

Original Article

Strategic Trends in Marketing Innovative Products of Azerbaijan's Light Industry

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Abstract - The way a company sells its products is very important for how it does in the market and if it will be around for a long time, especially when it comes to new and innovative products in the light industry. This study looks at how companies in Azerbaijan's industry sell their products, particularly in the textile sector, where new technology and design are becoming more important. We used statistics from the sector reports from institutions and information on how money companies spend on marketing to see how they plan and check their marketing efforts when there is a lot of competition and technology is changing fast. What we found out is that even though companies are spending more on marketing and using tools more, a lot of them are still using old ways of selling things rather than having a clear plan for marketing that focuses on new ideas. Some of the problems are that companies do not have a good idea of who their customers are, they do not use systems to get information about marketing, and they do not have strong brands that can sell to other countries. On the one hand, having materials from Azerbaijan, getting help from the government, and being able to use digital platforms make it easier for companies to change and improve. This study says that if companies focus more on marketing that is driven by ideas, use digital tools more, and work together with other companies, they can do better in the market and rely less on imports in Azerbaijan's light industry. The results of this study are useful for people who run companies and make policies who want to help the sector do well in a good way, for the environment, and can last.

Keywords - Innovation-oriented marketing strategy, Light industry sector, Market competitiveness, Digital marketing transformation, Azerbaijan economy.

1. Introduction

In the contemporary global economy, innovation has become a fundamental driver of business competitiveness and sustainable growth. Rapid technological advancements, increasing globalization, and evolving consumer preferences have significantly transformed market dynamics, requiring firms to adopt more adaptive and innovation-oriented strategies. In this context, the light industry sector plays an important role in national economies, particularly in developing countries, by contributing to employment generation, domestic production, and export expansion. In Azerbaijan, the light industry sector has undergone notable structural and competitive changes over the past decade. The growing presence of imported goods, shifting consumer demands, and the expansion of digital technologies have intensified competition within the domestic market. Under these conditions, enterprises are required to strengthen their innovation capabilities and implement more effective marketing strategies to maintain competitiveness and ensure long-term development. Despite the recognized importance of innovation in the development of the light industry, there is still a limited amount of research that specifically examines the marketing of innovative products in Azerbaijan. Most existing studies focus on general industrial development, production indicators, or macroeconomic trends, while the role of marketing in the

commercialization of innovative products remains insufficiently explored. This gap highlights the need for a more detailed and systematic analysis of marketing strategies in this field. Accordingly, the main problem addressed in this study is the lack of a comprehensive evaluation of marketing strategies applied to innovative products in Azerbaijan's light industry. In particular, there is a need to determine which strategies are most effective, how they are implemented by enterprises, and what challenges hinder their successful application. This research aims to analyze current marketing practices in Azerbaijan's light industry, assess their effectiveness in promoting innovative products, and propose recommendations for improving marketing strategies in this sector. In line with this objective, the study seeks to answer the following research questions: What marketing strategies are currently used for innovative products in the light industry? How effective are these strategies in enhancing competitiveness? What barriers limit the successful implementation of innovation-oriented marketing approaches?

This study contributes to the existing literature by providing a focused analysis of the relationship between innovation and marketing within a specific sectoral and national context. The findings are expected to provide practical insights for business managers, policymakers, and researchers, and to support the development of more effective, innovation-driven strategies in Azerbaijan's light industry.

2. Literature Review

The world of business is changing fast. For companies to stay ahead, they need to come up with ideas and adjust to what is happening in the market. This is because of all the technology companies doing business all over the world, and people wanting different things. The light industry sector is very important for countries that are still growing, like Azerbaijan. This sector helps create jobs, makes different things, and sells products to other countries. Azerbaijan's light industry has had a tough time in the last ten years. Many products are being imported, people are buying things, and everything is going digital really quickly. This has made the market very competitive. Companies can no longer just make things. Sell them. They need to come up with products and find good ways to sell them. Marketing is very important for this. It helps companies make products that people want and find ways to sell them. Marketing also helps companies build a brand and stay ahead of others. Even though innovation is key to the light industry, not many studies have looked at how to market new products, especially in Azerbaijan. Most studies look at how to make things government policies and big economic numbers. They do not look at how marketing can turn ideas into successes.

Other countries have shown that marketing is not about selling things. It is also about helping companies adjust to changes and stay competitive. In countries that are still growing, like Azerbaijan, marketing is often limited. Companies do not have information about the market, they do not get enough help from institutions, and they do not have much experience with new ideas. So many companies just focus on selling things and do not plan for the future. New studies are saying that digital marketing, using data to make decisions, and selling things online are very important. These tools help companies understand what people want to make their marketing better and reach people. There is a big gap between having these digital tools and using them in a way that makes sense for the company. In countries, including Azerbaijan, companies use digital tools without a clear plan, so they do not help as much as they could.

Azerbaijan's light industry is facing the same challenges as other countries that are still growing. Even though the country has some advantages like having materials to make things and the government supporting industry companies are still struggling. They have a time understanding the market, building their brand, and selling new products. The main problem is that they do not have a marketing plan and do not know how to use new ideas to compete.

This shows that we need to study how marketing can help the Azerbaijani light industry come up with ideas and compete. We need to look at how marketing can help companies make products that people want, reduce the need for imported goods, and become a part of the global market. This is important for scholars.

3. Methodological Approach

This study uses a mix of ways to do research. It looks at numbers from parts of the industry and also checks what marketing strategies companies in Azerbaijan's light industry are using. The way we do this study is set up so that everything is clear and easy to understand. We want to make sure other people can use what we find out and build on it. The study of Azerbaijan's industry is important, and we want to make sure our results are good and can be trusted.

3.1. Data Sources and Materials

The information in this study comes from numbers and reports from the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan. We also got information from government offices and papers about the light industry sector. We looked at what companies spend on marketing and how they use marketing. We also looked at what they export. We got this information from company reports and surveys that are available to the public. All the information we used is available to anyone. We did not use any private or restricted information. The light industry sector information is based on what's publicly available.

3.2. Strategic Evaluation Framework

To see if marketing plans work for products, the study uses a special tool that looks at many different things. This tool includes things like how much a company likes to try new things, how much it uses computers and the internet, how well it knows its customers, and how good it is at selling its brand to other countries. The study looks at each of these things by using facts and numbers from the data it collected, so it can compare what different companies do in a way. The study uses ideas from marketing and business that are already well known, but it changes them a little to fit the special needs of the light industry in Azerbaijan. The study wants to know how well these marketing plans work for products, so it looks at the marketing strategies for innovative products in a very detailed way. The marketing strategies are important for the industry in Azerbaijan, and the study uses a special tool to evaluate the effectiveness of these marketing strategies.

4. Research Methodology

Azerbaijan's light industry is very important for the country's economy. This is because it helps create jobs, makes the economy stronger, and increases exports. Over the past ten years, Azerbaijan's light industry has faced a lot of challenges. Many imported goods have come into the country peoples buying habits have changed. Technology has advanced quickly. These changes have made the market very competitive. As a result, companies in Azerbaijan's industry need to be innovative and have good marketing strategies. They must make products and sell them successfully. Marketing is crucial in this process. It helps companies understand what customers want, makes their brands stronger, and gives them a term competitive advantage. However, there is no research on how to market new products in Azerbaijan's light industry. Most studies focus on how much companies can produce, government policies, and the overall economy. They do not look at how marketing can turn ideas into successful products. This study uses a mix of research methods to understand how companies in Azerbaijan's light industry market their products. It looks at data from reports, government publications, and industry analyses. It also reviews what other researchers have written about marketing strategies, innovation, and industrial development. The study also examines companies in the textile industry to see how they market their products. It looks at their use of marketing, branding, and efforts to expand into new markets. The study compares Azerbaijan's industry to other countries with similar economies. This helps identify what Azerbaijan does well and what it can improve. (Kotler & Keller, 2016)

The study finds that companies in Azerbaijan's industry do not have well-developed marketing strategies. Some companies use marketing, but it is not part of a larger plan. Many companies still use sales methods and do not innovate much. Compared to countries, Azerbaijan's light industry is okay at using digital technology, but it is not good at planning marketing strategies or building strong brands. Companies in Azerbaijan struggle to make brands that can compete internationally and to sell products in foreign markets. There are reasons why marketing strategies in Azerbaijan's light industry are not effective. Companies do not do market research, they do not have access to good data about customers, they lack professional marketing expertise, and they rely too much on government support. The study concludes that companies in Azerbaijan's industry need to develop better marketing strategies to compete successfully. They must understand what customers want and make products that meet those needs. The government can help. Companies must also develop their own abilities to market and innovate. (Armstrong and at.al., 2018)

This study has some limitations. It mostly uses existing data, which may not be entirely accurate or up-to-date. It also only looks at a company, which may not represent the whole industry. Future research could collect data and study more companies. The study also compares Azerbaijan to other countries, but it is hard to get comparable data. Finally, the field of marketing and innovation is changing quickly, so the findings of this study may need to be updated regularly.

5. Empirical Analysis and Discussion

The study finds that marketing strategies in Azerbaijan's industry are not well-developed. Some companies are starting to use marketing tools, especially digital marketing. However, these efforts are often not part of a marketing strategy. The study looks at how companies use marketing, such as social media and online marketplaces. It finds that some companies are good at using these tools. Many are not. The study also looks at how companies brand themselves and try to expand into markets. The comparison with countries shows that Azerbaijan's light industry is moderate in terms of digital adoption. However, it lags in marketing planning and brand development. Companies in Azerbaijan struggle to build brands and position their products in foreign markets. The study identifies barriers that limit the effectiveness of marketing strategies. These include a lack of market research access to customer data and a lack of professional marketing expertise. Companies in Azerbaijan also rely heavily on government support, which can reduce their incentives to develop their own marketing capabilities. The study confirms that a structured marketing framework is necessary for the commercialization of innovation. Companies that do not align their product development with market needs are less likely to achieve competitive advantages. (Aliyev, 2020). Overall, the study suggests that while there are some developments in the adoption of modern marketing tools, there is still a significant gap in terms of strategic coherence, analytical depth, and long-term orientation. Addressing these issues is essential for improving the competitiveness of products and ensuring the sustainable development of Azerbaijan's light industry.

6. Research Limitations

This study has limitations. First, it relies primarily on existing data, which may not be entirely accurate or up-to-date. The absence of primary data restricts the ability to capture firm-level behavioral insights in greater detail. Second, the empirical analysis is based on several case observations, which may not fully represent the diversity of enterprises within the light industry sector. Future research could expand the sample size. Incorporate more systematic data collection methods. Third, the comparative analysis is constrained by differences in data availability and measurement standards across countries, which may affect the consistency of country evaluations. Finally, the changing nature of digital marketing and innovation processes implies that some findings may require continuous updating to remain relevant. Azerbaijan's light industry must keep up with these changes to remain competitive.

7. Marketing Strategy in the Light Industry Sector

Marketing strategy reflects the objectives and operations of an enterprise. Without a clearly defined marketing strategy, it is impossible to justify budget allocations or the sequence of operational activities. Moreover, a well-structured marketing strategy ensures that all stages of business operations are interconnected and aligned. Consequently, enterprises operating in the light industry sector must develop a unified marketing strategy, with marketing activities planned for each subsequent year in accordance with this overarching framework. The developed marketing strategy should be measurable, enabling continuous monitoring, evaluation, and adjustment whenever necessary. Implementing such a strategy allows enterprises to respond dynamically to market demands and optimize operational efficiency.

7.1. Role and Scope of the Light Industry

The light industry sector is really important because it makes things that people need to buy. Its main job is to make sure everyone has what they want, no matter who they are or where they come from. This sector makes a lot of things like clothes, shoes, socks, hats, and things made from leather, fur, and other fabrics. (Mammadov, 2021)

The light industry sector is not just about making things for people to buy. It also helps industries by making special materials for them. For example, it makes ropes for coal mining and for companies that work with metal, and it makes filters for companies that make food and chemicals, and electricity, and it makes special fabrics for farmers. These things are used in a lot of industries, and they are really important for the whole country. So the light industry sector is a part of the economy. One of the things about the light industry sector is that it can make money quickly, which means it can help the economy fast and make a big difference. The light industry sector is really important. It helps the light industry sector to grow and to make more things that people need.

8. Innovation and Development Challenges in the Light Industry Sector of Azerbaijan

Innovation is a constant necessity in the light industry sector, driven by rapid technological changes and the emergence of new competitors in the market. To remain competitive, enterprises must conduct thorough market research and place innovation at the core of their strategic planning. (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019)

Despite the significant challenges facing Azerbaijan's light industry, including limited financial resources and the additional costs associated with adopting new technologies, promising areas for development exist. A key factor supporting growth in the sector is the availability of a domestic raw material base. Efficient utilization of these resources, coupled with continuous modernization of production and advancement of scientific and technological infrastructure, is critical for achieving sustainable development. Enhancing the sector's performance can also reduce dependency on imported products and raw materials while increasing the market share of innovative products. (Gereffi & Frederick, 2010)

The light industry in Azerbaijan is growing because it uses the country's raw materials. This helps the economy. Makes the light industry a bigger part of the country's total production. Recently, we have seen that the light industry in Azerbaijan is doing well, even if other industries are not doing well. The government wants to sell things that are not oil, so it has programs to help people start businesses and make things. These programs give people benefits like taxes, special areas for industries, and help for farmers. The light industry does not need a lot of money to start compared to other industries. The textile part of the industry needs a lot of money for machines and equipment, and it is very competitive. But the apparel part of the industry needs workers, and the machines are easier to move around, so it does not need as much money. Other countries have shown that helping the light industry is a way to make more things, help businesses, and create jobs.

One of the important things for the light industry in Azerbaijan is that it has the materials it needs. This helps keep costs. People always want to buy industry products, so there is a lot of potential for sales even in other

countries. This means Azerbaijan can export more. The government has made a website called Azexport. az to help people know about the things that are made in Azerbaijan and to help these things compete with others in the country and around the world.

9. Conclusion

The findings of this study show that marketing strategies are very important for making innovative products more competitive in Azerbaijan's light industry sector. If we look at the sector, we can see that even though marketing investments and the use of tools have been increasing, many businesses still use traditional sales methods. Some challenges stop these businesses from reaching their full potential. For example, they do not segment their markets well their branding strategies are not good. They do not use marketing information systems in a useful way. At the time, there are many opportunities in the sector. Azerbaijan has a lot of materials that businesses can use. The government is also helping businesses with programs. Additionally, the digital infrastructure is getting better, which provides a foundation for using advanced marketing strategies. New and innovative brands in Azerbaijan's industry are adapting quickly to digital marketing. This shows that the whole industry can change for the better.

- One of the problems is that they lack market segmentation.
- Another problem is that their branding strategies are not well-developed.
- They also do not use marketing information systems effectively.

Despite these challenges, there are opportunities in the sector.

Azerbaijan has a supply of raw materials.

The government is supporting businesses with programs.

The digital infrastructure is growing.

This provides a foundation for developing and using advanced marketing strategies.

Newer and innovative brands are adapting quickly to marketing.

This shows that the whole industry can change for the better.

The study says that to improve market performance and reduce reliance on imports, businesses must strengthen their innovation-focused marketing strategies. They need to digitalize their marketing processes. They should use cluster-based development models. For policymakers, the study suggests creating targeted support programs. These programs should help businesses modernize their strategies. For business managers, the study offers advice. It shows how to use marketing tools and practices. This can help businesses grow sustainably and stay competitive in a changing market.

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