

A Strategic Study of First Club Outlet Conversion, Product Visibility, and Personal Care Sales Growth in the General Trade Channel

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How to Cite this Article:

Kokarde, D. (2026). A Strategic Study of First Club Outlet Conversion, Product Visibility, and Personal Care Sales Growth in the General Trade Channel. International Journal of Creative and Open Research in Engineering and Management, 5(9), 1-9.
<https://doi.org/10.55041/ijcope.v2i9.181>

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<https://doi.org/10.55041/ijcope.v2i9.181>

Abstract

General Trade (GT) remains the dominant route to market for Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) companies in India, and outlet-level execution—availability, visibility, and retailer engagement—substantially determines whether brand equity converts into actual sales. This paper presents a field-based, descriptive-exploratory MBA research study conducted during an On-the-Job Training (OJT) engagement with ITC Limited's Personal Care Products Division from 15 May 2026 to 30 July 2026, in the role of Sales & Marketing Intern in the General Trade channel. The research problem is the extent to which First Club (FC) outlet conversion, together with product visibility and retail execution, is associated with Personal Care sales performance in General Trade. Primary data was gathered through outlet visits, retailer interactions, and FC pitching across a beat-based field coverage of 796 outlets, supplemented by secondary company records and academic literature. Field activity generated 344 orders worth ₹3,12,130. Of 41 outlets formally pitched for FC conversion, 29 converted (≈ 70.7 percent of outlets pitched). The project record shows an average outlet sale of ₹1,071.50 before FC conversion and ₹2,145 after, an observed increase of ₹1,073.50 (≈ 100.2 percent); however, the underlying project documentation does not specify whether this reflects the same outlets over a defined, matched time window, and the comparison is therefore treated as an observational, uncontrolled association rather than evidence of a causal

effect. The findings are consistent with retail-execution and relationship-marketing literature suggesting that visibility, availability, and sustained retailer engagement support outlet productivity, and the paper closes with field-grounded recommendations for outlet prioritisation, visibility management, and data-driven monitoring, together with an explicit account of the study's methodological limitations.

Keywords

First Club, General Trade, Retail Execution, Product Visibility, Retailer Engagement, Sales Growth, FMCG, Channel Management

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

General Trade accounts for the majority of FMCG sales in India, and within this channel the retail outlet is the final and most decisive point of contact between a brand and the consumer. Distribution effectiveness, product availability, visibility, and the quality of retailer engagement jointly determine whether marketing investment is realised as an actual sale. Retail execution translates upstream marketing strategy into outlet-level presence; its absence can neutralise brand equity when a preferred product is simply not available or not visible at the point of purchase.

1.2 Industry/Business Context

Within this environment, ITC Limited's Personal Care business—comprising brands such as Fiamma, Vivel, Engage, Savlon, Dermafique, and Charmis—competes in a category marked by intense rivalry among established FMCG majors and a growing presence of regional and direct-to-consumer entrants. For ITC Personal Care, General Trade performance depends on outlet coverage, consistent availability, effective shelf placement, and retailer willingness to prioritise the brand, including through structured mechanisms such as the First Club (FC) programme.

1.3 Problem Context

Against this backdrop, the project addressed a practical execution problem observed in the field: limited FC penetration among eligible outlets, uneven product visibility, variable retailer awareness of the FC scheme, an actively competing set of national brands contesting shelf space and retailer attention, and a consequent need for structured outlet identification, beat planning, and consistent monitoring to support conversion and sales.

1.4 Research Problem

The research problem is formulated as follows: to what extent is First Club outlet conversion, supported by product visibility and retail execution, associated with Personal Care sales performance for ITC Limited in the General Trade channel, and what retailer-level and execution-level factors appear to influence this relationship, given that the available project data permits an observational rather than a controlled or causal test of this question.

1.5 Purpose of the Study

The study examines FC outlet conversion as a retail-execution and channel-development mechanism, analyses its observed association with outlet-level sales using the project's own field and order data, and identifies the visibility, engagement, and scheme-related factors that appeared to support or constrain conversion during the fieldwork, in order to generate field-grounded, evidence-based recommendations for General Trade management.

1.6 Research Objectives

Objective 1: To study the effectiveness of First Club (FC) outlet conversion in improving the sales and market presence of ITC Personal Care products in the General Trade (GT) channel.

Objective 2: To identify and evaluate potential retail outlets suitable for conversion into First Club outlets based on outlet type, product availability, sales potential, and retailer profile.

Objective 3: To understand retailer requirements, preferences, and expectations regarding ITC Personal Care products, schemes, margins, promotions, and trade benefits.

Objective 4: To analyse the impact of product visibility, shelf placement, merchandising, and in-store promotion on the sales performance of ITC Personal Care products.

Objective 5: To identify and analyse key retailer objections and barriers affecting First Club outlet conversion and develop suitable approaches for addressing them.

Objective 6: To evaluate the effectiveness of trade schemes and promotional offers in encouraging retailers to place orders and participate in the First Club programme.

Objective 7: To recommend strategic measures for increasing FC outlet conversions and improving sales productivity, retailer engagement, product availability, and long-term market penetration in the General Trade channel.

Collectively, these objectives position the study as a field-level contribution that combines outlet coverage, FC pitching and conversion, order generation, and an outlet-level sales comparison with qualitative retail-execution observations, within a single ITC Personal Care General Trade context.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Retail Marketing and General Trade

Retail marketing theory positions the outlet as the point at which the marketing mix is finally implemented; distribution channels create value by making products available at the right place and time (Kotler, Armstrong, & Opresnik, 2020). Retail management literature treats the retailer's assortment, layout, and service decisions as determinants of overall channel performance (Berman, Evans, & Chatterjee, 2018). In General Trade, this outlet-level implementation occurs across a large and fragmented base of independently owned stores, making retail execution—rather than store design alone—the primary lever available to an FMCG manufacturer such as ITC.

2.2 Channel Management and Distribution

Channel management theory holds that intermediaries exist because they perform functions a manufacturer cannot efficiently perform alone, including breaking bulk, providing local market access, and reducing the number of transactions required to reach dispersed consumers (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Effective channel management requires balancing manufacturer control with distributor and retailer autonomy; Rosenbloom (2007), writing on multi-channel business-to-business distribution, similarly notes that channel effectiveness depends on how well channel members' roles are integrated and coordinated, a proposition that extends by analogy to the manufacturer–distributor–retailer structure examined here. For ITC Personal Care, market coverage and outlet-level product availability are treated as core indicators of channel effectiveness.

2.3 Retail Execution, Merchandising and Product Visibility

Retail execution and merchandising literature link shelf placement, facings, and point-of-sale material to purchase incidence, since availability failures at the shelf translate directly into lost sales opportunities even where underlying consumer demand exists. Ailawadi and Keller (2004) argue that retail branding, including in-store presentation, materially shapes how consumers perceive and select among competing products at the point of sale. Applied to the present project, these concepts explain why product visibility, shelf presence, and stock availability were treated as central execution variables during outlet visits.

2.4 Retailer Engagement, Relationship Marketing and Conversion

Relationship marketing theory argues that trust and commitment are the central mediating variables determining whether a channel relationship endures and performs (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Retailer engagement, in this view, is not a single transactional interaction but an ongoing process of communication, requirement understanding, and follow-up that builds the trust needed for a retailer to commit to a scheme. This framing directly informs the conceptualization of FC outlet conversion, which proceeds through outlet identification, retailer interaction, scheme explanation, objection handling, and follow-up before conversion is achieved.

2.5 Sales Management, Trade Promotion and Consumer/Shopper Behaviour Trade promotion literature indicates that channel-directed incentives can influence retailer stocking and participation decisions, though effectiveness depends on perceived retailer benefit and how the offer is communicated. Research on multichannel customer management observes that consistent availability and coordination across customer touchpoints is a recurring managerial challenge for firms operating multiple channels (Neslin et al., 2006; Verhoef, Kannan, & Inman, 2015). These studies are drawn from multichannel and omni-channel retail contexts rather than traditional General Trade, and are used here only for the narrower, transferable proposition that consistent availability materially affects purchase outcomes; the specific dynamics of a single-channel, outlet-based General Trade market are not directly addressed by this literature. In General Trade, where the shopper's decision is frequently made at or near the point of sale, retailer recommendation and product visibility function as an important influence on final brand choice.

2.6 Synthesis and Research Gap

Existing knowledge. The literature reviewed above establishes that distribution effectiveness, retail execution, relationship quality, and trade promotion jointly shape channel and sales performance, and that these constructs are interdependent (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Berman, Evans, & Chatterjee, 2018; Ailawadi & Keller, 2004; Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

Existing limitation. Much of this literature is conceptual or drawn from modern/multichannel or Western retail settings (Neslin et al., 2006; Verhoef, Kannan, & Inman, 2015; Rosenbloom, 2007), and offers limited field-level evidence of how these constructs interact inside a single company's structured retailer-conversion programme operating in a fragmented, outlet-based General Trade market of the kind found in India.

Specific gap. There is limited publicly available, verifiable field evidence connecting a structured retailer-conversion programme (such as FC), General Trade outlet-level execution, and an observed sales association, within a single FMCG Personal Care context.

Contribution of this study. This study contributes field-level evidence from an ITC Personal Care General Trade context by combining outlet coverage, FC pitching, FC conversion, order generation, an outlet-level sales comparison, and retail-execution observations gathered directly during fieldwork. It does not claim to be the first study of its kind; rather, it offers a bounded, transparently limited empirical account from a specific market and period, intended to complement—not replace—the broader theoretical literature.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study follows a descriptive and exploratory, field-based observational design. The descriptive component addresses outlet coverage, order generation, and FC conversion outcomes; the exploratory component addresses retailer requirements, objections, and engagement patterns observed during fieldwork. The design does not include a controlled experiment, a matched comparison group, or formal hypothesis testing, and findings are reported accordingly as observational rather than causal.

3.2 Research Context

The research was conducted during a structured OJT engagement with ITC Limited's Personal Care Products Division, in the General Trade channel, over the period 15 May 2026 to 30 July 2026, in the role of Sales & Marketing Intern.

3.3 Data Sources

Primary Data: Collected through market visits, direct retailer interactions, outlet-level observation of product availability and competitor presence, FC pitching activity, and order generation. No formal, structured retailer survey instrument was administered; retailer-level qualitative information was gathered through direct field interaction and observation.

Secondary Data: Company-provided sales and outlet records available during the OJT, distributor and product information, trade-scheme information, and academic literature. Company-level financial figures used in Section 4 were cross-checked against ITC Limited's published FY 2025–26 Report and Accounts as reported in independent business-press coverage, and are distinguished in the text from project-specific field data.

3.4 Sampling/Field Coverage

Field coverage was determined by the assigned General Trade market and beat structure allocated for the OJT period; a total of 796 outlets were covered over the course of the engagement. This is non-probability, beat-based field coverage rather than a statistically designed or randomly drawn sample, and the 796 outlets should be read as the

assigned territory covered during the internship rather than as a representative sample of ITC Personal Care's General Trade universe.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

The field process followed a consistent sequence: market planning, outlet identification, retail outlet visit, retailer interaction, ITC product availability check, competitor observation, product demand and retailer feedback collection, First Club scheme explanation, objection handling, retailer conversion or follow-up, data recording, and subsequent data analysis leading to findings and recommendations.

3.6 Data Analysis

Field data was compiled and analysed using Microsoft Excel and Power BI, with descriptive statistics applied to outlet coverage, order generation, and FC pitch-to-conversion outcomes. The comparison of average outlet sale before and after FC conversion (Section 5.3) is drawn directly from the project's Executive Summary figures. The underlying project documentation available for this study does not specify whether the before and after figures rest on an identical set of outlets, the exact duration of the “before” and “after” windows, or whether any outlets were excluded from either average. This detail could not be verified from the supplied project files and is treated as an open methodological question rather than assumed; it is also carried forward as an explicit limitation in Section 8.

3.7 Research Ethics/Data Considerations

Company and retailer information gathered during the OJT was used responsibly and in aggregated form for the purposes of this study; confidential company- and retailer-specific information was not disclosed. No formal institutional ethical review was sought, consistent with the standard confidentiality expectations of an academic internship engagement rather than a funded research study.

4. Case/Company Context

ITC Limited is a diversified Indian enterprise established in 1910, with interests spanning FMCG, Agri Business, Paperboards and Specialty Papers, Packaging, and Information Technology. Independent business-press reporting on ITC's FY 2025–26 Report and Accounts records a standalone gross revenue of approximately ₹80,867 crore (up 10.1 percent year-on-year) and profit after tax of approximately ₹20,286 crore, confirming the company-profile figures used in the underlying OJT project record. Within its FMCG portfolio, the Personal Care business—including Fiama, Vivel, Engage, Savlon, Dermafique, and Charmis—competes against established players such as Hindustan Unilever, Procter & Gamble, and Dabur, as well as regional and direct-to-consumer brands, in a category where availability, shelf visibility, and retailer preference substantially influence sales outcomes. The General Trade channel remains central to this business, operating through a manufacturer-distributor-retailer structure in which market coverage and outlet-level execution determine reach. Within this channel, ITC's First Club programme functions as a structured retailer-conversion mechanism intended to secure preferential stocking, visibility, and engagement at identified high-potential outlets; this programme, together with associated retail execution activity observed by the researcher during fieldwork, provided the empirical setting for the present study.

5. Results and Analysis

5.1 Field Coverage, Order Generation and Outlet Productivity

Table 1 presents the field-level coverage and order-generation indicators recorded during the OJT.

Table 1. Field Coverage and Order Generation Indicators

Indicator	Value
Outlets Visited	796
Orders Taken	344
Total Order Value	₹3,12,130
Average Order Value (derived: Total Order Value ÷ Orders Taken)	₹907.35
Order Generation Rate (derived: Orders Taken ÷ Outlets Visited × 100)	43.2%

The data indicates that field activity translated into orders at a rate of approximately 43 percent of outlets visited, suggesting a moderate but meaningful conversion of outlet visits into transactional outcomes across the assigned beat coverage. The derived average order value of approximately ₹907 per order provides a baseline productivity indicator against which the FC-related indicators in the following sections can be read; it is a descriptive figure computed across all orders and does not distinguish between FC and non-FC outlets.

5.2 First Club Pitch and Conversion Analysis

Table 2 presents the outcomes of FC pitching activity undertaken during the fieldwork.

Table 2. First Club Pitch and Conversion Outcomes

Indicator	Value
FC Pitched	41
FC Converted	29
Pitch-to-Conversion Rate (derived: FC Converted ÷ FC Pitched × 100)	≈70.7%

Of the 41 outlets formally pitched for the First Club programme during the observed project activity, 29 converted — approximately 70.7 percent of the outlets pitched, not 70.7 percent of the 796 outlets visited overall. Within the narrow set of outlets actually approached, retailer receptiveness to the FC value proposition was comparatively high once the scheme was explained and objections addressed. Because the 41 pitched outlets were not randomly selected from the 796 visited, and because the basis on which they were selected for pitching is not separately documented in the project record, this conversion rate should be read as descriptive of the outlets actually pitched during this specific engagement, and not generalised to the wider outlet base, to other territories, or to the broader ITC Personal Care market.

5.3 Observed Association Between FC Conversion and Outlet Sales

Table 3 compares average outlet sale before and after FC conversion, as recorded in the project's Executive Summary.

Table 3. Average Outlet Sales Before and After FC Conversion

Indicator	Value
Average Outlet Sale Before FC Conversion	₹1,071.50
Average Outlet Sale After FC Conversion	₹2,145.00
Observed Increase per Outlet	₹1,073.50
Approximate Percentage Increase (derived)	≈100.2%

The comparison shows an observed increase of approximately ₹1,073.50 per outlet, or approximately 100.2 percent over the pre-conversion average. As noted in Section 3.6, the project documentation available for this study does not establish whether this before/after comparison rests on the same set of outlets over a matched time period, how many outlets contributed to each average, or whether any outlets were excluded; the figures should therefore be read as an available aggregate observational measure reported in the project record, rather than as the output of a controlled

pre/post design. Subject to that caveat, the direction and magnitude of the difference is consistent with the premise that FC outlets receive additional visibility, availability attention, and retailer engagement. It should not be interpreted as evidence that FC conversion alone caused the increase: outlet-level sales can also be influenced by product availability, assortment changes, retailer-specific promotional activity, seasonality, competitor response, and other concurrent factors that this observational design cannot separate out. No control group of comparable non-FC outlets over the same period was available for comparison in the supplied project data.

5.4 Retail Execution, Visibility, Retailer Engagement and Competitor Analysis Field observations during the OJT indicated that product availability, shelf placement, facings, and point-of-sale visibility were consistently relevant considerations at the outlets visited, and that gaps in availability appeared to create openings for competing brands to gain retailer and shopper preference. During retailer interactions, retailers described evaluating ITC Personal Care products against factors such as consumer demand, margin, scheme attractiveness, and existing stocking relationships with competing companies, including major national players such as Hindustan Unilever, Dabur, Marico, and Godrej Consumer Products, all of which maintained an active retail presence in the outlets covered. These are qualitative field observations rather than frequency-counted survey results, and no percentage of retailers expressing a given view is reported because no structured survey instrument was used to generate such a figure. Retailer engagement—explaining product and scheme benefits, addressing concerns, and maintaining follow-up—was observed during fieldwork to be an important precondition for both initial FC conversion and continued outlet-level execution, a pattern consistent with, though not statistically linked to, the sales association reported in Section 5.3.

6. Discussion

FC conversion. Relationship marketing theory holds that trust and commitment mediate channel-partner performance (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). FC conversion, as observed in the field, is the outcome of a structured retailer-engagement process—identification, interaction, scheme explanation, objection handling, and follow-up—that plausibly builds exactly this kind of trust. The higher average sale recorded at converted outlets (Section 5.3) is consistent with this literature, though, as stated above, the project’s observational design cannot establish that the engagement process itself, rather than a concurrent factor such as improved availability, produced the difference.

Visibility. Retail-execution and retail-branding literature (Ailawadi & Keller, 2004) argues that in-store presentation shapes purchase outcomes at the point of sale. Field observations of shelf placement and facings gaps at non-FC outlets are consistent with this proposition, and offer one plausible mechanism—alongside retailer engagement—through which FC status could be associated with higher sales, since FC outlets typically receive more consistent visibility attention than outlets that were visited but not pitched or converted.

Distribution. Channel management literature emphasises coordinated distribution and availability as determinants of channel effectiveness (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Rosenbloom, 2007). The moderate order-generation rate recorded across all 796 outlets (Section 5.1) illustrates this point in practice: market coverage alone did not automatically translate into orders, indicating that availability and execution gaps constrained conversion of coverage into sales, independent of FC status.

Competition. The consistent retail presence of major competing brands observed during fieldwork indicates that ITC Personal Care products compete for shelf space and retailer attention within an already contested environment. Where availability or visibility gaps existed, retailers and shoppers had ready access to competing options, suggesting that part of the sales association reported for FC-converted outlets may reflect a relative improvement in ITC’s competitive position at those specific outlets, rather than a change in total category demand.

Across these four threads, the literature and the field evidence are broadly consistent with one another, but the project’s observational, non-controlled design means this consistency should be read as support for plausibility rather than as confirmation of a specific causal mechanism.

7. Recommendations

- 1. Increase FC Outlet Conversion.** Finding: Only 41 of the 796 outlets visited were formally pitched for FC conversion during the study period. Recommended Action: Extend structured FC pitching systematically across a larger share of visited outlets, using outlet-level screening ahead of each pitch. Managerial Implication: A larger pitched base could extend the sales association observed for FC status to a wider set of outlets.
- 2. Systematic Screening of High-Potential Outlets.** Finding: The observed post-conversion sales difference suggests FC status is associated with stronger outlet productivity. Recommended Action: Screen outlets by existing sales potential, product assortment, and retailer willingness before pitching, rather than pitching opportunistically. Managerial Implication: More efficient use of field time and potentially a higher conversion yield per pitch made.
- 3. Improve Product Visibility and Shelf Placement.** Finding: Visibility and shelf presence were repeatedly noted as relevant to sales opportunity during outlet visits. Recommended Action: Standardise shelf-placement and facings checks during each outlet visit, supported by point-of-sale material where available. Managerial Implication: Improved shopper attention and reduced loss of sales to more visible competitor products.
- 4. Strengthen Product Availability and Assortment.** Finding: Availability gaps were observed to create openings for competing brands to gain preference. Recommended Action: Track SKU-level availability at each outlet and flag recurring gaps for distributor follow-up. Managerial Implication: Fewer missed sales opportunities arising from stock-outs or assortment gaps.
- 5. Improve Retailer Engagement and Follow-up.** Finding: Retailer engagement was identified as a precondition for both FC conversion and continued execution. Recommended Action: Maintain structured, periodic follow-up with both converted and non-converted outlets rather than one-time visits. Managerial Implication: Sustained retailer relationships and a higher likelihood of future conversion.
- 6. Address Retailer Objections Systematically.** Finding: Objection handling formed a distinct and necessary stage of the observed conversion process. Recommended Action: Document common retailer objections (margin, scheme clarity, competing loyalty) and standardise response approaches for field staff. Managerial Implication: More consistent handling of objections during pitching.
- 7. Improve Trade-Scheme Communication.** Finding: Retailer participation in FC and order placement appeared linked to how clearly scheme benefits were communicated. Recommended Action: Tailor scheme communication to individual retailer requirements rather than applying a uniform pitch. Managerial Implication: Improved retailer receptiveness to schemes and order placement.
- 8. Monitor Competitor Activity.** Finding: Major competing brands, including HUL, Dabur, Marico, and Godrej Consumer Products, maintained an active presence in the outlets covered. Recommended Action: Continue systematic competitor observation covering availability, visibility, and retailer preference at each visit. Managerial Implication: Earlier identification of competitive pressure on ITC Personal Care's retail presence.
- 9. Optimise Beat/Route Planning.** Finding: Field coverage and order generation depended on structured market and beat planning during the OJT. Recommended Action: Refine beat planning using outlet-level productivity and FC-conversion data as they accumulate. Managerial Implication: More efficient allocation of field time toward higher-potential outlets and beats.
- 10. Extend Power BI/Data-Driven Monitoring.** Finding: Excel- and Power BI-based analysis supported tracking of outlets visited, orders, and FC conversion during the OJT. Recommended Action: Extend dashboard-based monitoring of KPIs such as outlet coverage, order value, FC pitch-to-conversion rate, and average outlet sale on an ongoing basis, and begin recording the outlet identity and date underlying each before/after comparison so that future analysis is not limited by the ambiguity noted in Section 3.6. Managerial Implication: Earlier, data-driven identification of execution gaps and a stronger evidentiary basis for future sales comparisons.

8. Limitations

The findings of this study are subject to several limitations that a reader should weigh when interpreting the results. The research was conducted within a limited OJT period of approximately eleven weeks, restricting the ability to observe longer-term changes in outlet sales and retailer behaviour. Field coverage reflects non-probability, beat-based coverage of the specific General Trade market assigned during the internship, not a statistically representative sample, so the findings may not generalise to other territories or to ITC Personal Care's wider General Trade business. No formal, structured retailer survey instrument was administered; retailer-level qualitative information rests on field interaction and observation, which may vary in consistency and is subject to some interviewer and recall subjectivity. The study relied on company data made available during the OJT period, and certain confidential information relating to margins, distributor performance, and broader company strategy was not accessible for analysis. The before/after outlet-sales comparison in Section 5.3 is an aggregate figure drawn from the project record; the underlying methodology—specifically, whether the same outlets and a matched time window were used—could not be verified from the supplied documentation and is disclosed here rather than assumed. No matched control group of non-FC outlets over the same period was available, so the causal contribution of FC conversion, as distinct from concurrent factors such as availability, promotions, seasonality, and competitor activity, cannot be established from this study's design.

9. Conclusion and Future Research

9.1 Conclusion

This study examined the association between First Club outlet conversion, product visibility, and retail execution, and Personal Care sales performance for ITC Limited in the General Trade channel, drawing on field evidence gathered during an eleven-week OJT engagement. Across 796 outlets covered under the assigned beat structure, field activity generated 344 orders worth

₹3,12,130, indicating meaningful but partial conversion of outlet coverage into orders. Among the 41 outlets formally pitched for FC conversion, 29 converted, a pitch-to-conversion rate of approximately 70.7 percent among the outlets pitched, pointing to comparatively strong retailer receptiveness once engaged. The project record shows an observed increase in average outlet sale of approximately ₹1,073.50 (≈100.2 percent) following FC conversion; given the absence of documented detail on the underlying before/after methodology and the absence of a comparison group, this is reported as an association consistent with, but not proof of, the value of FC conversion. Field observations further indicated that product visibility, availability, and sustained retailer engagement were consistently relevant to both FC conversion and outlet-level execution. The study contributes a bounded, transparently limited, field-grounded account of General Trade management that complements—without superseding—the more general propositions found in existing retail and channel-management literature, and offers a practical basis for outlet prioritisation, visibility management, and retailer engagement in future FC-related field activity.

9.2 Future Research

Future research could usefully extend this study through a matched comparison of FC and non-FC outlets with similar baseline characteristics, in order to better isolate the contribution of FC conversion from concurrent factors; longer-period, longitudinal tracking of the same outlets to assess whether the observed sales association persists; broader geographical coverage across additional territories to test the generalisability of the pitch-to-conversion rate and sales association reported here; a structured, questionnaire-based retailer survey to complement the field-observation approach used in this study; multi-quarter sales data with explicit controls for seasonality and promotional activity; SKU- or category-level analysis to identify which Personal Care products benefit most from FC conversion and improved visibility; and, where sufficient outlet-level raw data becomes available, formal statistical testing (for example, mean-difference testing between FC and matched non-FC outlets) rather than descriptive comparison alone. These are proposed as directions for subsequent research and are not findings of the present study.

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