

## **A STUDY ON CHANNELS OF DISTRIBUTION AT KESORAM**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study investigates the channels of distribution at Kesoram Cements with a focus on identifying the influencing factors, evaluating the impact on retailer satisfaction, and examining the strategic approaches employed by the company. A structured questionnaire was administered to 100 retailers, and the analysis reveals that digital transformation has significantly influenced the preferred modes of ordering, with a large majority opting for mobile apps and online platforms. Retailers exhibited consistent demand trends, with frequent large-quantity orders, and showed a general preference for Rapid Hardening Cement. The study also highlights areas of moderate satisfaction, such as credit terms, product range, and promotional support, while pointing out limitations in communication and transportation cost transparency.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The concept of channels of distribution occupied a pivotal position in the broader framework of marketing management, particularly within industrial sectors such as cement manufacturing. Channels of distribution encompassed the various intermediaries, institutions, and logistical mechanisms that facilitated the movement of products from the point of production to the final consumer. In the context of the cement industry, the efficiency and structure of these channels determined the timely delivery, availability, and accessibility of cement to end-users, thereby influencing overall market performance. The cement market functioned within a highly competitive and geographically dispersed environment, where

strategic control over distribution networks played a crucial role in market penetration, cost optimization, and customer satisfaction. Thus, the operational effectiveness of distribution channels stood as a critical determinant of business success.

At Kesoram Cements, a recognized entity within the Indian cement industry, the deployment of distribution channels was central to its operational strategy and market outreach. The company functioned within an extensive value chain that required the integration of multiple agents including wholesalers, dealers, transport agencies, stockists, and retailers. Each of these intermediaries played a specific role in ensuring the uninterrupted flow of products from the manufacturing units to diverse market destinations. The complexities associated with managing this network—considering the bulk nature of the product, storage limitations, transport challenges, and demand variability—necessitated a well-designed and efficiently monitored distribution system. As such, the study of channels of distribution in Kesoram Cements offered valuable insights into logistical strategies and market alignment.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Chatzigeorgiou (2020) in this qualitative study had explored the adoption of social media as distribution channels within the tourism marketing context by analyzing consumers lived experiences. Through in-depth interviews and thematic analysis, the author identified key determinants—such as perceived convenience, trust in peer recommendations, and platform interactivity—that influenced the decision to engage with tourism providers via social networks.

Wong (2022) had investigated the viability of a network marketing model as an alternative distribution channel for Maldivian hotels through an exploratory, mixed-methods approach. The research combined survey data from hotel managers with case studies of successful network marketing initiatives, revealing that such models yielded improved occupancy rates, diversified customer segments, and enhanced brand loyalty.

Abedini (2020) had examined marketing channel challenges confronting pharmaceutical distribution companies handling herbal medicines. Using a cross-sectional survey of distribution managers, the research identified logistical constraints, regulatory ambiguities, and low brand awareness as primary impediments. The author had shown that inadequate cold-chain infrastructure and fragmented retail networks undermined product integrity and market reach.

Han (2020) had developed a theoretical framework linking psychological marketing practices with women's narcissism tendencies within distribution channels. Drawing upon interdisciplinary literature in psychology and marketing, the author had posited that narcissistic traits in female consumers influenced their channel preferences, promotional responsiveness, and loyalty behavior. The model suggested that self-enhancement motives drove higher engagement with channels offering personalized branding and social recognition features

Adam (2023) had explored the interplay between pricing strategy, distribution channels, and customer satisfaction in the green products sector by analyzing survey responses from environmentally conscious consumers. The study had employed structural equation modeling to demonstrate that transparent pricing coupled with eco-friendly distribution mechanisms—such as carbon-neutral logistics and direct-to-consumer delivery—positively influenced satisfaction and purchase intention.

## **NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY**

This study was necessitated by the growing importance of distribution efficiency in the Indian cement industry, which had been witnessing increased competition, evolving dealer expectations, and shifting logistics paradigms. Given the bulk nature of cement, any inefficiencies in channel management resulted in significant cost escalations, delayed deliveries, and reduced retailer trust. For Kesoram Cements, ensuring the robustness of its distribution strategies was essential to maintaining market share and operational stability. The study addressed a critical managerial area that influenced the company's long-term competitiveness. Furthermore, the lack of specific academic work focusing on the practical impact of distribution channels on retailer satisfaction in the context of Kesoram Cements created a research gap that this study intended to bridge.

## **SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The scope of the study was confined to the evaluation of channels of distribution used by Kesoram Cements, with specific attention to the factors influencing these channels, their impact on retailer satisfaction, and the distribution strategies adopted by the company. The study focused on the operational and strategic dimensions of distribution and included feedback from relevant retail stakeholders to assess the effectiveness of the existing system.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To study about factors influencing channels of distribution at Kesoram Cements.
2. To assess the impact of channels of distribution on retailers satisfaction.
3. To know the strategies related to channels of distribution at Kesoram Cements.
4. To give suggestions for marketing managers at Kesoram Cements.

## **DATASOURCES**

The primary data for this study were obtained through a structured, closed-ended questionnaire distributed among 100 retailers of Kesoram Cements.

Secondary data were collected from relevant academic journals, books, internet sources, and the official website of Kesoram Cements.

## **PERIOD OF THE STUDY**

The research work had been completed in 45 days.

## **STATISTICAL TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES**

- Frequency analysis
- Descriptive statistics
- Bar charts
- Pie charts
- M-Excel and SPSS

## **LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

- The study is geographically limited to a specific set of retailers associated with Kesoram Cements, and may not represent national-level trends.
- The sample size of 100 respondents may not be sufficient to generalize findings across diverse markets.
- The data collected is based on self-reporting, which can introduce biases or inaccuracies.

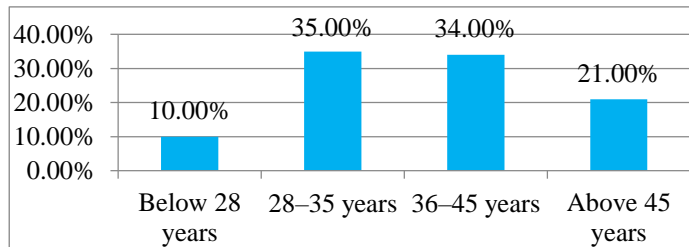
## DATA ANALYSIS

### 1. Age Group:

**Table 1: Age group**

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Below 28 years	10	10.00%
28–35 years	35	35.00%
36–45 years	34	34.00%
Above 45 years	21	21.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Figure 1: Age group**



### Interpretation

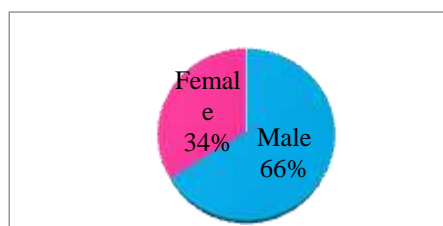
The age distribution of the 100 retailers shows that a plurality falls within the 28–35 years category (35%), closely followed by those aged 36–45 years (34%), indicating that over two-thirds (69%) of the retail network comprises mid-career individuals. Retailers below 28 years constitute only 10%, suggesting limited early-career engagement, while those above 45 years account for 21%, reflecting a moderate presence of seasoned retailers. This concentration in the 28–45 age bracket may influence communication preferences and technology adoption in distribution channels, as this demographic is generally more receptive to digital ordering platforms and dynamic credit schemes.

### 2. Gender:

**Table 2: Gender**

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Male	66	66.00%
Female	34	34.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Figure 2: Gender**



### Interpretation

Gender composition among respondents reveals a marked male predominance, with 66% of retailers identifying as male and 34% as female. This gender imbalance may reflect structural characteristics of the building materials trade in the region, where male participation is traditionally higher. However, the substantial minority of female retailers

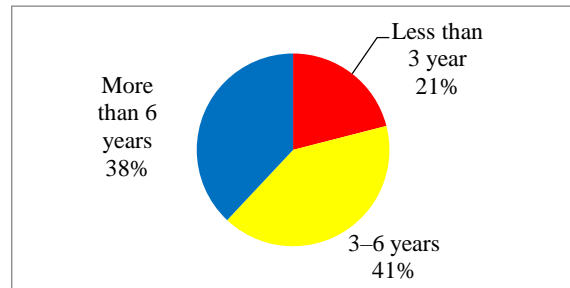
(over one-third) suggests potential for targeted outreach and inclusive marketing strategies to further engage women in the distribution network.

### 3. Years of Experience as a Retailer of Kesoram Cements:

**Table 3: Experience**

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Less than 3 year	21	21.00%
3–6 years	41	41.00%
More than 6 years	38	38.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Figure 3: Experience**



#### Interpretation

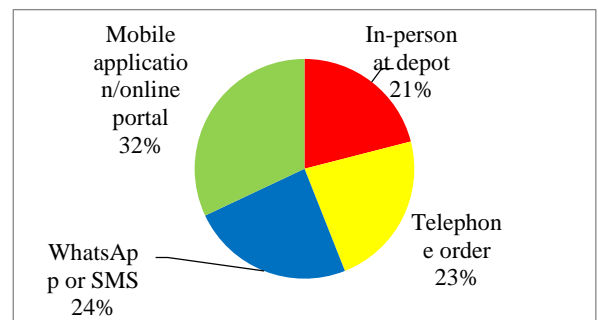
Experience levels among Kesoram Cements retailers indicate that 41% have been associated for 3–6 years and 38% for more than six years, together accounting for 79% of the sample. Only 21% have less than three years of experience, implying that the majority of the retail network possesses substantial familiarity with the company’s products and processes. Such entrenched relationships can facilitate stability in ordering patterns but may also present challenges in introducing new channel innovations if long-standing practices prevail.

### 4. Primary Mode of Ordering Cement from Kesoram Cements:

**Table 4: Mode**

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
In-person at depot	21	21.00%
Telephone order	23	23.00%
WhatsApp or SMS	24	24.00%
Mobile application/online portal	32	32.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Figure 4: Mode**



#### Interpretation

Analysis of ordering modes shows that 32% of retailers primarily use the mobile application or online portal, the highest among all channels, followed by WhatsApp/SMS at 24% and telephone orders at 23%. In-person depot orders are least preferred (21%), underscoring a clear shift toward digital and remote ordering mechanisms. This trend

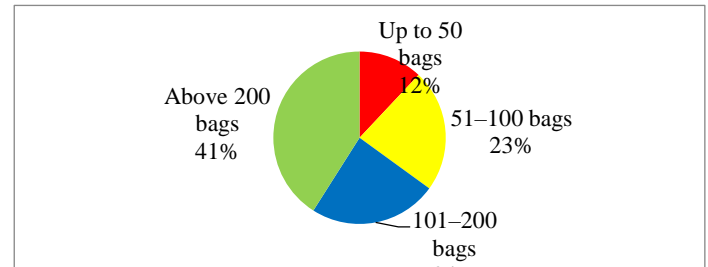
highlights the critical importance of investing in reliable and user-friendly digital interfaces to meet evolving retailer expectations.

#### 5. Average Order Quantity per Transaction:

**Table 5: Quantity**

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Up to 50 bags	12	12.00%
51–100 bags	23	23.00%
101–200 bags	24	24.00%
Above 200 bags	41	41.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Figure 5: Quantity**



#### Interpretation

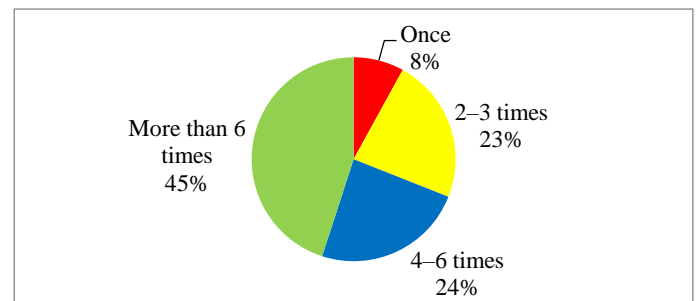
The average order quantity per transaction indicates that 41% of retailers place orders exceeding 200 bags, while 24% order 101–200 bags and 23% order 51–100 bags. A smaller segment (12%) orders up to 50 bags. The predominance of large-volume transactions suggests that retailers maintain high stock levels to meet project demands and underscores the necessity of an efficient distribution channel capable of handling bulk shipments.

#### 6. Frequency of Orders in a Typical Month:

**Table 6: Frequency of orders Figure**

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Once	8	8.00%
2–3 times	23	23.00%
4–6 times	24	24.00%
More than 6 times	45	45.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**6: Frequency of orders**



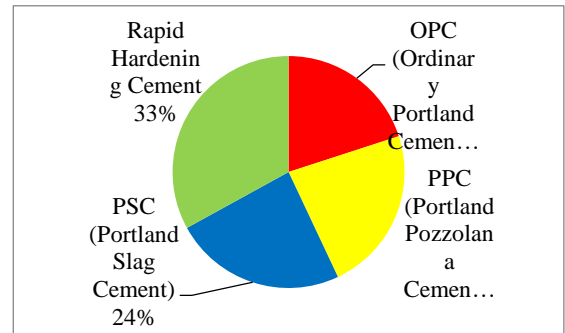
#### Interpretation

When assessing monthly order frequency, 45% of retailers place orders more than six times per month, while 24% order 4–6 times and 23% order 2–3 times. Only 8% order once monthly. The high frequency of repeat orders by nearly half of respondents suggests a dynamic inventory turnover and a critical need for responsive replenishment cycles to avoid stockouts and support continuous construction activities.

## 7. Preferred Type of Cement Supplied by Kesoram:

**Table 7: Type**

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
OPC (Ordinary Portland Cement)	20	20.00%
PPC (Portland Pozzolana Cement)	23	23.00%
PSC (Portland Slag Cement)	24	24.00%
Rapid Hardening Cement	33	33.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

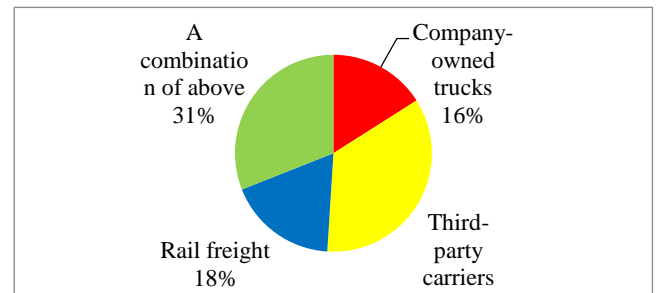
**Figure 7: Type****Interpretation**

Preferred product types reveal that Rapid Hardening Cement leads at 33%, with PSC (24%), PPC (23%), and OPC (20%) following. The strong preference for Rapid Hardening Cement reflects project timelines that demand faster setting times, indicating that product offerings and promotional efforts should emphasize the benefits of this variant to align with retailer and end-user requirements.

## 8. Mode of Payment for Cement Purchases:

**Table 8: Payment mode Figure**

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Cash on Delivery	18	18.00%
Credit period (30 days)	35	35.00%
Advance payment	14	14.00%
Online transfer	33	33.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**8: Payment mode****Interpretation**

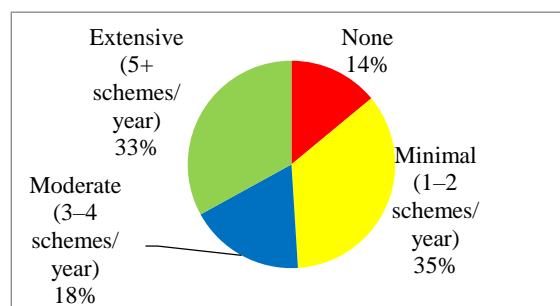
Payment mode data show that credit period transactions (30 days) are most common at 35%, closely followed by online transfers at 33%. Cash on delivery accounts for 18%, and advance payments only 14%. The predominance of credit and digital payments underscores the importance of robust credit management systems and secure online payment infrastructure to maintain trust and liquidity in the distribution channel.



## 9. Level of Promotional Support Received (e.g., discounts, schemes):

**Table 9: Promotional support Figure**

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
None	14	14.00%
Minimal (1–2 schemes/year)	35	35.00%
Moderate (3–4 schemes/year)	18	18.00%
Extensive (5+ schemes/year)	33	33.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

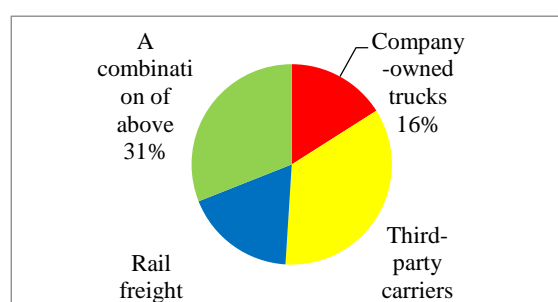
**9: Promotional support****Interpretation**

Regarding promotional support, 35% of retailers receive minimal schemes (1–2 per year), 33% enjoy extensive support (5+ schemes), 18% receive moderate support, and 14% report no support. The variation in promotional frequency suggests inconsistencies across regions or dealer networks, highlighting an opportunity to standardize promotional programs and ensure equitable access to incentives for all retailers.

## 10. Primary Transportation Method Used by Kesoram Cements:

**Table 10: Transportation**

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Company-owned trucks	16	16.00%
Third-party carriers	35	35.00%
Rail freight	18	18.00%
A combination of above	31	31.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Figure 10: Transportation****Interpretation**

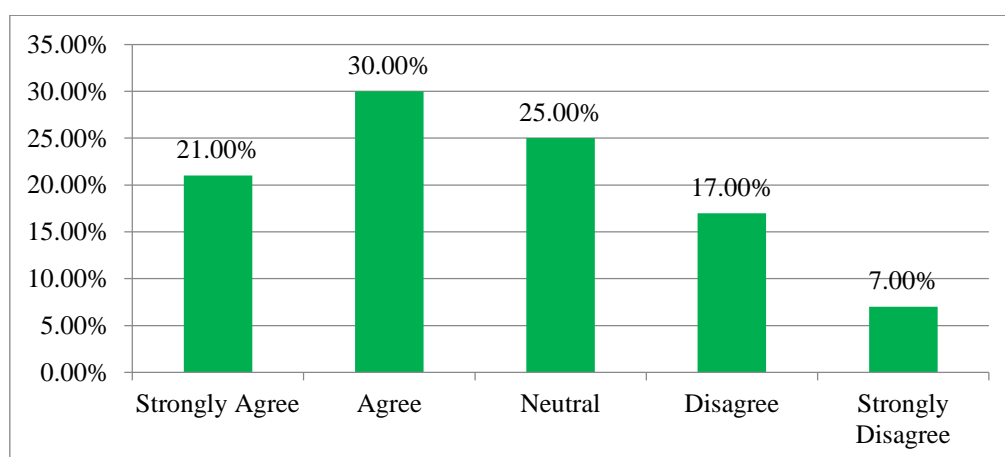
Transportation methods indicate that third-party carriers are used by 35%, combinations of methods by 31%, rail freight by 18%, and company-owned trucks by 16%. The reliance on external logistics providers underscores the need for stringent performance monitoring and contractual service-level agreements to guarantee timely and damage-free deliveries.

11. The delivery of cement by Kesoram Cements was consistently punctual.

**Table 11: Consistency**

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Strongly Agree	21	21.00%
Agree	30	30.00%
Neutral	25	25.00%
Disagree	17	17.00%
Strongly Disagree	7	7.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Figure 11: Consistency**



### Interpretation

Punctuality perceptions reveal that 51% of retailers agree or strongly agree that deliveries are consistently punctual, while 25% are neutral and 24% disagree or strongly disagree. Although a slight majority is satisfied, the one-quarter expressing dissatisfaction or neutrality points to gaps in delivery reliability that require process optimization and real-time tracking capabilities.

## FINDINGS

- Most retailers are belonging to 28 to 45 years age group.
- The majority of the respondents are male retailers.
- Many retailers have over three years of experience dealing with Kesoram Cements.
- Online and mobile application methods are the most preferred modes for ordering cement.

- A significant number of retailers place bulk orders exceeding 200 bags per transaction.
- Retailers tend to place orders more than six times a month.
- Rapid Hardening Cement is the most preferred type among the retailers.

## **SUGGESTIONS**

- Kesoram Cements should expand digital infrastructure to enhance order processing and tracking.
- The firm should improve promotional frequency and customize offers to retailers' needs.
- Develop flexible and tiered credit schemes based on retailer loyalty and volume.
- Conduct regular training and orientation programs for retailers on digital platforms.
- Evaluate and enhance packaging standards to minimize in-transit damages.

## **CONCLUSION**

The present study aimed to evaluate the factors influencing channels of distribution and their impact on retailer satisfaction at Kesoram Cements. The findings reveal that while retailers have largely adopted modern order placement systems such as mobile apps and online platforms, the efficiency of these systems and responsiveness of the company remain critical to maintaining high satisfaction levels. Retailers, particularly those with significant experience, displayed a consistent pattern in ordering frequency and preferred cement types, indicating stable demand trends and established channel behavior.

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