and hence messages should not mix the two up *Diffuse*

	Customers want to know as much as possible about products and brands; likes messages that mix personal/social and work-life; consumers favour social functions and invites
Achievement vs. Ascription	*Achievement* Consumers expect appropriate rewards at the individual level; *Ascription* Consumers value authority
Time Orientation	*Sequential time culture* Consumers focused on one activity at a time; expects punctuality and adherence to deadlines *Synchronic time culture* Consumers value flexibility
Internal Direction vs. Outer Direction	*Internal Direction* Values product information that is objective; values constructive conflict. *Outer Direction* Consumers expect appropriate information from MNCs about purchasing; consumers value reassurance on products/services; customers expect quick and quiet resolution of complaints; wants to offer balanced feedback of negative and positive aspects: consumers expect the same for a product/service through marketing communication from MNCs

(Source: compiled by author from on Smith, Dugan and Trompenaars, 1996; Hampden-Turner, 2010)

The above interpretation of the cultural traits of countries with respect to marketing communications implications can be extended to identify the differences in such implications targeted at consumers based on the U.S. and India. the following table compares the national cultures of the U.S. and India based on the Trompenaars Model.

Table 6: *Differences in National Cultures between the U.S. and India according to the Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner Modal for National Culture*

Cultural Dimension	**The U.S.**	**India**

Universalism vs. Particularism	*Universalism (People place a high value on laws, rules, values, and obligation)*	*Particularistic (circumstance and relationship dictates rules)*
Individualism vs. Communitarianism	*High individualism (Belief in personal freedom & achievement; make your own decisions, take care of yourself)*	*Communitarian (the belief that group is more important than individual; group provides help & safety in exchange for loyalty; group before the individual*
Neutral vs. Emotional	*Neutral (Control of emotions; actions dictated by reason and not feelings; people don't reveal thoughts or feelings)*	*Emotional (Express emotions, even spontaneously, and at work; welcome and accepted to show emotion)*
Specific vs. Diffuse	*Specific (work & personal lives separated; belief that people can work together without good relationship)*	*Diffuse (Overlap between work & personal life; good relationships vital to meeting work objectives; social relationships brought to work and spend time with colleagues outside of work hours)*
Achievement vs. Ascription	*Achievement (belief of individual's worth is based on what ones do; values performance, only)*	*Ascription (Belief an individual's value for who one is; importance to power, title, and position).*

Time Orientation (sequential vs synchronism)	*Sequential (high value on punctuality, planning & staying on schedule; "time is money")*	*Synchronic (past, present, and future are interwoven periods; able to work on multiple tasks at once; flexibility in plans and commitments)*
Internal Direction vs. Outer Direction	*Internal (Belief in controlling the surrounding environment to achieve goals)*	*Outer oriented (Belief of being controlled by the surrounding environment; working alongside environment to achieve goals; avoid conflict where possible; need reassurance)*

(Source: compiled by author from Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1997; Banerjee, 2008; Karlin and Weil, 2019; Peter, 2017)

2.4: The 7Ps of Marketing

The major marketing activities under taken by companies are often perceived to be only comprised of the messages delivered to the target audience. But the modern view of the marketing concept comprises of several other related business activities or elements in addition to marketing messages delivered through marketing communications (Jiménez-Marín, 2018). This study focuses on the most widely accepted and used framework for creating an overall effective marketing strategy – the 7Ps of the marketing mix (Pulido Polo, 2018). This framework is considered in combination with the cultural difference models discussed above.

While elements such as products or prices or place of availability – which are parts of the 7Ps of the marketing mix, generally could appear to be separate business activities or processes, these are considered carefully in modern marketing and creating an appropriate mix of them to develop the most appropriate marketing strategies. These 7Ps or the seven elements are **Product** (*physical features as well as quality*), **Place** (*the sale channels or the channels where consumers can get access to the products*), **Price** (*the determinants of pricing and strategies behind it*), **Promotion** (*advertising, marketing and branding activities*), **People** (*quality,*

quantity as well as training of its employees), **Process** (*planning and controlling strategies and activities*) and **Physical** (*decoration and cleanliness of store outlets as well as the ambience of the service*) (Keillor, 2007).

Marketing theories suggest that companies should make use of one or more of the seven elements of the marketing mix and design them such that they are aligned with the needs and wants of consumers. Appropriate use of these elements in marketing communication messages in line with the considerations for national culture can help companies to develop an integrated marketing strategy that is aligned with the national culture so that the maximum impact of the messages on the consumers is possible (Febriansyah, 2019).

2.4.1: Product

As the name suggests, this marketing mix element is related to the products or services offered by a company to consumers. It goes without saying that products or services should be sich that they are not only able to meet the needs and desires of consumers but are also in line with their cultural expectations. Such an alignment could help MNCs offer products that are consumers not only expect but their expectations are surpassed (Weber, 2015).

In this content it is therefore important for MNCs to consider the personal views, beliefs and attitudes that are exhibited by the majority of the customers in a market or a society and such traits need to be incorporated in the product-related marketing messages (Hasan, 2012). Based on the discussions on cultural differences, it can be said that product attributes desired by consumers could differ from one market to another which in turn can shape the way products are designed or attributes of products presented to consumers (Jiménez-Marín, 2018). It can be argued that such well thought out product strategies can result in consumers of a particular market reacting positively to a product offered as the majority of them will find positively perceived usefulness from such products.

2.4.2: Place

The marketing mix element of place is the actual space where consumers can get access to products or services offered by a company. Such space or *Place* can be physical stores of companies or retailers, the small neighbourhood mom-pop shops and/or the online sale platforms of companies and e-commerce sites and online market places. This also denotes the last point in the distribution channels of companies. The local trends and demands or attitudes of customers of the particular market cab often dictate the choice of *Place* for companies and that can vary from one market to country to another.

In the context of the Indian market, Khare, (2016) noted a rising trend among Indian customers to use online sale channels more frequently for purchasing certain products. This trend has also been boosted by the novel coronavirus pandemic. However, there was not much evidence in the literature that can suggest that this trend has become a social or cultural trend in India. Moreover, for an important purchase such as a bike – which in the case of Harley Davidson can even be considered as a luxury buy, it is more likely that the Indian consumers will be keener to have a look and feel of the bike physically (Farooqi, 2017).

2.4.3: Price

It is assumed that the element of *Price* of the marketing mix is amongst the biggest determinants of consumers' perception of value for money or the value or worth of a product (Ward, 2014). It is known that this element is given great importance at the corporate level of companies and carefully present this in their marketing messages.

However, it has also been argued that the local market environment such as the purchasing power of consumers, the state of the economy, the level of price consciousness among consumers, etc. most often dictates the setting of a pricing strategy (Matsumura and Matsushima, 2015). In addition to the local economic conditions of a market, culture also plays an important role in consumers choosing to accept a certain level of price for products and services because of the perception of need and desire for a product. Therefore pricing strategies are also often determined by the degree of willingness to pay by consumers of a particular market. That, in turn, dictates the local culture as people's concept of value for money and hence dependent on culture. This possibly prompted Aliyev and Wagner, (2017) to opine that luxury products do well in some markets compared to other markets that have similar local economic conditions.

In the context of the Indian market, it is assumed that consumers give a high preference for value for money because of their high price consciousness compared to consumers in some other similar income bracket countries. This is due to the convention and cultural traits that are prevalent among Indians. This essentially means it is more likely that Indian consumers will be expecting more value for money from products or services purchased (Patel, 2012).

2.4.4: Promotion

Promotion is another of the important elements of the marketing mix and is the dissemination of messages from a company to the targeted customers (Grover and Srinivasan, 1992). The aim of promotions can be to increase sales, establishing or enhancing brand image and constantly

reminding consumers about the presence of a product or a brand in the market. Promotional activities can include activities such as advertising, public relations, in-store promotions, participating in trade fairs, etc.

Successful promotional activities are those that are received well by consumers and those that can effectively convey a company's messages to its customers. Such messages can be delivered through elements such as pictures, symbols, pictures, words, language, gestures, customs, music and songs, videos, etc. The promotional messages are often comprised of coded meanings and these are sought to be conveyed through various media (Gordon, 2012).

But considering the discussions on cultural impact on marketing and consumer behaviour, it can be argued that the perception or the meaning of such pictures, symbols, words, language, gestures, customs etc. can be deciphered or decoded by a target audience or consumers differently compared to the same messages being dispersed to consumers in another market. This is because of the cultural differences between societies and nations – as it dominates or influences how a particular individual understands and makes meaning of a picture or symbol or word (He, 2011).

Therefore, the feelings and emotions or values that an MNC wants its customers to experience and understand, through marketing promotions and communication, might not be understood or even misunderstood, differently by different cultures (Alden, Steenkamp and Batra, 2006). Therefore, it can be said that companies need to carefully consider how pictures, symbols, words, language, gestures, customs, etc. are interpreted and understood according to the local culture and accordingly adjust and incorporate them in their promotional messages to targeted customers.

2.4.5: People

This element of the marketing mix refers to the employees or staff of a company that come into direct and regular contact with consumers. They are considered to be the first point of contact between companies and customers (Warrink, 2018). According to Kotrba et al., (2012), consumers expect to see a reflection of the values, beliefs and convictions conveyed by a company through its marketing and promotional messages in the behaviour of the staff or the *People.* Consumers can come into contact with such staff during the process of purchasing or while inquiring about a product to service or during post-purchase services. Further, consumers also want to see the reflection of their own beliefs, views and attitudes in the attitudes of the staff of companies that they get in touch with while making a purchase. Take for example a

natural caring attitude and respect for elders that is a part of a culture is expected by consumers to get reflected in the attitude and behaviours of the *People.*

According to Dominici, (2009), the *People* of a company also carry the values and cultural traits that the customers expect and desire in terms while interacting. For example, certain cultures might not promote over-aggressive behaviour and if such behaviour is expressed by the *People* of a company, it is likely to not go down well with the consumers (Lin and Liang, 2011).

2.4.6: Process

Process in the marketing mix refers to the business processes that are used to bring a product to customers. Very often these processes also find a place in marketing communications with companies aiming to highlight specialities of such processes (Pulido Polo, 2018).

An example of this is the concept of green sourcing of raw materials which may be considered to be one of the unique features of a product and a trait of an environmentally conscious national society. In such cases, it would be good for companies to highlight this aspect in their marketing communications (Pulido Polo, 2018).

It has also been argued that this element of the marketing mix is not significantly influenced by local culture except for social trends such as growing concerns for equitable conditions in supply chains or environment-friendliness of a production process (Febriansyah, 2019). Since the impact is quite small, this element is largely outside the scope of this study.

2.4.7: Physical Evidence

The *Physical Evidence* element of the marketing mix is everything that customers see while they interact with a company. This element can include the immediate physical environment in which consumers access products or the layout or interior design of a physical store or the packaging or branding or the online platforms and the ease or non-ease of use (Pulido Polo, 2018). *Physical Evidence* may also mean the staff and how they dress and act.

This element has been included in the marketing mix because these small things can provide tangible clues for consumers to assess the quality of experience while interacting with a brand or a company. This element of the marketing mix can be specifically important for first-time consumers of a company as it can create an everlasting impression - which in turn can infuse confidence to interact and transact with the company or brand before making a purchase (Yasanallah and Bidram, 2012).

For a product like superbikes from Harley Davidson, there can be a host of physical shreds of evidence – from the physical stores, their layout, how the employees are dressed to the experience of test riding a bike as well the experience of engaging with the company on its online channels. As has been noted previously, such experiences as mentioned above are most often the personal choices and preferences of individuals – which are often shaped by the dominant culture and cultural values.

However, for this research, the last three marketing elements are not directly linked to marketing campaigns and marketing communications of Harley Davidson in India – especially since the company has already left the country. Further, even while it was operating in India, the element of *People* and *Physical Evidence* did not play any significant role in its marketing efforts as well as the cultural differences between India and the United States. Studies by this researcher into these aspects of Harley Davidson, while it was operating in India, resulted in yielding negligible evidence of their presence in Harley's marketing strategies in India. Moreover, the element of *Process* was found to present negligible influence in the marketing strategies of Harley Davidson from the perspective of cultural differences between India and the US. Hence it was decided to leave out the marketing mix elements of *People, Process* and *Physical Evidence* when identifying the marketing mix of Harley Davidson in India

2.5: Company Overview of Harley Davidson

Harley-Davidson is an American company that is more than 100 years old – having been established in 1903 in the city of Milwaukee Wisconsin. It is amongst the best-known brands in the world in the superbike category with the company offering high-quality superbikes at high prices. These bikes are more likely to be viewed as prized possessions as well as a way of life instead of simply being a means of regular travelling or usage (Coutinho, Mesquita and Muylder, 2018).

It was this aspect that allowed the company to develop a cult following among its users and owners primarily because of its niche brand and customization options that it has on its products. Apart from the already established markets in the U.S., Europe, and Canada, the brand has also ventured into countries with developing economies such as Brazil and India.

Another of the major reasons for the success of the brand is the high degree of customization and uniqueness offered by the company. These are the two attributes of the company that has helped it to adapt to the local taste in the new markets that it enters – such as Brazil and India. This, therefore, creates a competitive advantage for the company over its rivals in the superbike

category such as Honda, Yamaha and Suzuki which are known to make more standardized products (Farris and Gregg, 2017).

In the Indian market, the company operates through a wholly-owned subsidiary company called Harley-Davidson India which has its headquarters in Gurgaon in Haryana province. While the company had formally started its operations in the Indian market in 2009, it had been planning for an entry for several years till then. High tariffs and emission regulations were the major constraints (harley-davidson.com/in (b), 2021). The governments of India and the U.S. struck a deal in 2007 that allowed the entry of Harley Davidson into India. There remained complications over the emission standards set by the Indian government for bikes which were over 500 cc displacement. That delayed the actual entry of the company into the then fastest-growing major economy in the world (Banerji, 2020).

The company was also deterred by import duties of up to 60 per cent and additional taxes of 30 per cent which resulted in an almost doubling of the prices of the bikes in the Indian market (Banerji, 2020).

The company started to offer bikes in the Indian market after some of those taxes were reduced and it managed to set up an assembling unit in the country. Harley Davidson first offered 12 models in India from its range of five motorcycle families. These were wholly imported as completely built units and therefore attracted a tax of more than 100%. The prices went down dramatically after a manufacturing unit was established by the company in India (Singhee, 2010).

However, the company was unable to penetrate the Indian market with only a fraction of the market share. Even though the company celebrated selling more than 25,000 motorcycles since its inception in 2009 in February of 2020 (ETAuto.com, 2020), the company decided to exit the market in the second half of 2020. The production of its bikes in India had dropped from 11,753 units in the fiscal year 2016-2017 to 4,533 units in the fiscal year 2020-2021 with its sales declining from 4,708 units to 2,470 units annually during the same period. It has been argued that the lacklustre performance of the brand in India was because of its high prices as well as the wrong product strategy and marketing strategy (Panday, 2020).

This makes it worthwhile to examine how Harley Davidson go wrong with its marketing strategy in India in this study.

2.6: *The 4Ps in Harley Davidson's Marketing Mix in India (Product, Price, Place, Promotions)*

Going back 11 years, India was a completely new market for Harley Davidson but one that had the potential for its superbikes. And much like every global giant Harley Davidson too relied on a marketing mix for its superbikes. The company has hailed its bikes to be a lifestyle and not merely another bike for an owner - with its highly stylised bike models, in the global market (Tapp and Spotswood, 2013). The company has always chosen to offer heavily built stylised superbikes that comes with strong and powerful engines which deliver both power and the trademark sound that has come to one of the identities of the brand.

Another important element of the company's products is the unique designs which can not only be highly customized according to the demand of the bikers but also leaves a bike enthusiast spoilt for choice (Goi, 2009).

2.6.1: *Product*

For Harley Davidson bikes, the uniqueness and the strength and power are almost unmatchable in the industry which created the perfect product identity for the brand in the product aspect of the marketing mix (Fitzgerald, Bhiro and Carbaugh, 2014). It is worth mentioning that Harley bikes are known globally for their high quality and presents a sense of collectivism and pride in owning. Therefore, the marketing strategy for an emerging economy such as India would expectedly incorporate those elements of the product while also touting overall customer satisfaction.

And despite suggestions that the company should offer a lower price lower performance bike in India to suit the large middle-income group, the marketing strategy of the brand in India had rejected that idea and chosen not to compromise on price and thereby the quality of the superbikes for the Indian market. According to the company, following a low-cost low-quality product strategy in India will tarnish its global image while also weakening its product credibility that is based on its very high quality (Thompson Jr, Strickland and Gamble, 2005). The product strategy of the company, therefore, hinges on offering a world-class super bike at par with any other similar product from the company anywhere in the world. Harley had adopted a strategy of selecting the standard and touring models of its super bikes for marketing in India which are larger than the average bikes in the country while also scoring better in riding experience. The company marketed its bikes in India mostly not like ones that can be used on

a day-to-day basis by the owners but more like cruisers that represent a combination of style, class, quality, performance and comfort.

However, India being an emerging economy it can also be assumed that the average consumers who purchase bikes do so keeping in mind that those are their primary mode of transportation and not a secondary hobby - which can be evidenced in the home country of Harley where biker use such bikes for leisure. However, considering the Indian market and its customer base, it can be said that the Harley bikes were mostly targeted at the wealthy who would see them as an additional bike and driven to purchase not so much by the need for transportation but for the pride of owning a Harley Davidson.

2.6.2: Price

This second element of the marketing mix is important in the Indian context and therefore needs to be studied in some depth. Since the company offers products that have high displacement engines and has heavy-built chassis, it can be assumed that the company markets its products to a particular class of customers. This makes the pricing of the superbikes an issue of utmost importance. The bikes are such priced that they target the upwardly mobile and adventurous consumers (Tapp and Spotswood, 2013).

But despite a growing group of wealthy consumers, the Indian market is also still predominantly price-conscious and sensitive and a large section of the 1.3 billion strong Indian consumer bases cannot seemingly purchase a Harley Davidson. The starting price of the bikes in India is almost 5 lakh rupees (nearly $7700) (Harley-Davidson 1, 2017) while the costliest comes at a staggering 51,35,000 rupees (almost $79000) (Autox.com, 2021). These prices are exorbitantly high by Indian market standards as four-wheelers can be purchased at the base price of a Harley while the best of luxury cars can be purchased for its top-end price. Also consider that the average starting price for a bike in India used for regular transport is 70,000 rupees or about only about $800 (Autox.com, 2021).

This shows that purchasing a Harley Davidson bike in India can be considered to be a luxury for many – especially given the price sensitivity of Indian consumers.

It also needs to be mentioned that the costs of the superbikes from the Harley stable did not go down to any significant degree despite the company setting up an assembling plant in the country and avoided the import duties and other taxes.

2.6.3: Place

Place too plays an important part in the marketing mix of Harley in the Indian context. The company believes that the ideal market is where a customer exists (Hänninen and Karjaluoto, 2017). It also needs to be mentioned that the Indian market is large in terms of its geographic area as well as the variety of customer base and the distribution of wealth. There is also fragmentation and fracturing in the market according to cultural and economic denominators. For example, the western part of the country is more develop industrially and therefore wealth abounds there compared to the eastern parts. Similar is the case of Northern Indian states that are economically well off compared to the Eastern and Southern regions of the market.

Hence the distribution strategy that Harley Davidson offered in the Indian market was primarily focused on the northern and western parts of the country. It used a wide network of distributors and dealers to get the bikes to the customers through its physical stores (harley-davidson.com/in (e), 2021). Even though the company has decided to exit the Indian market in September of 2020, its Indian website is still available and the company continues to offer Indian customers a look at the bikes, the options of purchasing, customization and financing. It also allows for the placing of a test ride request online through its website (harley-davidson.com/in, 2021).

However, since bikers would like to have a see and feel of the bikes and even would want to take a test ride because emotions of the customers attached to it, therefore the physical stores - the showrooms and the dealer stores, are the places where most Indian consumers would presumably want to go to get access to the product.

2.6.4: Promotion

The fourth and the last element of the marketing mix that is being considered for this study is Promotion. The promotional plans and strategies of the company are always strategically designed with the stress on class factor. However, in addition to the conventional modes of promotions such as advertisements, Harley has preferred to create a loyal band of customers. That is the reason that the company focuses on promoting the owners of its bikes forming a closely-knit community that engages in activities and events such as cross-country bike rides and cruise rides on Harley bikes. This prompts the company to claim that *"Harley riders are Harley riders, there's always that commonality."* Further, the Enthusiast Magazine is taken out by the company since 9016 which celebrates Harley Davidson bike owners (harley-davidson.com/in (a), 2021). It had also followed this promotional strategy in the Indian market.

Therefore, instead of being aggressively focused on promotions, Harley Davidson has subtly undertaken its publicity campaign by intelligently positioning the brand alongside its customers and displaying its status as a mean machine (Guo, 2013).

Sales Promotion Strategy

Harley Davidson made use of the pull strategy to attract customers in the Indian market such as by offering customer the option of trying out and riding the bikes at the company dealerships – which in India is was offered through its website. A biker was allowed to book a test ride on the website simply by filling out some personal details and Harley arranged for the biker to test ride a bike of choice from the nearest dealer available (Testride.Harley-Davidson.Asia, 2021).

At the same time, the company also engaged in a free membership to the local Harley Owners Groups. It also used point of sale advertisements and other promotional campaigns to boost sales in India.

Public Relations Events

Harley also was engaged in organizing various events related to bike and bikers in India. The HOG rallies throughout the country is amongst the prominent ones that the brand used as a customer reach out campaign. These events aim to establish closer relationships with Harley bikers and amongst bikers, the dealers of the company and the company itself. In India, Harley organized HOG rallies throughout the year in different parts of the country to allow Harley owners to share as a common trait amongst themselves (harley-davidson.com/in (f), 2021).

Sponsorships and Endorsements

While this mode of promotions was not widely used by Harley, it did engage a bit in getting associated with some sporting and cultural events in India.

Communicating with Customers Directly

The company engaged directly with customers at its showrooms and dealerships and through its website – which is still interactive even after the company has officially left the market. For example, the company used the program called "Be Heard" allowing customers to provide feedback about their personal experience at a store in real-time directly from their smartphones even while they are still at the stores. Such information was received by the company dealership and the Harley Davidson head office in India within hours (economictimes.com, 2018). Such a process not only helped the company to know its customer better but also was used for instant

resolving of any issues raised by customers. That program has since been stopped in India. Further, most of the dealerships and showrooms also had – and some still have them, Harley Davidson memorabilia such as T-shirts and bikes accessories which is a way of communicating with the customers.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1: Introduction

This section of the research provides details on the methods and techniques used for this study for achieving the desired outcomes. Details of how the methodology was structured are presented in this chapter. It needs to be noted at this point is the fact that methodology is not a method in itself but a framework for this researcher to select the most appropriate method (Goddard, Wayne, and Melville. 2011). For this purpose, the methodological framework that this researcher followed was the so-called 'Research Onion' or Saunder's model.

3.2. The Saunder's Model of Research Methodology

This model essentially presented this researcher with several options for methods and technique to choose from for various aspects and parts of the study and this researcher used his knowledge and judgment to choose the best possible method.

Shown below is a pictorial representation of Saunder's model

Table 7: Saunder's research Methodology model
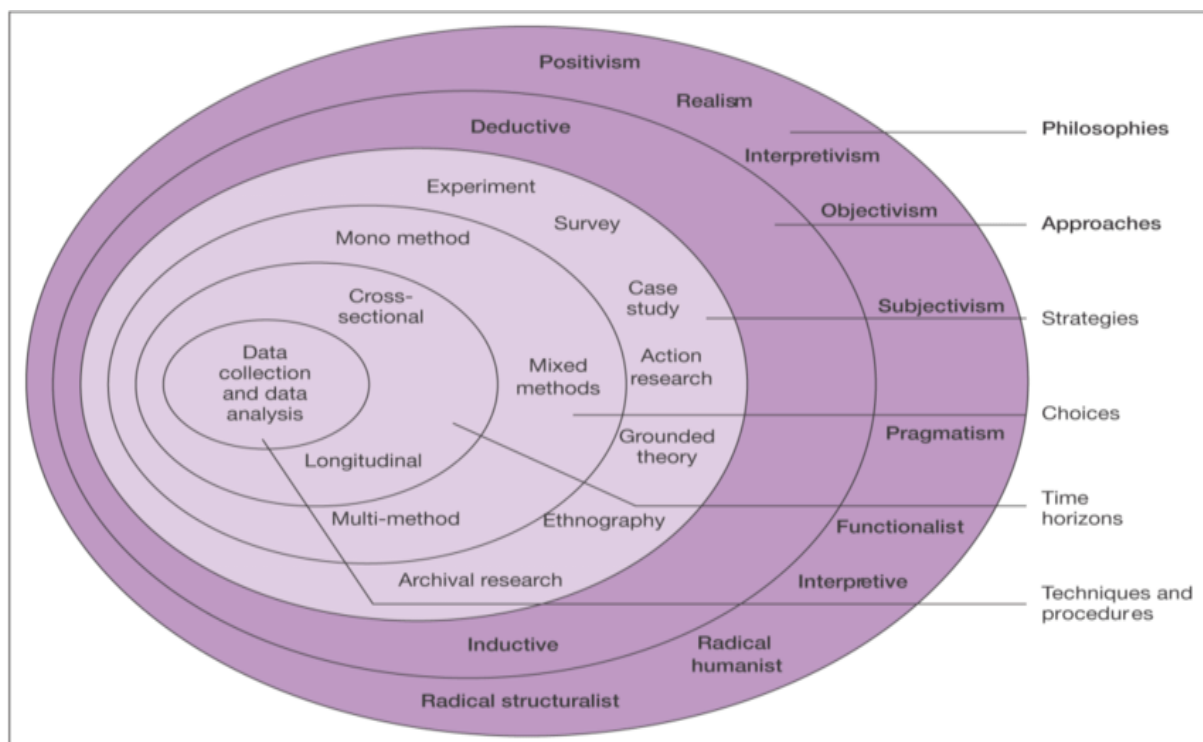
(Source: Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill. 2016)

The picture above resembles an onion that had concentric layers wherein each of the layers represents one aspect of academic research and has multiple options to choose from. This

model suggests a researcher first taking a bird's eye view of research work, choosing the general direction that is desired follow and then adopting a more micro vision. Following the framework, this researcher started with choosing the research philosophy – which is represented by the outermost layer of the model. This model then prompts a researcher to move to the next layer and choose the method from the options available according to his or her judgment as well as keeping in mind the other choices made. This method is prompted to be followed through the other layers of the model.

3.3: Research Approaches

3.3.1: Research Philosophy

The primary aims of this research were to examine the potential cultural dimensions that differentiate US and India's national cultures and hence what should the marketing strategy of Harley Davidson have been in the Indian market to its to have succeeded. Hence, it can be said the core concept of this study was associated with the interpretation of human feelings – reflecting the psychology of consumers. The primary theme of this research was also related closely to the personal choices of consumers about each of the 7 Ps of Harley Davidson's marketing mix in India and therefore included personal choices, feelings and beliefs of the consumers.

These elements were carefully considered while choosing the research philosophy along with other methods and techniques that this researcher intended to use for other parts of this study (Bryman, Alan, and Bell. 2011). The above considerations prompted this researcher to adopt the positivist research philosophy which allowed undertaking an observational study – observing and recording how consumers reacted to the marketing mix in India of Harley Davidson in India, without exerting any influence on the participants and their reactions. This allowed this researcher to come out with highly objective outcomes for this study (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill. 2016).

3.3.2: Research Approach

This researcher considered two approaches for this study - inductive and deductive and chose to use the inductive approach. The logic behind choosing this method is that it supports the chosen research philosophy and allowed this researcher to start with a set of observations and recording such observations – which in this case was how consumers reacted to or were influenced by the marketing mix elements of Harley Davidson in India, and then analyzing the recorded data to conclude by the end of the study (Goddard, Wayne, and Melville. 2011). This

was exactly what this researcher had planned to undertake this study and hence the inductive research choice can be considered to be apt. Further, this research approach also is more suited for quantitative research, in the context of this study, the potential number of bike users or customers, which was the target population for primary data, was huge – running into millions. Thus, a qualitative study was not feasible for the generalization of the outcomes. Therefore, the quantitative method was conceived which is supported by the inductive approach (Bernard, and Russell, 2011).

3.3.3: Research Strategy

This research followed a quantitative research strategy because of reasons as mentioned in the preceding section. At the time of conceptualizing this study, this researcher had planned to survey the Indian bike consumers and it was believed that was not possible to bring out what this researcher wanted through a qualitative strategy. Additionally, the previously chosen positivist philosophy and inductive approach also lend support to a quantitative strategy and therefore this strategy was apt (Bryman, Alan, and Bell. 2011). Moreover, quantitative data also was perceived to be the only viable option for gathering primary or empirical data from such a large target population which also meant gathering a large volume of data from a large number of people and then analyzing it (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill. 2016). This made quantitative research strategy the only choice.

3.4: Research Design

This study used a descriptive research design since this researcher intended to accurately and systematically explain the phenomenon and those of the possible various impacts of the variables of the marketing mix on Indian consumers of Harley Davidson. Hence it can be said that this research attempted to find answers to the what (the marketing mix elements influencing Indian consumers), where (in stores and online in India), when (while interacting with Harley) and how (creating a favourable or unfavourable attitude to the Harley brand) of the phenomenon (Mishra, 2008). These are all attributes and characteristics of descriptive research design which were also what the study intended to explore and hence this strategy was apt. Moreover, descriptive design allowed the researcher to identify characteristics, frequencies and trends in consumers being influenced by Adidas' marketing mix in India and these were supported by this design (Welman, Kruger, and Mitchell. 2005). This research also followed a cross-sectional study design helping this researcher to accumulate data from multiple sources and individuals at a single point in time (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill. 2016).

3.5: Sampling and Participants

This researcher believes that sampling is one of the critical elements of academic or professional research as well as for any quantitative research because such studies involve dealing with a large target population to and consequently with large amounts of empirical data from (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill. 2016). This study used a combination of simple random sampling and purposive sampling technique as suggested by Saunder's model.

The main reason for choosing this sampling technique is to get a representative sample of the target population. Purposive sampling was used to set predefined thresholds for the inclusion of participants who for this study were bike owners or buyers in India and those who were aware of the marketing efforts of Harley Davidson in India. This inclusion criterion was not mentioned in the survey questionnaire supplied to participants but was ensured at the time of selection of the participants. The resultant target population obtained following purposive sampling, the simple random sampling technique was applied which theoretically allowed every individual of the target population to participate in the study (Fowler, and Lavrakas. 1988) while also removing any personal bias of this researcher in sampling selection (Cohen, Welkowitz, and Lea. 2011).

However, the current environment of restrictions because of the novel coronavirus pandemic disallowed this researcher to physically reach out to the respondents or the participants of this study. Hence electronic modes of contact were used. Multiple social media platforms and groups within them comprising of Indians were targeted to identify the possible participants. This researcher sent out requests to potential participants over the social media platforms – primarily Facebook and Twitter for about 6 weeks. Additionally, this researcher also used personal contacts and their friends to identify and reach out to prospective participants. About 275 people were sent such requests from social media groups comprising of Indian members related to bikes and biking groups. While this researcher also reached out to 'Harley Owner's Groups' (HOG) in India, caution was exercised not to include too many participants from this group because of possible bias towards the brand. About 109 people agreed to participate and 7 responses were considered to be invalid while 1 of the answer sheets was found to be incomplete. That left a total of answers of 101 respondents and this researcher chose to use only 100 responses for ease of analysis and considering that the exclusion of just 1 respondent will not have any significant impact on the outcome of the study.

The selected participants were sent the questionnaire and other documents electronically as well. Many of the participants also did not want their identity to be disclosed and therefore this researcher took care not to make such names public. Answers to the questionnaire were also received electronically.

3.6: Materials – Survey Research Questionnaire

The survey method was used for collecting primary data which included a questionnaire that comprised of a total of 28 close-ended questions – each with multiple choice answers. The participants were asked to select the most applicable answer according to their opinion. The questionnaire was mostly designed according to the Likert Scale wherein each answer was assigned a specific value ranging from 1 to 5 as shown below.

Strongly Agree (1)	Agree (2)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly Disagree (5)

Using the Likert scale allowed this researcher to quickly transform the answers into the statistical format for statistical analysis (Chang, 1994). The questionnaire was divided into 8 sections. The first section was demographic–aimed to ascertain the age and gender of the participants. The next section attempted to establish the cultural differences between India and the US – the home market of Harley Davidson followed by a section that attempted to extract information about the strategic fit of the brand in the Indian market. The rest of the section dealt with the various elements of the marketing mix that was offered by Harley Davidson in India

The detailed questionnaire is listed in Appendix A.

3.7: Data Analysis Procedures

This researcher used the statistical analysis method for the analysis of primary data gathered through the survey wherein the first step was extracting data from the survey by making use of the numerical values attributed to every answer according to the Likert Scale. This allowed the easy and quick transformation of the data into a numerical and tabulated form for analysis. Analysis of the trends from among the data was done using statistical software SPSS and Excel so that the analysis was fast and as accurate as possible. The main focus of the statistical analysis was to identify trends among the answers which were then compared and contrasted with the data from secondary sources got in the literature review section. That ultimately helped to get generalized results. To enhance the readability and to make the outcome of the analysis

easy for readers to understand, the data was presented in the form of graphs, charts and tables (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill. 2016).

3.8: Research Ethics

All the established ethical norms for academic research were followed for this study. This researcher sent a detailed briefing of the purpose of this study while approaching participants and asked them to make an informed decision about participating. They were also assured of safety, security and secrecy of the data that they would provide and assured that such data would be used only for this study and not for any commercial purposes. The participants were also assured that the data they provided would be permanently erased from the electronic device of this researcher after the publication of this research or six months – whichever was earlier. The participants were also informed that they could leave the research at any point in time without providing any reason whatsoever. According to ethical norms, this researcher also assured the participants that they could participate completely anonymously.

Chapter 4: Analysis and Discussions

4.1. Results and Analysis of Data Secondary data on Marketing Mix of Harley in India

This section of the study highlights the results obtained from the analysis of secondary data about the marketing strategy that was followed by Harley Davidson in the Indian market. Data showed that Harley Davidson exited the Indian market at the end of 2020 after about 11 years of operations in the market. The company had even started to make some of its bikes in India but decided to leave the market because of continued losses. It has been argued that the major reason for the failure of the company in the Indian market was because of its pricing and marketing strategies even though the superbikes of the company were well appreciated in the Indian market.

In terms of products, Harley offered the same bikes in India that is offered for the rest of the world. Known for their uniqueness - strength and power, Harley bikes are considered almost unmatchable in the industry and the Indian market and the company portrayed them to have an identity of its own. The company also touted the collectivism and pride of ownership of a Harley bike as being other factors that customers in India should purchase. One of the major decisions that the company had taken about its products in India was not to make lower-priced but lower-performing bikes despite suggestions that the company should offer such bikes in the Indian market. The company believed that following a low-cost low-quality product strategy in India would tarnish its global image while also weakening its product credibility that is based on its very high quality (Thompson Jr, Strickland and Gamble, 2005). Hence the product strategy of the company in India was to offer a world-class superbike at par with any other similar product from the company anywhere in the world – which broadly involved selling the standard and touring models of its superbikes in India which are larger than the average bikes in the country while also scoring better in riding experience. This product strategy of the company however tied it down to a niche market segment as the average Indian consumer purchasing bikes do so keeping in mind that those are their primary mode of transportation and not a secondary hobby. *Therefore, owning a Harley bike for touring or other leisure purposes was apparently outside the scope of the average Indian consumer.*

The pricing of its bikes can be considered to be one of the major reasons that Harley could not do well in India despite it being the largest two-wheeler market in the world. The prices of Harley bikes were mostly out of reach for the average Indian consumer. The bikes are such priced that they target the upwardly mobile and adventurous consumers (Tapp and Spotswood,

2013). However, despite the presence of a growing group of wealthy consumers, the Indian market is also still predominantly price-conscious and sensitive and a large section of the 1.3 billion strong Indian consumer bases cannot seemingly purchase a Harley Davidson. For example, the starting price of a Harley bike in India was almost 5 lakh rupees which is the starting price of a small four-wheeler in the country. The costliest of the bikes of the company in the Indian market is 51,35,000 rupees (almost $79000) (Autox.com, 2021) at which an Indian consumer can easily purchase two luxury four-wheelers. *This shows that purchasing a Harley Davidson bike in India can be considered to be a luxury for many – especially given the price sensitivity of Indian consumers.* It also is pertinent to mention that despite the company setting up an assembling plant in the country and hence avoid the hefty import duties, the price of the superbikes from the Harley stable did not go down to any significant degree.

Additionally, consumers in India were also seemingly unable to reach out to and access a Harley bike at one of its stores in India because of the [presence of few such stores in the country. The distribution strategy of the company was such that it primarily focused on the northern and western parts of the country and had some stores in these regions because of the presence of more affluent customers there. While the company claims to have established a wide network of distributors and dealers to get the bikes to the customers through its physical stores (harley-davidson.com/in (e), 2021), this did not appear to be the case as *Harley bikes were not available as easily as those of its competitors.* The company however offered consumers the option of booking a test ride through its website at the nearest Harley store but that was about all that a customer could do with the company's website in terms of accessing a product. The physical stores - the showrooms and the dealer stores, are the places where most Indian consumers would presumably want to go to get access to the product since bikers would like to have a see and feel of the bikes and even would want to take a test ride because emotions of the customers attached to it.

The company claims that its promotional strategies are strategically designed with the stress on class factor for the world market. Just as in its home country of the United States, Harley preferred to create a loyal band of customers in the Indian market instead of extensively using the conventional modes of promotions such as advertisements. The tag line of the company that *"Harley riders are Harley riders, there's always that commonality"* used in India is testimony to that fact. Harley also attempted to use its *Enthusiast Magazine* for promotional but mostly unsuccessfully in India. It was apparent from secondary data that Harley Davidson subtly focused its publicity campaign by intelligently positioning the brand alongside its

customers and displaying its status as a mean machine (Guo, 2013). By using the pull strategy to attract customers in India - such as by offering customer the option of trying out and riding the bikes at the company dealerships, Harley attempted to break the conventional promotional mix used by its rivals and most auto companies in India. Another unique promotional effort of the company was to create the Harley Owners Groups in India – in line with its strategies in the United States. However, the number of Harley owners in India was so little compared to the size of the general population, it can effectively be said that this promotional strategy was of very; little help for the company. For example, organizing various events such as the HOG rallies throughout the country arguably had little impact on the general bike consumers. It also shows that Harley tried to duplicate its promotional and marketing strategy used in the United States in the Indian market. The company also refrained from engaging in sponsorships and endorsements – even while many of the auto companies, including foreign companies, do so. Other customer engagement efforts in India such as the program called "Be Heard" was arguably also not able to be a substitute for widespread promotional campaigns.

4.2: Analysis of Survey Data and Discussions

This section will discuss in detail the results of the analysis from the survey. The data obtained from the survey was transformed into numerical data and then statistical tools were used for conducting an analysis. To enable a better understanding of the results from the 28 questions put forward in the survey, they were also represented in graphical and chart formats.

Respondent Demographics

The majority of the respondents were between the ages of 31and 40years (55%), while the second-largest group was in the age bracket of 18-30 years (25%) and 15% were in the bracket of 41-50 years and only 5% was over the age of 50. This indicated that most of the respondents were younger and therefore likely to be well versed with the wants demands of the younger generation. The gender ratio of males and females among the respondents was roughly 5:1.

Cultural Attributes and Differences

This section essentially attempted to get opinions from the participants about the cultural differences between India and the United States – the home market of Harley.

(Abbreviations used in the section:

Strongly Agree – SA; Agree – A; Neutral – N; Disagree – D; Strongly Disagree – SD)

In this respect, a very large portion of the participants (80%) opined that they believe that Indian culture is very different from that of the US while only 6% disagreed and 4% chose not to say anything.

With respect to the statement about Indian culture accepting hierarchy system, a cast majority of the participants (82%) agreed about the statement while only 9% disagreed and 9% stayed neutral.

**Graph 1**: **Indian culture accepts a hierarchy system**
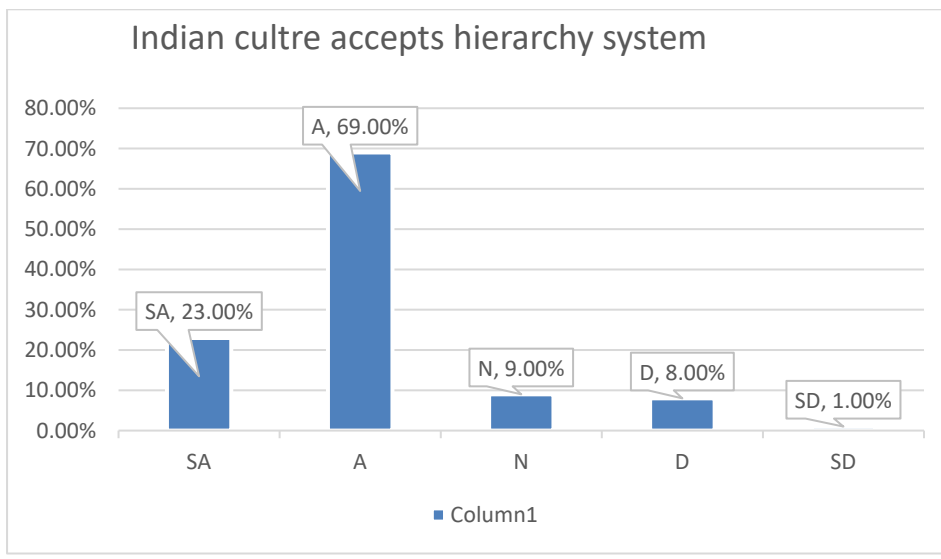
The next statement was about Indian culture prompting people to think more about groups than individuals and cast the majority of the respondents (89%) agreed or strongly agreed while only 4% disagreed. 7% chose to be neutral.

The next statement was about Indian culture prompting Indians to take recourse in tradition and seek advice from senior. A majority of the participants (66%) either agreed or strongly agreed to the statement while only 19% disagreed and 15% chose to stay neutral.

Indians depend on tradition and seek advice from seniors

INdians depend on tradition and seek advice from seniors

SA, 21.00% — A, 45.00% — N, 15.00% — D, 10.00% — SD, 9.00%

Column1
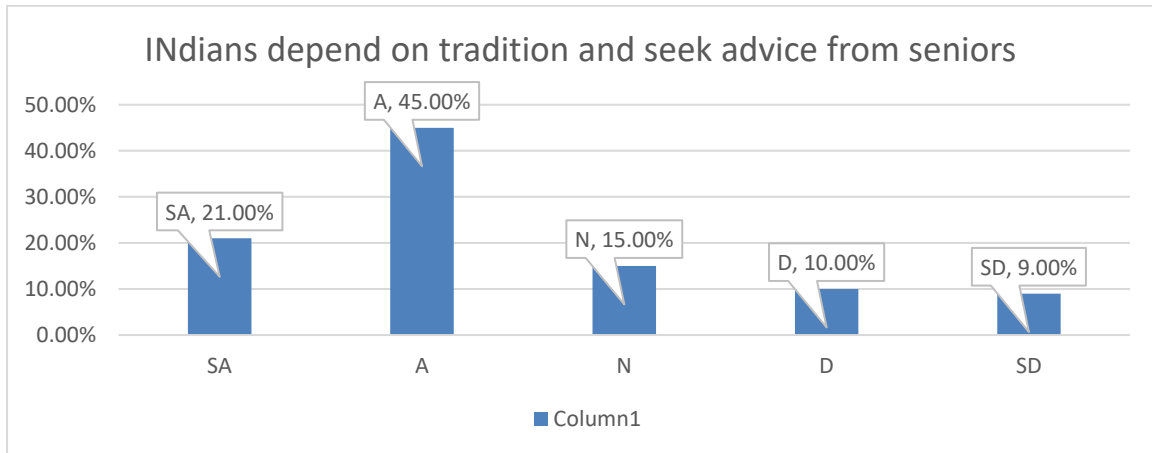
Next, the researchers wanted to know what the respondents thought about Indians being perceived as not expending much on self-indulgence to which 83% of the participants agreed while only 12% disagreed and % chose to say nothing,

Indians do not expend much on self-indulgence

Indians do not expend much on self-indulgence

SD, 2.00%
D, 10.00%
N, 5.00%
A, 65.00%
SA, 18.00%

Indians do not expend much on self-indulgence
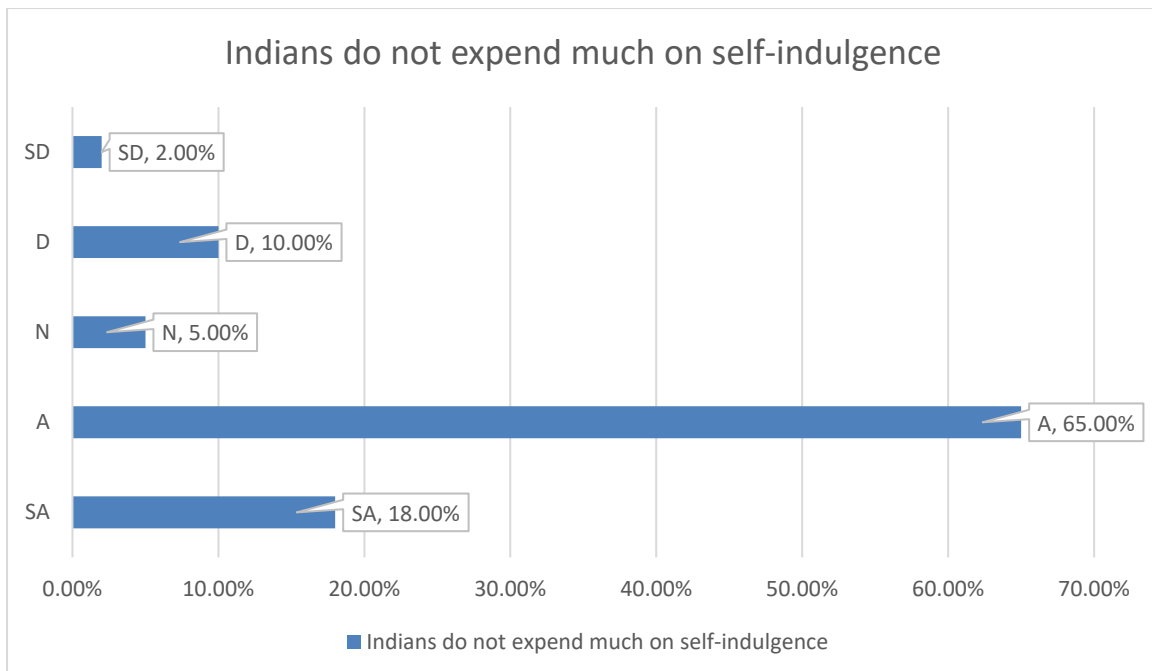
The above analysis shows that for most of the questions, the majority of the participants generally believed that there was a major difference between Indian and US cultures. Data

analysis showed that, unlike US culture, the Indian culture accepts a hierarchy system and prompts Indians to think more about groups than individuals. The analysis also showed that Indians value their tradition and falls back on them in times of need such as seeking advice from seniors. Differences in culture also were found in Indians not intent on expending much on self-indulgence unlike people in the US as has been shown from secondary data.
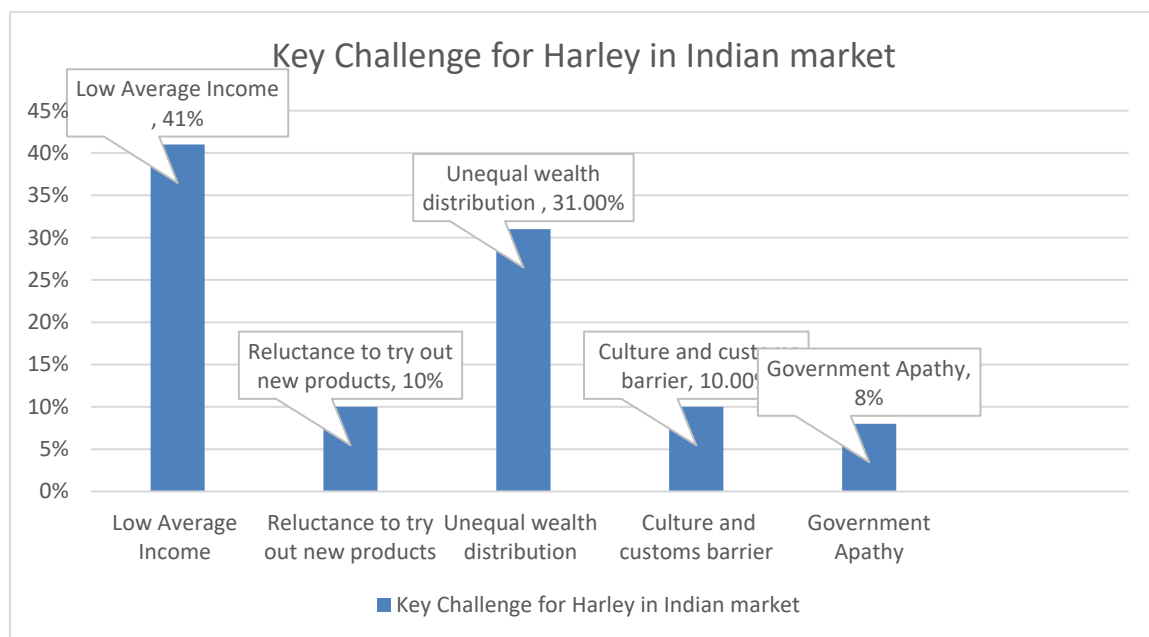
Harley Davidson & the Indian Market

This part of the analysis attempted to find out the perception of the participants about the market opportunity that was available for Harley Davidson in India.

A vast majority of the participants (72%) agreed that the American company had a good market opportunity in the Indian market while only 8% disagreed and 10% chose to say nothing.

However, since Harley had to ultimately leave the Indian market, this study also asked the participants about what they thought was the ONE major key challenge that the company faced in the Indian market.

Graph 4: **Key Challenge for Harley in the Indian market**

The data above shows that the low average income of Indian consumers in comparison to consumers in the United States was identified as the single key challenge for Harley in the Indian market by the largest group of participants (14%) while the unequal wealth distribution among the Indian consumers was identified as the key challenge by the second largest number of participants (31%). 10% of the participants chose reluctance to try out new products and

culture and customs barrier to be the key challenges while 4% chose government apathy as the key challenge.

Up till now, the survey has shown that the Indian market is fragmented in terms of its customer base, the income of consumers, cultural and custom differences, etc. and varies considerably in comparison to cultures and customs of the developed countries from where most of the global brands with high-end products originate. As such foreign companies doing or planning to do business in the Indian market have to adjust to the Indian local conditions to succeed.

The next section examines the perception of the participants about the marketing mix that was offered by Harley Davidson in the Indian market.

Products

The next question posed to the participants in the survey asked them to identify the single main reason that consumers purchase a Harley bike.

Graph 5: **Main reason for purchasing Harley bikes**
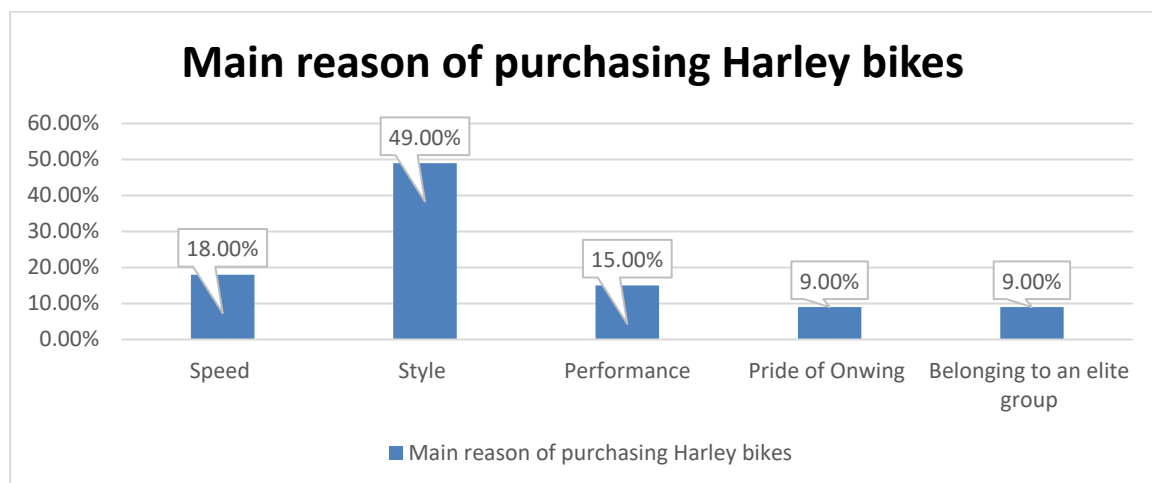
The above chart shows that Style was identified to be the major factor for consumers purchasing Harley bikes in India as identified by 49% of the participants while speed and performance were selected by 18% and 15% of the respondents respectively. Pride of ownership and desire to belong to an elite group of bike owners were among the least important reasons as both were identified by 9% of the respondents,

The next statement proposed to the participants was that Harley's bikes presented a differentiating factor in comparison to rivals. Results are displayed below.

Harley bike is differentiated from rivals
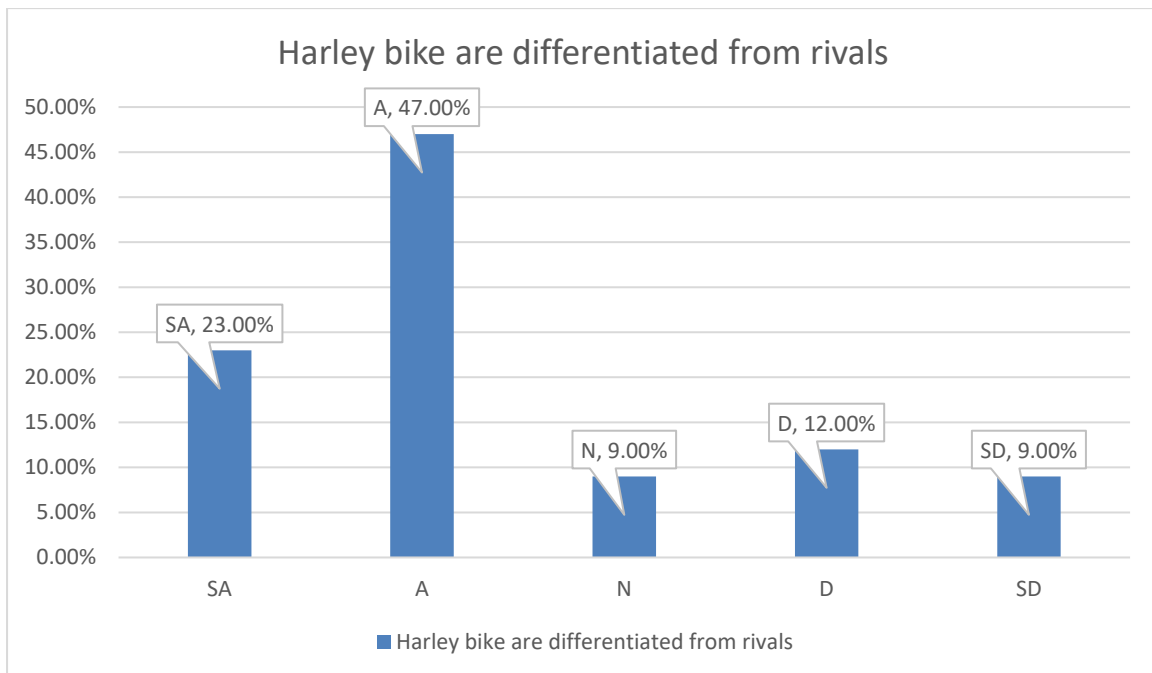
The data presented above shows that a vast majority of the participants (70%) agreed to the statement while a significantly large (21%) disagreed and 9% chose to say nothing. This is an interesting outcome because Harley banks on the uniqueness of its products to attract bikers as found in the analysis of secondary data.

The survey also urged the participants to consider whether some of the features of Harley's bikes were not needed by them as bikers.

Some features of Harley bikes not necessary for Indian bikers
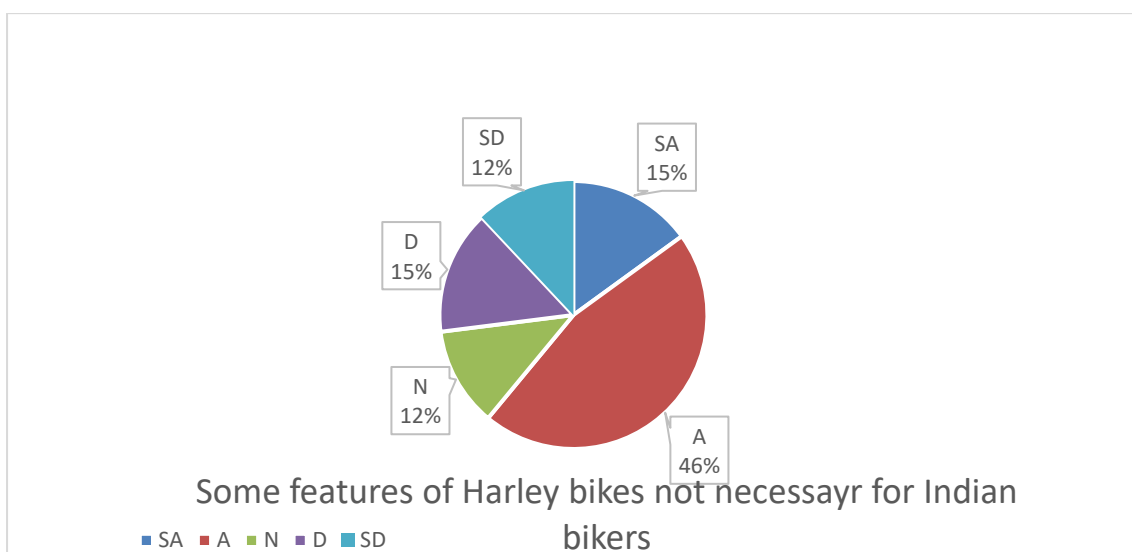
Data above shows a large majority of the respondents (16%) agreed with the statement while a significantly large portion of the respondents (27%) also disagreed. At the same time, 12% of the respondents chose to say nothing,

The nest statement in the survey was about whether the participants believed that Harley products in India were of the same quality as those available in western countries such as in the US.

Harley offered international products in India
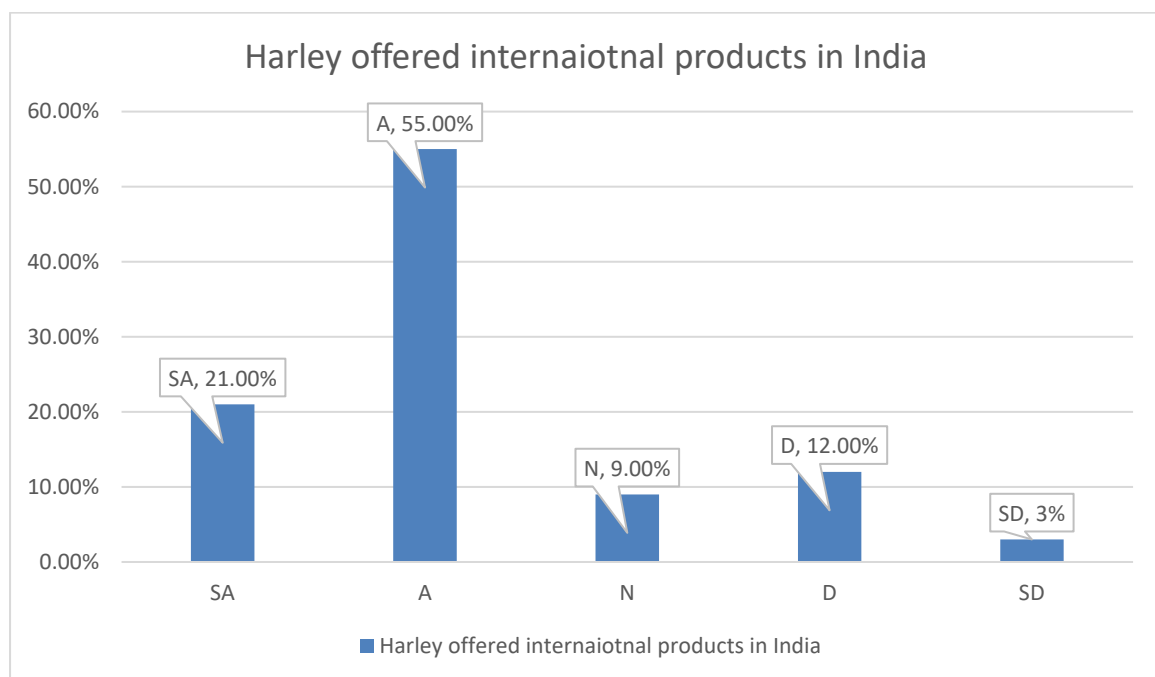
Data above shows that a large majority of the participants (76%) agreed to this statement while a small (15%) disagreed and 9% chose to say nothing.

The product element of Harley marketing mix was seemingly welcomed by the participants who showed confidence in the high quality of the products while style, speed and performance – which are also world-class, were selected as the main reasons for purchasing Harley bikes in India.

Price

The next question was about what the participants thought about the general perception that Harley's bikes were highly-priced with was a damper for many bike purchasers in India and which prevented many from purchasing bikes of the brand.

High price of Harley Davidson bikes is a damper for many buyers in India
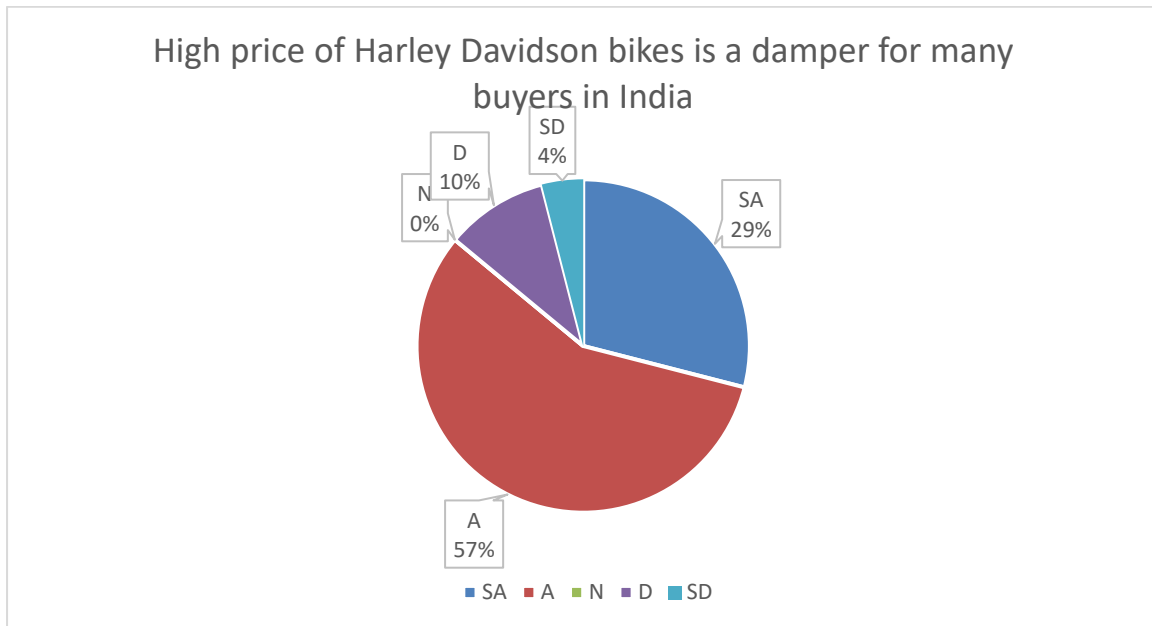
The data above shows that most of the participants (86%) agreed to the statement while only 14% disagreed. None of the participants chose to stay silent. This result points out the major issue for Harley in the Indian market.

The next proposition for the respondents was that Most Harley Davidson buyers purchase the bikes despite having difficulty with the high price in India.

Graph 10: **Most Harley Davidson buyers purchase the bikes despite having difficulty with the high price in India**
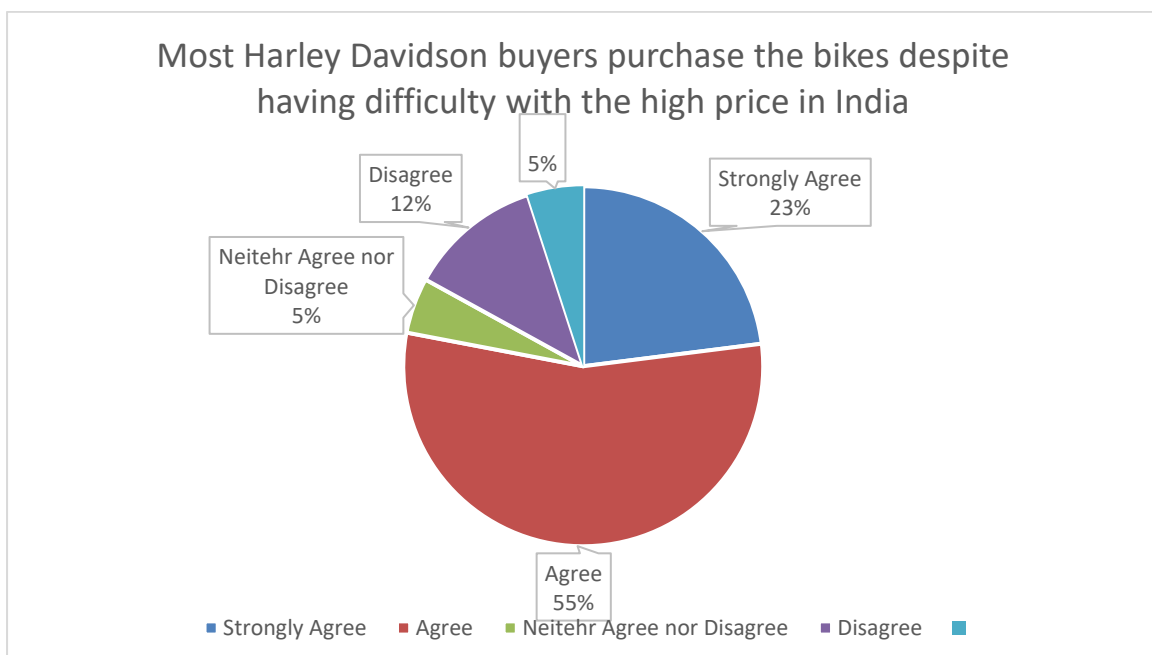
The data above shows that the vast majority of the participants (78%) agreed to the statement while a significantly large number of the participants (17%) disagreed and 5% chose to stay silent.

Since the price of Harley Davidson bikes seems to be an issue with many Indian customers, the next question put forward to the marketing professionals being surveyed was that should Harley Davidson have given a rethink to its pricing strategy in India. The response to this question showed that almost all the participants (90%) 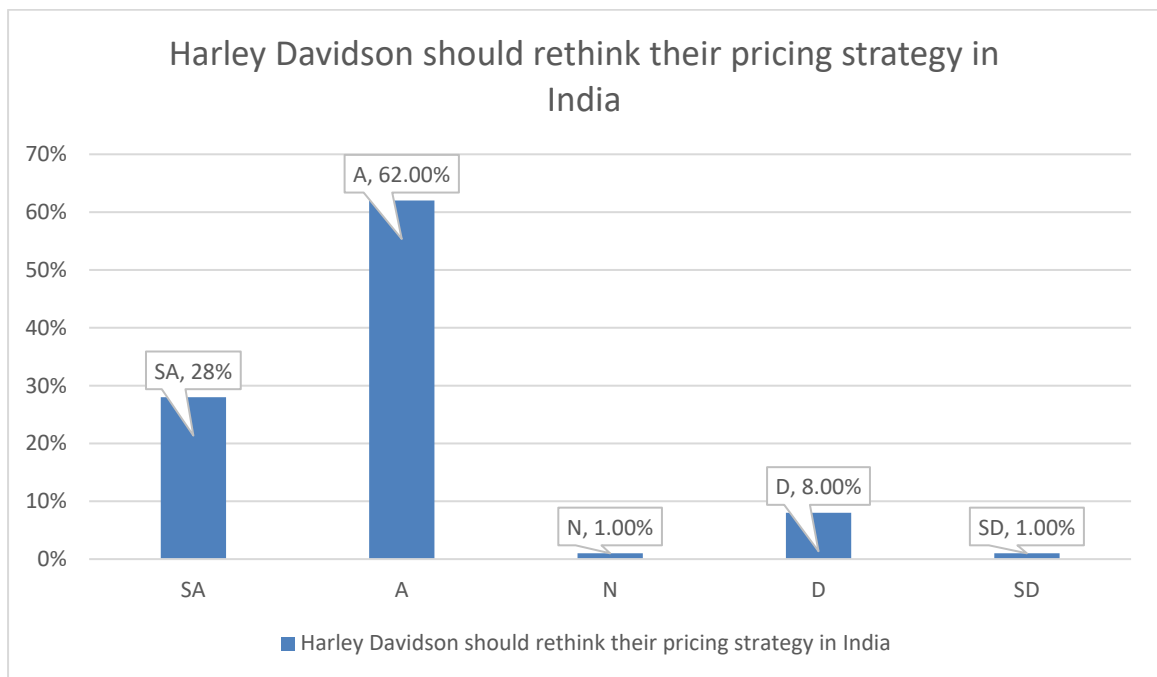believed Harley should have revisited its pricing strategy – which potentially could have been a successful recipe while only 9% disagreed and just one of the participants chose not to answer this question by staying neutral.

Graph 11: **Harley Davidson should rethink their pricing strategy in India**

The above data therefore clearly points out one of the flaws in the marketing mix strategies of Harley Davidson when it was present in the Indian market.

The analysis of the price element of the marketing mix points out the flaw of Harley in its pricing strategy in the Indian market and indicating that the prices were way above the reach of the average Indian consumers as also disclosed from the analysis of secondary data.

Place

This section dealt with the access of Harley's bikes for consumer4s in India.

The survey proposed that Harley bikes were not available easily in India because it had very few flagship stores in contrast to other countries such as the US. The reactions are presented in the graph below:

Graph 12: **Harley bikes not easily available in all parts of India as in the US**

Harley bikes not easily available in all parts of India as in US
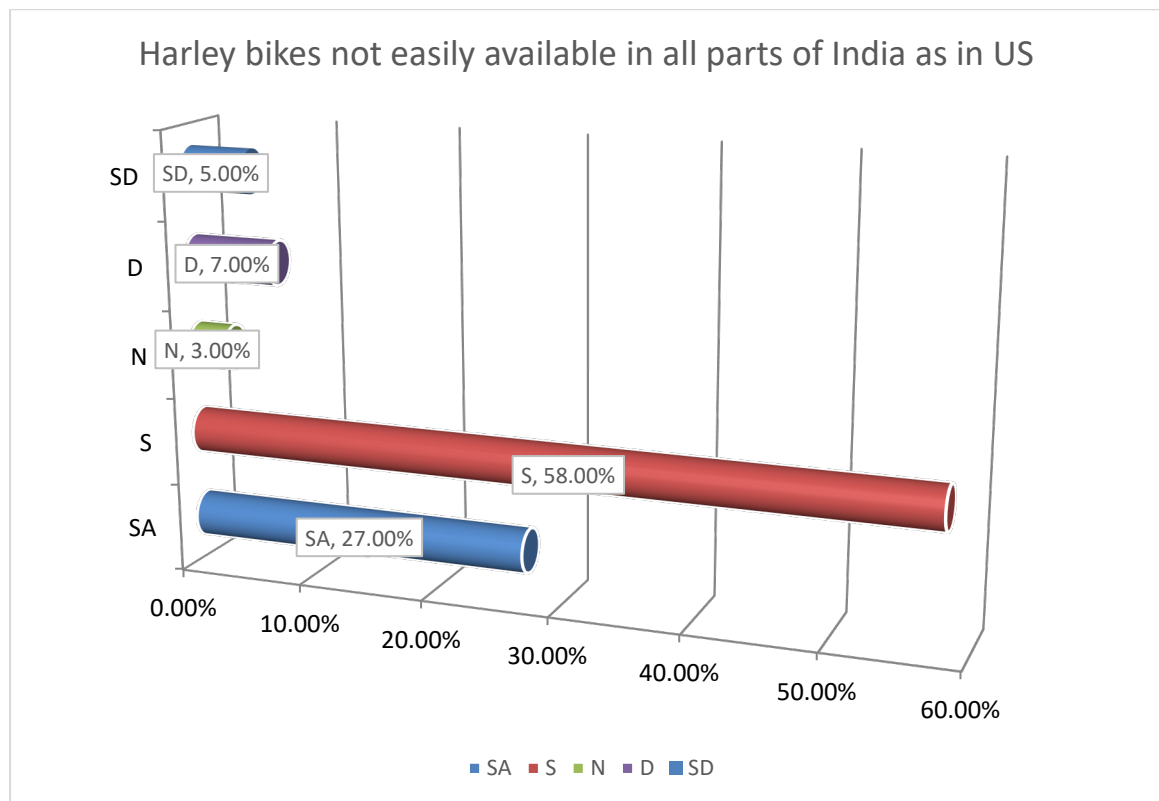
The data above shows that a very large majority of the participants (85%) agreed to the statement while only 12% disagreed and 3% chose not to say anything. This indicates access issues for Harley Bikes.

The next question compared purchasing a Harley bike online and offline and the results are presented below:

Graph 13: **Rather purchased a Harley bike from physical/retail store instead of online**
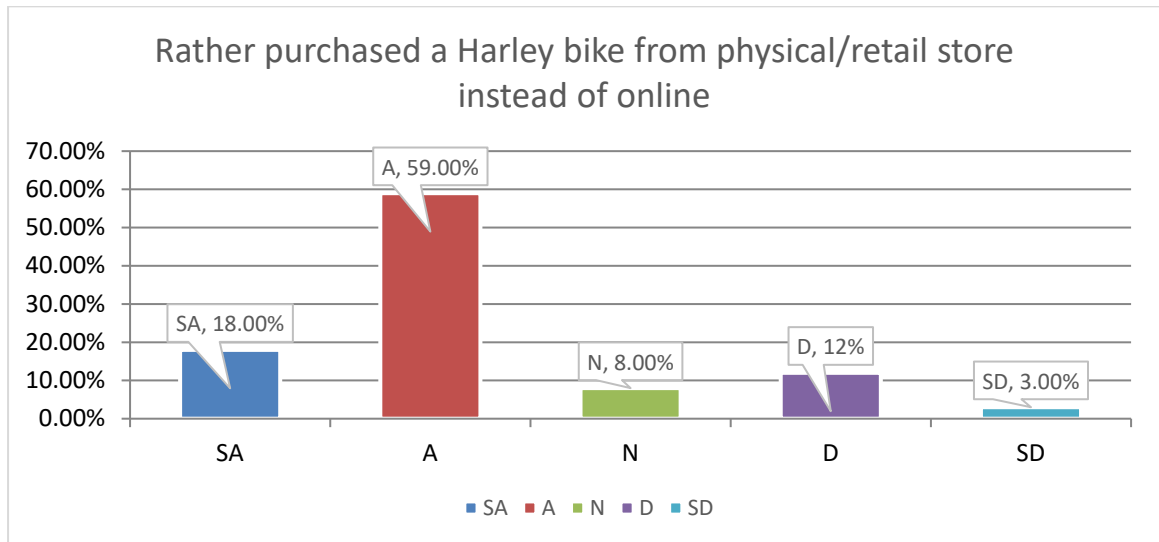
Data presented above shows that the majority of the participants (77%) agreed to the statement while only 15% disagreed and 8% chose not to say anything. This shows issues in the distribution of Harley bikes in India which s further supported by the answer in the next question which asked the participants about their opinion on the adequacy of the distribution network of Harley in India.

Graph 14; **Reach of the distribution network of Harley Davidson was adequate in India**
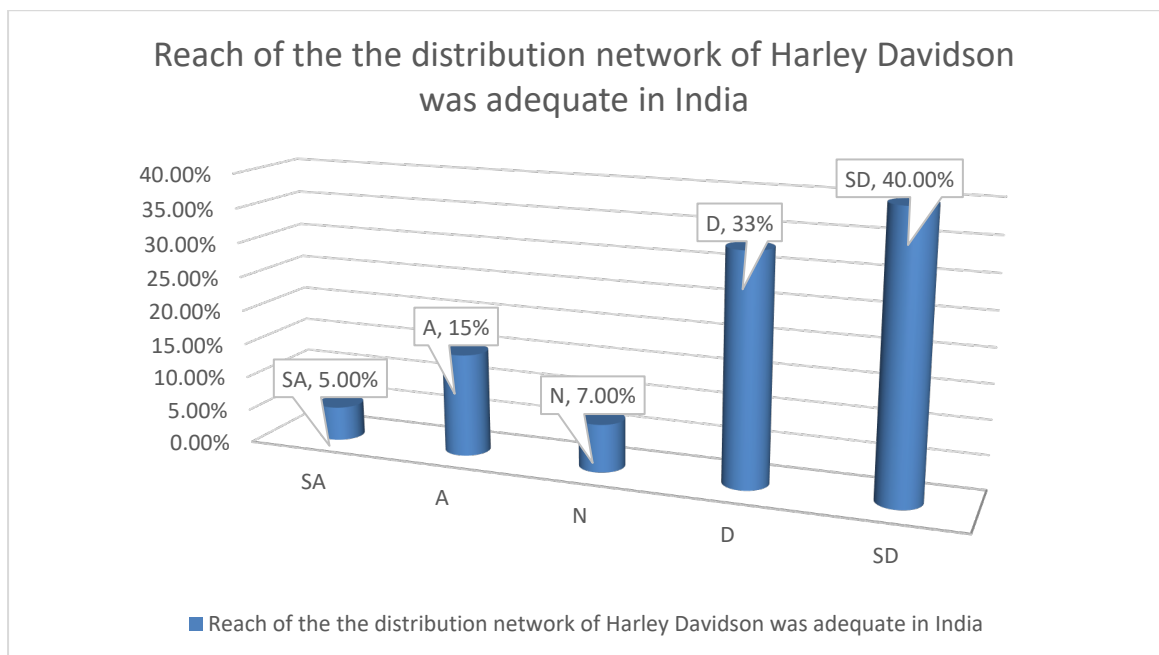
The data above shows that Harley perceivably had an issue with its distribution network in India as 77% of the participants did not think it was adequate while only 20% thought otherwise and 7% chose not to say anything.

The data analysis on the Place element of Harley Davidson in India shows that the participants believed there were issues for customers to access the brand's bikes in India

Promotions

This section of the study presents data on the reaction of the participants to the promotional element that Harley used in the Indian market.

The first statement in this respect asked whether the participants had come across ads from Harley while it was in India.

Graph 15: **Have not seen Harley ads in India**
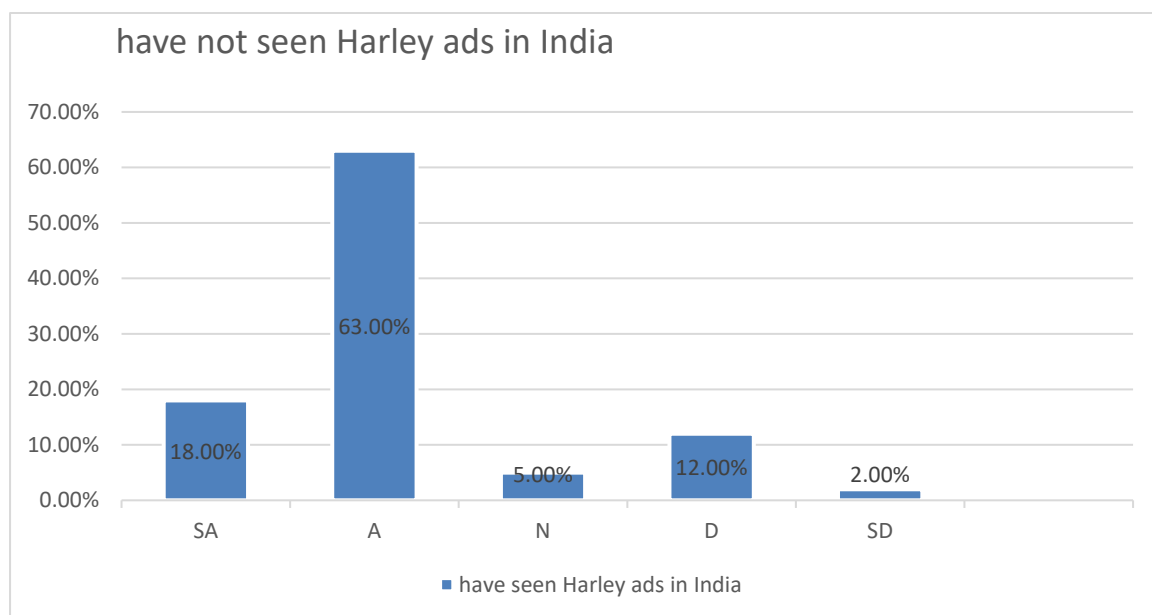
The data above shows that majority of the participants (85%) agreed to this statement while 14% disagreed and 5% chose not to say anything.

The next proposition for the participants was about the HOG group of Harleys and that it had helped Harley Davidson to create a market presence and attract consumers

Graph 16: HOG created a market presence and attract consumers

HOG created market presence and attract consumers
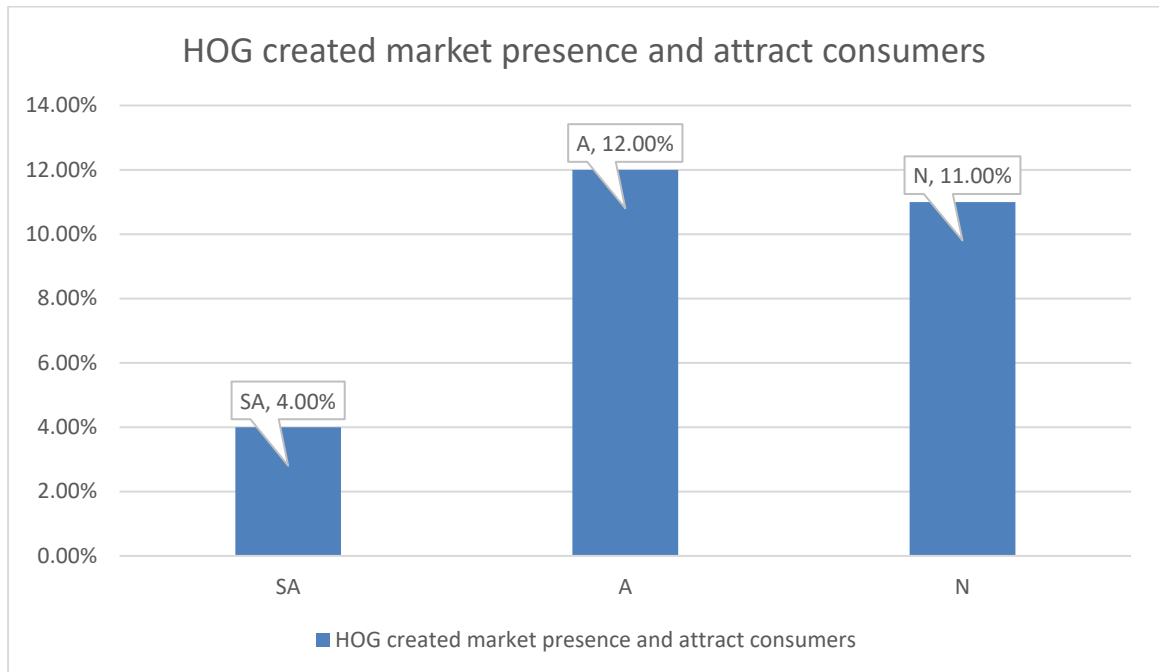
The data above shows that only 16% agreed to the proposition while a vast majority of the participants (73%) disagreed and 11% chose not to say anything. This was congruent with findings from secondary data which showed that the HOG concept in India did not work well to promote Harley's brand despite it being successful in the US.

The best statement asked participants to rate Harley's test riding having helped Harley Davidson create more customers

Graph 17: Test riding having helped Harley Davidson create more customers
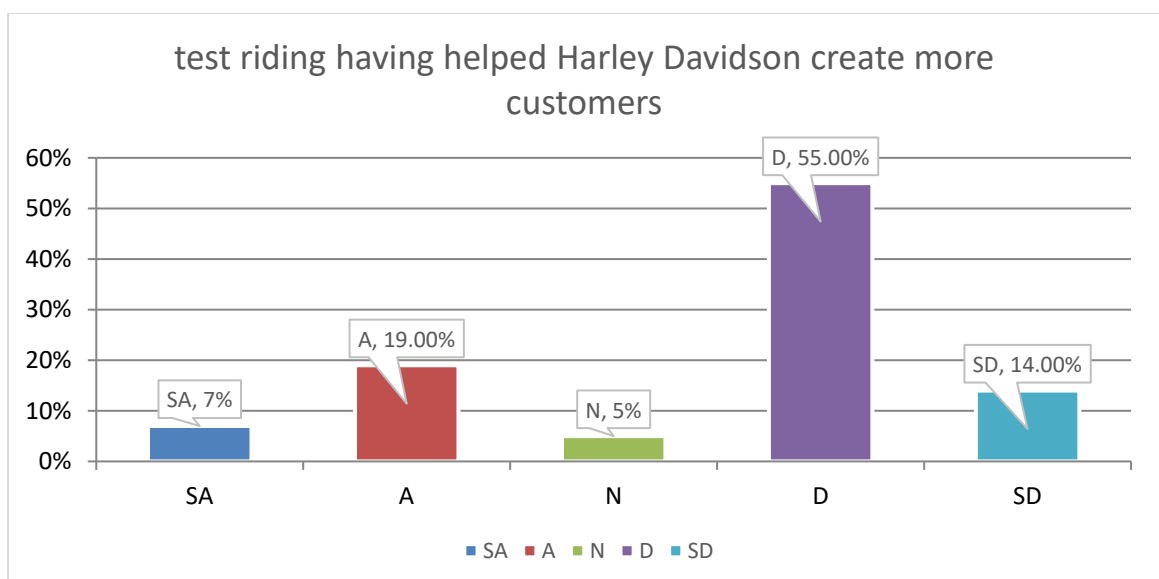
The data above shows that a vast majority of the participants (74%) did not agree with the proposition with a significantly large number of participants (26%) agreeing to it. Just 5% of the participants chose to say nothing.

The next proposition for the participants was: *"The marketing campaigns of Harley were most often designed for Indian bikers and bike owners like me"* and its analyzed results are presented below.

Graph 18: **marketing campaigns of Harley often designed for Indian bikers and bike owners**
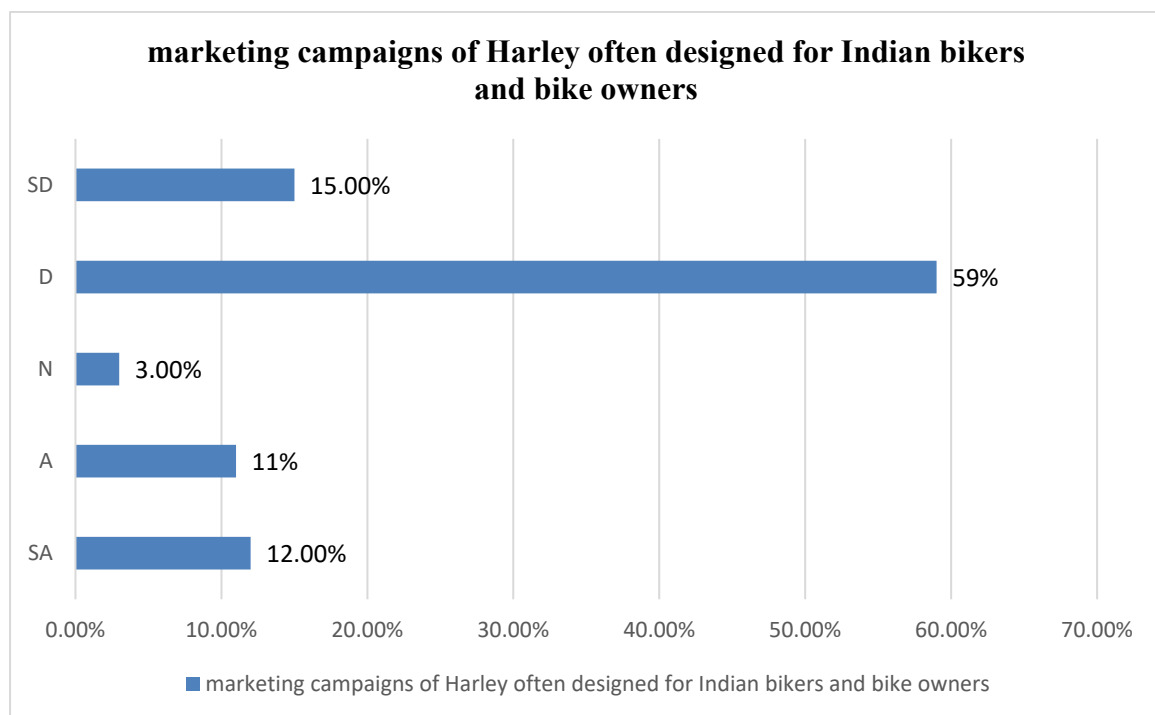
The data presented above shows that only 23% of the participants agreed to this statement while a vast majority of them (74%) disagreed and 3% chose to stay neutral. This, therefore, indicates that the majority of the participants think that the marketing campaigns of Harley had not been tuned to suit Indian culture as has been indicated in the analysis of secondary data, for example, the concept of the HOG was imported from the United States and was not much of a success in India. The company also had not engaged in extensive advertisement campaigns as its rivals and other auto companies do in India.

The last proposition for the participants was about their perception of the HOG program being foreign to Indian culture.

Graph 19: The HOG Program is alien to Indian culture
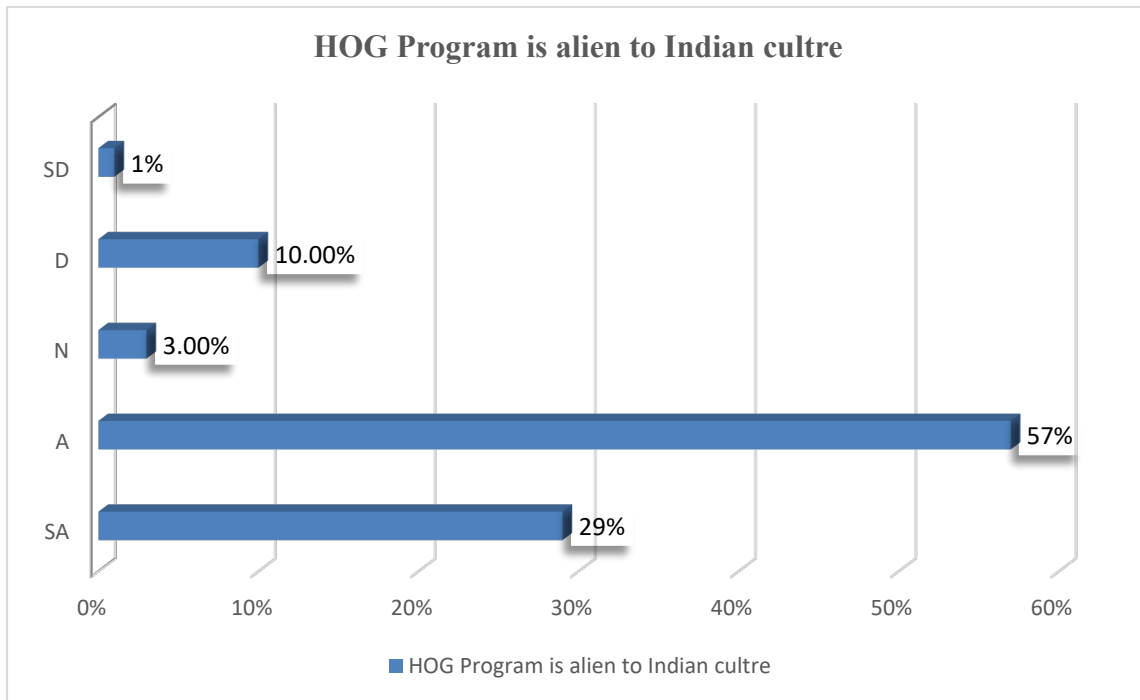
The data above clearly indicates that the majority of the participants (86%) agreed to the statement while only 11% disagreed and 3% chose to say nothing. This further lend support to the secondary findings of Harley importing promotional and marketing concepts from the United States into India which did not work well.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This concluding section will examine whether this study has been able to find answers to the research questions that were proposed at the beginning of this study using both primary and secondary data. The research questions were:

➢ What are the cultural dimensions that differentiate US and India's national culture?

➢ What is the overarching global marketing strategy, if any, followed by Harley Davidson?

➢ What are the specific cultural dimensions of the Indian market that Harley Davidson needs to keep in mind while developing marketing strategies for India?

➢ What specific guidelines should Harley Davidson follow for forming a successful marketing campaign for the Indian market? \

Secondary and primary data has managed to identify several cultural elements that differentiate the cultures of the United States and India. these can be summarized as below:

Universalism vs. Particularism – the US place high value for laws, rules, values, and obligation while Indian culture values circumstance and relationship dictates rules

Individualism vs. Communitarianism – US believes in high personal freedom and achievements and taking care of yourself while the Indian culture emphasizes groups over the individual

Neutral vs. Emotional - US culture professes controlling of emotions with actions dictated by reason and not feelings while Indian culture promotes expression of emotions, even at work

Specific vs. Diffuse – US culture postulates keeping work and personal lives separated while Indian culture allows overlapping of work and personal life and believes that social relationships can be brought to work

Achievement vs. Ascription   Achievement – the US promotes the belief of individual's worth is based on what one does while the Indian culture promotes a belief that an individual's value for who one is

Time Orientation – the US gives high value on punctuality, planning and staying on schedule whereas Indian culture is more relaxed and allows for flexibility in plans and commitments and

Internal Direction vs. Outer Direction - the US culture attempts to control the surrounding environment for achieving goals while Indian culture allows being controlled by the surrounding environment.

Similarly, primary data also brought out some differences in US and Indian culture that bears relevance for the topic of this study. For example, the existence of and wide acceptance of the hierarchy system in the Indian culture differentiated it from the US culture whereas group thinking and concern is given more importance in Indian culture compared to in the US. Further depending on the traditional is another aspect that differentiates the two cultures just like the low intention of expending for self-indulgence seen in Indian cultures. These were potential factors that could have made Indian consumers averse to the marketing efforts of Harley Davidson in India.

This study was however unable to find an answer to the overarching global marketing strategy, if any, followed by Harley Davidson. But it did manage to identify the major marketing mix elements that the company offered in India.

In terms of products, though Harley offered the same quality of products that are offered in the US as was found in secondary data, this researcher believed that portraying the bike to have an identity of its own could be in contrast to the Indian culture of collectivism. The overall products strategy of the brand in India was to offer a world-class superbike at par with any other similar product from the company anywhere in the world but promoting individualism which potentially was against the local culture of collectivism. Further, the low self-indulgence tendency among Indians potentially did not go down well with Indian consumers as the company portrayed the bike to be useful for touring or other leisure. This can also be said of the price as shown from primary data too where the consumers believed that the Harley bikes were much higher priced compared to the average Indian bike purchaser. The price element of the marketing mix of the company portrayed prices that were mostly out of reach for the average Indian consumer while secondary data showed that the prices of Harley bikes were such that purchasing them could be considered to be a luxury for many. This also goes against the culture of Indians to spend less on self-indulgence and luxury

Further, being price-conscious, Indian consumers would want to have a good look at a Harley bike before deciding to purchase such as costly product. And therefore the absence of an adequate network of stores across India – as found in both primary and secondary data, can be considered to be one of the major impediments for Harley in the Indian market. Hence it can

be concluded that Harley bikes were not available as easily as those of its competitors. Even the online platform of the company was seemingly not enough for Indian consumers because that did not allow the touch and feel that consumers wanted.

In terms of the promotional strategy, Harley seems to have made the biggest mistake of not adapting to the local culture. Primary and secondary data showed that Harley mostly had attempted to import and impose its promotional strategies of the US in India. For example, the HOG program was a very American concept which did not do well in the Indian market even though this concept was congruent with the collectivist trait of the Indian culture. The failure of the promotional campaigns of Harley Davidson was also abundantly clear from the analysis of primary data where a majority of the participants also thought that the promotional campaigns of Harley Davidson were imported and they were not adjusted to suit the local Indian culture.

While a host of recommendations could be presented to Harley in terms of adjusting to the cultural difference such that its consumer reaches out efforts can be successful, the recommendations in this study have been restricted mainly to the marketing mix of the company.

➢ Offering international quality products is welcome but Harley should have considered whether all the features of its bikes are required in Indian conditions because such features might push up the price for the bikes.

➢ Harley required a complete rethinking of its pricing strategy for India considering that the Indian society is price-conscious and would not immediately start to expend large amounts of money for self-indulgence such as purchasing a Harley bike - more so because at that price they could purchase a four-wheeler

➢ Access to a distribution network was a major issue for Harley Davidson while it operated in the Indian market because of its strategy of focusing on the Indian regions which were richer than the rest of the country. While setting up a chain of stores, showrooms and dealerships across India might not have been feasible, it should have done more to take advantage of the growing culture of the use of the internet and online shopping in India.

➢ Harley's apparent strategy of importing promotional campaigns and strategies from its home market was not apt at all. It should have reviewed what other successful foreign

brands were doing in terms of promotional activities and accordingly adjusted the strategies to the local Indian culture.

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APPENDIX A: Survey Questionnaire

Research Topic; *Marketing Strategies of Foreign companies in a new market from consumer reach out perspective – the case of Harley Davidson in India*

(Information gathered through this questionnaire will be kept confidential and will be used for academic purposes only.)

SECTION – A: Details of Respondent

Please ✓ for the answer that matches with you.

1. Age of Respondent:

18-30

31-40

41-50

51 and above

2. Gender of Respondent

i. Male   ii. Female   iii. Other

SECTION – B: Details about marketing mix. campaigns of Harley Davidson in India

Please ✓ for the answer that matches with you.

 (For the questions/statements below put a tick mark on the option you feel correct)

Cultural Attributes

3. I believe Indian culture is very different from that of the US

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

4. Indian culture accepts a hierarchy system

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

5. Indian culture prompts us to think more about groups than individuals

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

6. I always fall back on my traditions and seek advice from seniors in times of crisis

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

7. I believe that Indians do not want to expend much on self-indulgence

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Harley Davidson & the Indian Market

8. The market opportunity for Harley Davidson bikes was good

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

9. The one Key challenge in the Indian market for high-end High-quality products from foreign companies

Low average income	Reluctance to try out new products	Unequal wealth distribution	Culture and customs barrier	Government apathy

Products

10. The primary reason for customers buying a Harley Davidson in India (tick on the most appropriate)

Speed	Style	Performance	Pride of owning	Belonging to an elite group

11. Harley Davidson bikes have a differentiating factor compared to rivals

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

12. I feel that some of the features of Harley's bikes are not needed by me

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

13. I believe that Harley products in India were of the same quality as those available in western countries such as in the US

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Price

14. The high price of Harley Davidson bikes is a damper for many buyers in India

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

15. Most Harley Davidson buyers purchase the bikes despite having difficulty with the high price in India

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

16. Harley Davidson should rethink their pricing strategy in India

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Place

17. I think Harley bikes were not easily available in all parts of India because it had very few flagship stores as in contrast to other countries such as the US

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

18. I would have rather purchased a Harley bike from a physical/retail store instead of online platforms

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

19. The reach of the distribution network of Harley Davidson was adequate

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Promotions

20. I had not come across many ads from Harley while it was in India

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

21. The HOG is a novel idea and is helping Harley Davidson to create a market presence and attract consumers

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

22. Test riding had helped Harley Davidson create more customers

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

23. The marketing campaigns of Harley were most often designed for Indian bikers and bike owners like me

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

24. The HOG concept was foreign to Indian culture

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree