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One Station One Product: An Awareness- Perception and Purchase behaviour analysis in Mumbai city.

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Abstract

One Station One Product (OSOP) was introduced in 2022 as a government initiative to promote indigenous products at busy railway stations. The present exploratory study attempts to examine the awareness, perceptions, and purchase behaviour of commuters who travel by Mumbai local trains. Primary survey data were collected from 264 respondents on the western and central lines using convenience sampling and analysed using mixed methods, with descriptive statistics and thematic analysis of semi-open and open-ended questions. The analysis reveals a significant gap between awareness and purchase behaviour, with a small proportion of commuters making an actual purchase. There is a clear awareness- purchase behaviour gap: while scheme awareness (61%) and cultural endorsement are relatively high, actual purchase conversion remains low (28%), with purchase behaviour characterised by impulsivity, low spend, and negligible repeat buying. The study identifies structural and communication constraints that drive consumer engagement. The study shows that OSOP evokes symbolic presence rather than being part of their daily consumer practice.

Key words- One Station One Product, purchase behaviour, structural barriers, consumer perception.

Introduction

The promotion of locally produced goods through public retail platforms has emerged as an important strategy for improving market access for small-scale producers and artisans. The One Station One Product (OSOP) initiative, implemented across railway stations by Indian Railways, represents one such effort to promote local products while supporting artisan livelihoods. Launched under the broader vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat, OSOP was designed to create economic opportunities for local artisans, promote regional products, and boost small-scale industries by placing dedicated stalls at railway stations across the country.

The study aims to examine consumer awareness, perception, and purchasing behaviour related to OSOP kiosks at railway stations in Mumbai. Specifically, it assesses the commuters' awareness of the initiative, how they evaluate the products offered, and the factors that influence their purchasing decisions. The study also explores the cultural and social meanings consumers assign to the scheme and analyses the barriers that impede consumer engagement.

Research Objectives

- To measure awareness and visibility of the OSOP scheme among Mumbai commuters.
- To assess consumer familiarity with and intent to purchase from OSOP stalls.
- To identify purchase behaviour patterns among respondents.
- To understand the cultural and social meanings consumers assign to the scheme.
- To analyse the barriers to engagement and offer recommendations for improvement.

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Methodology

Primary survey data was collected from 264 local train commuters in Mumbai using convenience sampling. The study uses mixed methods- the quantitative data has been analysed using descriptive statistics and mean average for multiple choice and Likert scale questions and the semi open and open questions were thematically analysed.

The data is limited since the sample data is heavily skewed towards female commuters with western travel dominating the sample. Therefore the data does not capture perceptions across varied population which can be addressed in future research.

Respondent Profile

The 264 survey respondents are all local train commuters. The Western line dominates the sample, accounting for 83% of respondents, followed by the Central lines. In terms of demographics, 74% of the sample falls within the 18–25 age group, with 69% female and 31% as male. Approximately 34% are working professionals, with the remaining majority comprising young population. Frequently visited stations include hubs along the Western and Central lines with most observing it at Borivali station and at stations between Andheri- Churchgate on the western line and mainly Ghatkopar on the central line.

Findings: Quantitative Analysis

Awareness and visibility

61% respondents were aware of the OSOP stalls. Of these daily commuters reported higher visibility (72.4%) in comparison to occasional commuters at 58.9%. 27.6% did not notice the stall despite regular travel. This data is consistent with the fact that everyday traveling does affect the probability of store visibility.

However this visibility does not reflect engagement because very few of the everyday commuters recall the location of the stall or the products they sell. 39% were completely unaware of the scheme.

Awareness is mainly through station signage, word of mouth through friends and family. Social media and formal advertising are virtually absent.

Purchase behaviour

The purchase behaviour is limited to 28% of the respondents with purchase of snacks dominating the product category. Spending is low with 77% buying below 200/-. Rather than spending on personal use, except for snacks as a product, it is made for gifting purposes especially handicrafts and textiles.

Awareness does not lead to purchase as both repeated and regular behavior is rare. Curiosity and recommendations from family and friends influence buying behavior. The buying pattern is impulsive rather than deliberate and planned.

The purchase behaviour varied by travel frequency. Daily commuters purchased at the rate of 30.3% compared to 21.4% among occasional travelers. 42% daily commuters who saw the stalls made purchase in comparison to 36% of occasional travelers. This difference in purchase rates among occasional travelers is mainly due to reduced visibility rather than attitude.

Familiarity and Purchase Intent

Familiarity with OSOP's stated objective is limited, with a mean score of 2.23 out of 5. Future purchase intent is similarly low, averaging 2.58 out of 5. These ratings show that most commuters neither strongly understand the scheme's purpose nor plan to engage with it in the near future.

Consumer Perception: Likert Scale Analysis

Perception of OSOP products across multiple indicators reflects weak to neutral engagement. Regarding cultural value, 37.2% of respondents believe the products reflect local culture, while 36.4% disagree; the mean score is 3.02, with 26.5% remaining neutral. This shows that commuters do not strongly perceive the cultural significance behind the OSOP stalls. Regarding quality, 33.3% agreed that products are of good quality, against 35.6% who disagreed, indicating trust deficit in the product quality. Pricing was identified as a major structural constraint, with a mean score of 2.81 and 38.6% in disagreement. Authenticity received the lowest mean score at 2.73, with 42% feeling the products were not distinctive. While 35% expressed symbolic support for local artisans, this did not lead to purchase, with 34.8% citing high price and poor quality as deterrents.

The overall mean scores across all perception indicators are below 3.09, with the highest score for cultural value (3.02) and the lowest for authenticity (2.73). The consistent presence of high neutral responses across all dimensions reflects limited awareness and weak evaluative engagement.

Thematic analysis of semi-open and open-ended questions

Theme 1: Low Level of Awareness and Visibility

The data consistently indicate that most commuters miss or overlook the OSOP stalls and are unable to distinguish them from regular railway retail stalls. Absence of signage, advertisement was a recurring theme and stalls were noticed only if they were boarding a train compartment that was close to the stall.

Structural and spatial concerns limit visibility and purchase behaviour. Frequent change and rotation of products restrict conscious engagement. As per the scheme the permission to operate the stall is initially for 15 days with minimum registration fees and then allotted for three months wherever demand exists.

Also the urgency of boarding trains, overcrowding at stations inhibits active engagement.

Theme 2- Pricing, Perception and buying behaviour

Among respondents who had come across the stalls, a significant theme is the perception that some felt that the price is justified due to the local, traditional touch and for its uniqueness. Products are overpriced in

comparison to other market alternatives. At the same time respondents also justified overpricing since the products are authentic with local flavour and uniqueness

Theme 3- Cultural Pride and Awareness

There is a clear gap between expressed values and actual behaviour towards OSOP products. While respondents agree that it changes society's perception towards local artisans and authentic traditional products, they do not intend to buy. Many drew blank responses when asked about social image the scheme evoked. Thus, OSOP has not succeeded in building a meaningful consumer identity around its products.

Theme 4: Structural and Situational Barriers

Several structural and situational constraints emerged consistently across respondents as barriers to engagement. Short train halts, platform overcrowding, and the inability to distinguish OSOP stalls from regular commercial stalls were the most frequently cited deterrents. Short train halts, identified by 49.3% of respondents as a purchase barrier, constitute a temporal constraint; station overcrowding, cited by 40.1%, corresponds to a social surroundings constraint.

The absence of product information and clear branding further reduces the stalls' ability to communicate their purpose to hurried commuters. Physical placement and visibility of stalls within station layouts were identified as areas requiring operational attention.

Discussion

The findings of this study show discrepancy between awareness of the OSOP scheme and active consumer engagement. The survey results show 61% awareness of the stalls, 66% report having noticed them, however engagement reduces to below 50% at the level of active purchase deliberation, and purchase conversion stands at only 28%. This pattern confirms that OSOP functions primarily as a symbolic policy presence rather than an active consumer practice in the lives of Mumbai commuters.

This discrepancy is consistent with the earlier studies on ethical and sustainable consumption (Jackson 2005, Thogersen 2010) where visibility and awareness though necessary do not lead to active consumer purchase choices. Cultural pride and mere recognition does not influence purchase behaviour.

The present study corroborates the finding that structural factors affect purchase (Batheja and Singh 2026, White et al 2019). Situational and structural factors like product visibility, quality and marketing exposure mediate active consumer engagement.

In high-density and high-speed transit environment of Mumbai local train stations, OSOP fails to capture the attention of hurried travellers at the point of purchase which is a major challenge. Rani (2025) analysed of OSOP initiative highlights challenges like inconsistent sales, crowd density, awareness and branding that affect purchase.

Commuters perceive the OSOP stalls as ordinary railway stalls rather than promoting culture or inclusive development, showcasing artisanal products. Combined with the perception that products are highly priced, not authentic, and of below-average quality affects sales.

Policy Implications and Recommendations

A targeted communication strategy is required to increase awareness. Given that the majority of respondents in this analysis are young commuters, aggressive use of social media channels for promoting the scheme's identity and product offerings should be used along with formal advertising and active digital engagement.

Product quality and authenticity trust deficit must be addressed through signage, labelling, product messaging and branding. The stalls should be more attractive with packaging of products and advertisements distinguishing them from other railway stalls. There should be active involvement of local artisans in promoting the products. They should be encouraged to maintain quality standards to attract customers.

Conclusion

Findings indicate that OSOP has achieved symbolic inclusion, only a physical presence in public space, but this visibility does not transform into social recognition (Sirieix et al. 2013).
The combined quantitative and thematic analyses point to a clear gap between awareness of the scheme and its intended outcomes of purchase behaviour and cultural integration. It requires strategic interventions like overcoming logistical issues, effective marketing strategies to increase visibility, inclusion of utility products and maintaining authenticity for it to become socially and commercially meaningful. The awareness–behaviour gap needs to be addressed by engaging with the everyday realities of urban commuters in high-density railway stations.

The scheme has the potential to foster economic empowerment and cultural heritage, with effective implementation strategies and overcoming structural constraints, the scheme is sustainable.

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