

Decoding Festive Gifting in Mumbai: A Study on the Hedonic and Utilitarian Drivers Behind Purchase of Cadbury Celebrations

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Abstract - This study explores consumer perceptions of Cadbury Celebrations as a festive gifting brand in Mumbai, focusing on hedonic (emotional) and utilitarian (practical) purchase drivers. Based on a survey of 48 Mumbai, India based respondents, findings show that the brand is trusted and convenient, however, it lacks a premium appeal. Consumers seek healthier, personalized, and festive-themed innovations. Using the 7Ps marketing mix, the paper suggests strategies for Cadbury to enhance its emotional connect, product variety, and positioning in the festive gifting market.

Keywords - FMCG, Cadbury Celebrations, confectionery, festive gifting, consumer behavior, emotional and practical factors, marketing mix (7Ps), product innovation.

I. Introduction

Aim, Objectives, Relevance and Papers Referred for the Study Aim

To analyze the consumer perception of Cadbury Celebrations as a festive gifting option in Mumbai, with a focus on hedonic (emotional) and utilitarian (practical) drivers influencing purchase decisions.

Objectives

- To study the gifting habits of Mumbai consumers during festivals and the role of Cadbury Celebrations within these traditions.
- To measure the influence of hedonic (emotional) factors such as joy, excitement, social approval, emotional bonding and Utilitarian (practical) factors like affordability, convenience, availability, and universal appeal in purchase decisions.
- To analyze consumer behavior in choosing Cadbury Celebrations versus competing chocolate brands (e.g., Ferrero Rocher, Lindt, KitKat, Amul, Hershey's).
- To explore consumer interest in innovation and premiumization (e.g., luxury gifting packs, festive-themed editions, healthier options, personalization).
- To suggest strategies for Cadbury to strengthen its position as a preferred festive gifting brand.

Relevance



This study is significant as it tries to understand the changing nature of festive gifting in Mumbai, where branded chocolates are increasingly seen as good alternatives to traditional sweets. By analyzing both emotional and practical factors that guide consumer choices, the research provides Cadbury with actionable insights to strengthen its role in the gifting market. The findings highlight opportunities for premiumization and festival-specific innovations, ensuring the brand remains competitive in the chocolate gifting market.

II. Research Methodology

Research Plan - The study was majorly done using a Primary Survey method. How:

Data was directly collected from 48 respondents in Mumbai using a Google Form questionnaire. The form included both close-ended (multiple choice, rating scales) and open-ended questions, allowing participants to share their motivations, and opinions about Cadbury Celebrations as a festive gifting option.

Why: Since the aim of the study is to understand the hedonic (emotional) and utilitarian (practical) drivers behind consumer gifting decisions, existing secondary data (like reports or articles) would not have captured these personal insights.

Research Technique - This research combines exploratory and descriptive techniques.

Exploratory Component

- Since little formal research exists on hedonic vs. utilitarian motivations in festive gifting of Cadbury Celebrations in Mumbai, this study does have an exploratory intent
- The open-ended questions in the questionnaire and the attempt to uncover new consumer insights (like what innovations could make them gift more often) makes it exploratory in nature.

Descriptive Component

• At the same time, the study collected quantitative data from 48 respondents using structured questions to describe consumer attitudes, preferences, and behaviors in measurable terms. This makes it descriptive, as it provides clear statistical data on how consumers think and behave.

Sampling Method - The study used a Convenience Sampling method. Respondents were selected based on ease of access and willingness to participate. Sample Size - 48.

Introduction - Industry Trends, About the Brand, Brief History of the Chocolate Gifting Market in India, Competitors

The confectionery and festive gifting industry in India, part of the larger FMCG sector, is growing quickly as festivals, traditions, and rising incomes shape consumer choices. Chocolates, especially brands like Cadbury Celebrations, have become a popular replacement for traditional sweets, as they combine emotional value with convenience and modern appeal. With social media and digital platforms influencing buying habits, consumers are now looking out for both taste and experience.

Industry Trends



The following trends are observable in the confectionery gifting industry:

Premiumization - People now buy chocolates not just for taste but for quality and status. Premium flavours, elegant looking hampers, and better packaging are trending. For instance, Cadbury Silk gift hampers with gold-themed festive boxes.

Focus on Health - Consumers are choosing options that are sugar-free, organic, or high in protein. For instance, Amul's sugar-free dark chocolate variant.

Digital Influence - Social media and influencer campaigns are guiding buying decisions, especially for younger consumers. For instance, Ferrero Rocher runs Instagram reels during Valentine's and Diwali.

Convenience Packs - Small, resealable or bite-sized packs are preferred for sharing and affordability. For instance, KitKat mini bites in zip-lock packs.

Eco Packaging - Growing concern for the environment is pushing brands to use recyclable or reusable packaging. For instance, Paper Boat's festive packs with recyclable boxes.

Price Concerns - Rising costs are leading to smaller pack sizes at the same price (a.k.a shrinkflation). For instance, chocolate bars are becoming thinner but are priced the same.

About the Brand

Name: Cadbury Celebrations (by Mondelez International)

Sector: FMCG (Fast-Moving Consumer Goods) Category: Confectionery / Packaged Food

Sub-category: Festive gifting / Seasonal gifting in India

Evolution and Growth

Founded in 1824 by John Cadbury in Birmingham, England, Cadbury began as a small shop selling tea, coffee, and drinking chocolate. The company expanded under the leadership of George Cadbury, who developed the Bournville estate, a model village designed to provide improved living conditions for workers. In 1905, Cadbury introduced the Dairy Milk chocolate bar, which used a higher proportion of milk in the recipe than rival products, making it a significant innovation in the chocolate industry.

Cadbury Celebrations was introduced in India in the early 2000s as a premium chocolate gifting range, specifically designed for festivals like Diwali, Raksha Bandhan, and corporate gifting. It initially brought together popular Cadbury chocolates, such as Dairy Milk, 5 Star, and Gems, in a single attractive box. Over time, the range expanded to include Silk, Fuse, Bournville, and other favorites, catering to diverse tastes. Packaging innovations and festive designs helped enhance the gifting appeal. In 2010, Cadbury was acquired by Mondelez International, a global snack and beverage company.

Innovations Cadbury Innovations:



- Introduced Dairy Milk in 1905 with higher milk content than competitors and it became their best selling product.
- Launched Bournville Cocoa for dark chocolate lovers.
- Created the Silk range, focusing on smooth, premium chocolate.
- Developed Cocoa Life program to support sustainable cocoa farming.
- Introduced flavored and fruit & nut variants to diversify taste options.

Cadbury Celebrations Innovations:

- Combined multiple popular chocolates in one festive box.
- Introduced attractive and thematic packaging for gifting occasions.
- Launched seasonal and limited-edition assortments for festivals.
- Included premium chocolates like Silk and Bournville in gifting collections.
- Expanded into tier-2 and tier-3 markets via e-commerce and retail.

Brief History of the Chocolate Gifting Market in India

The concept of gifting chocolates during festivals and special occasions gained popularity in India in the early 2000s. Brands like Cadbury recognized the potential of this market and introduced products tailored for gifting. Over the years, the market has seen the emergence of both international and Indian brands offering a variety of chocolate assortments, catering to different consumer preferences and price points. The growth of e-commerce and online gifting platforms has further fueled the expansion of the chocolate gifting market in India.

Competitors in the Indian Chocolate Gifting Market Nestlé India

Nestlé offers a range of chocolate products, including KitKat, Munch, and Milkybar. While primarily known for mass-market offerings, Nestlé has ventured into the gifting segment with premium assortments during festive seasons. Their products are widely available and cater to a broad consumer base.

Amul

Amul, an Indian dairy cooperative, produces a variety of chocolates, including dark chocolate and fruit & nut variants. Known for its affordability and quality, Amul has gained popularity in the gifting segment, especially among cost-conscious consumers seeking premium taste at budget-friendly prices.

Fabelle by ITC

Fabelle is ITC's luxury chocolate brand, offering artisanal chocolates crafted from single origin cocoa. With a focus on premium gifting, Fabelle provides a range of handcrafted chocolates in elegant packaging, targeting the high-end gifting market.

Ferrero Rocher

Ferrero Rocher is a global premium chocolate brand known for its hazelnut pralines. The brand has a strong presence in the Indian gifting market, especially during festive seasons, due to its luxurious packaging and premium positioning.

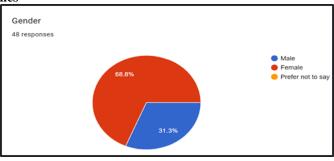
Lindt & Sprüngli

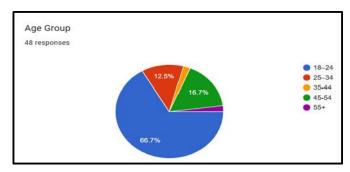


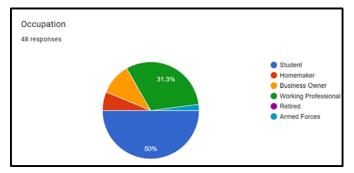
Lindt is a Swiss chocolatier renowned for its high-quality chocolate products. The company competes with Cadbury in the premium and luxury chocolate markets, offering a range of products suitable for gifting during special occasions.

Findings

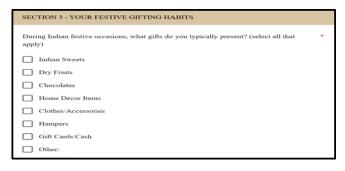
Demographics

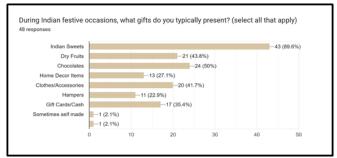












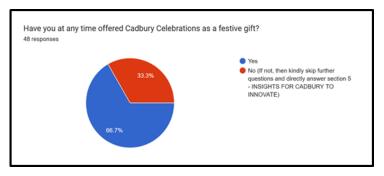
During Indian festive occasions, what gifts do you typically present?

Interpretation:

The dominance of Indian sweets (89.6%) reflects the cultural tradition of gifting mithai. However, half of respondents (50%) also gift chocolates, showing their growing acceptance as a mainstream festive option. This highlights the opportunity for Cadbury Celebrations to position itself as both modern and culturally suitable.

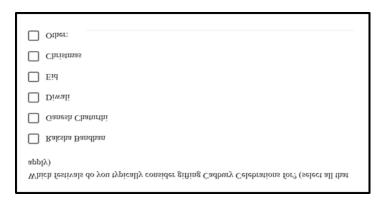
Have you at any time offered Cadbury Celebrations as a festive gift? *
O Yes
No (If not, then kindly skip further questions and directly answer section 5 - INSIGHTS FOR CADBURY TO INNOVATE)

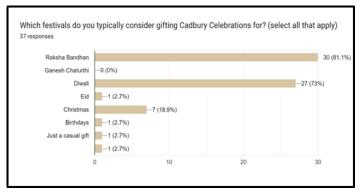




Have you at any time offered Cadbury Celebrations as a festive gift? **Interpretation:**

Two-thirds of respondents have gifted Cadbury Celebrations, showing strong penetration in the festive gifting market. However, one-third have never chosen it, showing the untapped potential. This segment may represent consumers who prefer traditional options (sweets, dry fruits) or premium competitors. So, Cadbury should target this untapped group through innovations and festival-specific campaigns.

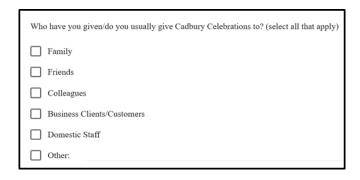


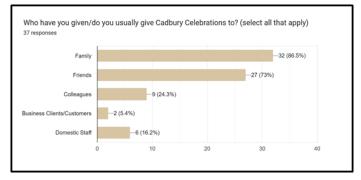


: Which festivals do you typically consider gifting Cadbury Celebrations for? Interpretation:



Cadbury Celebrations is most strongly associated with family-centric Hindu festivals such as Raksha Bandhan and Diwali. The low percentages for Christmas, Eid, suggests limited association with non-Hindu or non-festive occasions. Making good promotional strategies around Christmas, Eid will help Cadbury go beyond specific Hindu festivals and become a more all year round gifting option.

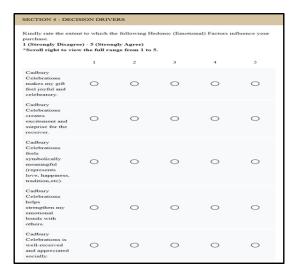


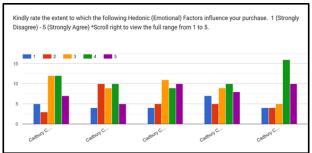


: Who have you given/do you usually give Cadbury Celebrations to? **Interpretation:**

Cadbury Celebrations is primarily given within close social circles like family and friends rather than in formal or professional spaces. Its limited usage with colleagues, staff, or clients shows that it is still seen as a personal/emotional gift rather than a corporate or formal one. This positions the brand strongly in the bonding and relationship space, but also shows that there is still potential to grow in corporate gifting with premiumized formal looking offerings.







Hedonic (Emotional) Factors

Respondents rated emotional aspects of Cadbury Celebrations on a 1–5 scale.

Results (Average Ratings):

Makes my gift feel joyful & celebratory – 3.33 / 5

Creates excitement & surprise for the receiver – 3.05 / 5

Feels symbolically meaningful (love, tradition, happiness) – 3.41 / 5

Helps strengthen emotional bonds -3.18/5

Is well-received & socially appreciated – 3.62 / 5

Interpretation:

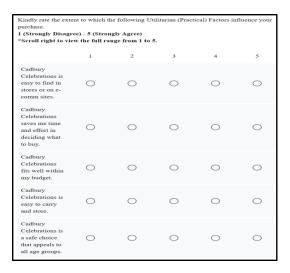
Emotional associations with Cadbury Celebrations are good but not outstanding. The highest rating (3.62) is for social appreciation, indicating that people believe it is a safe and socially acceptable gift. However, the low scores on excitement (3.05) and bond strengthening (3.18) suggest that while Cadbury is liked, it does not always create deeply emotional experiences.

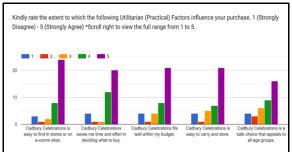
For Cadbury to improve its brand perception, it may need to:

• Introduce more surprising, or limited-edition options.

Strengthen its cultural connect through proper festival specific packaging and campaigns. They need to avoid keeping the same pack design around different festivals.







Utilitarian (Practical) Factors

Respondents rated practical aspects of Cadbury Celebrations on a 1–5 scale.

Results (Average Ratings):

Easy to find in stores/e-commerce -4.29 / 5

Saves time & effort in deciding what to buy -4.13/5

Fits well within my budget -4.08 / 5

Easy to carry & store -4.05 / 5

Safe choice that appeals to all age groups -3.79 / 5

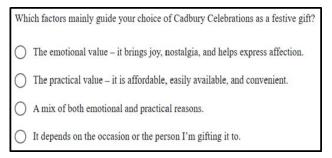
Interpretation:

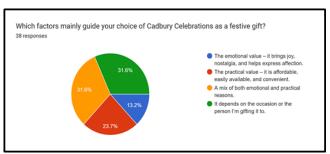
The utilitarian strengths of Cadbury Celebrations are very strong (avg. > 4.0). Convenience (easy availability, portability, and quick decision-making) and affordability are clear advantages. These findings show why Cadbury holds a mainstream position in festive gifting. Because it is simple, accessible, and budget-friendly.

The lowest-rated practical factor was being a 'safe choice for all age groups' (3.79). This indicates some consumers do not consider it suitable for certain age brackets, probably for the elderly who must be health conscious.



Overall, Cadbury Celebrations is viewed as convenient and practical, but to strengthen universal appeal, it could introduce more healthier variants or premium assortments.



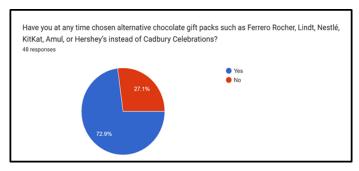


Which factors mainly guide your choice of Cadbury Celebrations as a festive gift? **Interpretation:**

Most consumers choose Cadbury Celebrations for a blend of emotional and practical reasons, or make their choice depending on the occasion or recipient. Practical value is slightly more influential than purely emotional appeal, suggesting that while Cadbury carries warmth and nostalgia, its affordability and convenience are the stronger purchase drivers.

SECTION 5 - INSIGHTS FOR CADBURY TO INNOVATE	
Have you at any time chosen alternative chocolate gift packs such as Ferrero Rocher, Lindt, Nestlé, KitKat, Amul, or Hershey's instead of Cadbury Celebrations?	*
○ Yes	
○ No	





Have you at any time chosen alternative chocolate gift packs (Ferrero Rocher, Lindt, Nestlé, KitKat, Amul, Hershey's)?

Interpretation:

Almost three-quarter of respondents have opted for alternatives, showing that Cadbury is dominant, but does face significant competition from premium brands. This highlights consumers' openness to experiment and switching when they want novelty, luxury, or a different taste profile. Hence, Cadbury cannot be considered as irreplaceable.

If yes, then why		
Your answer		

If yes, then why (reasons for choosing alternatives)?

Common reasons observed:

- Lack of desired variants in Cadbury (e.g., dark chocolate not visible in stores)
- Trying something new/trendy
- Availability issues in stores at the time of purchase
- Desire for premium gifting appeal

Interpretation:

Consumers turn to competitors mainly due to gaps in Cadbury's portfolio (e.g., dark chocolate, luxury positioning) and a curiosity for novelty. This shows that Cadbury can meet consumer demands by offering special variants and premium packs.

If no, then why		
Your answer		

: If no, then why (reasons for sticking with Cadbury)?

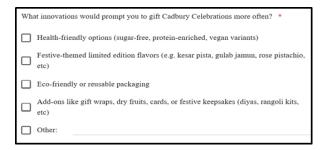


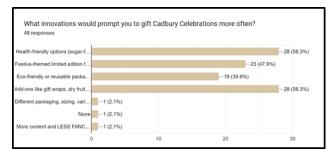
Common reasons observed:

- Variety within Cadbury Celebrations packs
- Brand loyalty
- Handy, convenient, multipack options
- Strong personal liking for the brand

Interpretation:

Non-switchers remain loyal due to trust in Cadbury, product variety, and ease of gifting. This suggests that Cadbury's brand equity is strong. By staying reliable and adding new ideas, Cadbury can keep loyal customers and attract back those who switched to other brands.





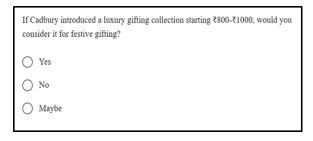
What innovations would prompt you to gift Cadbury Celebrations more often? Common responses:

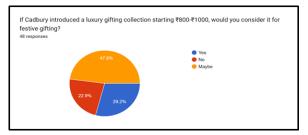
- Health-friendly options (sugar-free, protein-enriched, vegan)
- Festive-themed limited editions (regional flavors, festival specific packaging)
- Dark chocolate variants
- Luxury or premium gift assortments
- Customization options (personalized packs, messages)

Interpretation:

There's a clear demand for health-conscious choices and premium/luxury offerings, alongside novelty through festival editions. This reflects a market showing a market that values both tradition and modern ideas in gifting.



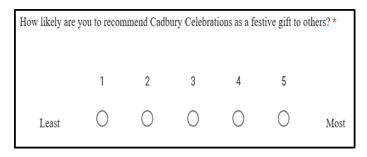


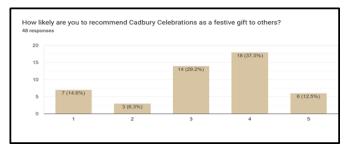


If Cadbury introduced a luxury gifting collection (₹800-₹1000), would you consider it?

Interpretation:

Almost 48% are open but hesitant ('Maybe'), and 30% clearly say 'Yes'. This shows that while people are price-sensitive, they are willing to spend more if they see value in premium gifting like special packaging, luxury flavors, or exclusivity. Cadbury must stand out clearly to compete with brands like Ferrero, Lindt, or premium hampers.





How likely are you to recommend Cadbury Celebrations as a festive gift? **Interpretation:**



Most respondents rated 3–4, showing a quite positive but not very enthusiastico utlook. Only 12.5% gave the top score (5), while 14.6% gave the lowest (1). While many view Cadbury Celebrations as a reliable gift, it lacks the 'wow' factor that drives strong recommendations. This highlights the need for greater innovation, emotional storytelling, and premiumization to strengthen brand positioning.

Any final thoughts, ideas or suggestions for Cadbury as a gifting brand? *
Your answer

Any final thoughts, ideas, or suggestions?

Interpretation:

Cadbury as a gifting brand is quite loved and trusted, it's associated with nostalgia and family celebrations. But, many respondents feel it has become generic and lacks premiumness. Key improvement areas include: upgrading packaging (more aesthetic, festive, and premium), adding variety (healthier options, dark chocolate, festival editions), and offering personalization (custom packs, keepsakes). While affordability has made it accessible to masses, it has also limited its premium perception. Overall, Cadbury has strong emotional value but must innovate in packaging, product variety, and personalization to sustain its foot as a gifting brand.

Suggestions for Cadbury Celebrations (7 P's structure)

Product

- Introduce healthier variants (sugar-free, protein, dark chocolate).
- Launch festival-specific editions (e.g., Diwali, Rakhi, Christmas) with local flavors.
- Add ons (keepsakes such as diyas, candles, decor).
- Create a luxury range with premium packaging for closer/family/corporate gifting.

Price

- Keep the core range affordable to maintain mass appeal.
- Introduce tiered pricing regular packs for casual gifting, premium hampers ₹800–₹1000 for special occasions.

Place

- Strengthen presence in e-commerce and quick commerce for convenience.
- Create festival pop-up stores/kiosks in malls.
- Offer corporate bulk gifting solutions.

Promotion

- Highlight emotional connection + tradition more effectively (Cadbury as part of family celebrations).
- Promote sustainability and health-conscious options to appeal to evolving consumers.



People

- Train retail staff to recommend gifting packs during festivals.
- Partner with influencers/celebrities who symbolize family bonds.
- Build corporate sales teams to target offices & institutions, this is an untapped market.

Process

- Make personalization seamless (online customization portal is available but awareness about it is absent among consumers, hence create awareness through marketing tactics).
- Ensure eco-friendly packaging processes to build credibility.

Physical Evidence

- Attractive premium packaging (modern, festive, eco-friendly).
- In-store displays/kiosks that reflect luxury (since many responders perceive the brand as massy/generic.
- Special edition boxes that look like keepsakes, not just simple wrappers that can be discarded later.

Cadbury Celebrations enjoys strong trust and popularity in festive gifting but needs to freshen its appeal to stay ahead of competition. The brand should maintain its affordability and wide availability while introducing healthier variants, premium assortments, and festive-themed limited editions to meet evolving consumer needs. More attractive and exclusive packaging, personalization options, and stronger cultural connect in campaigns can add the missing 'wow' factor. Expanding presence in ecommerce, corporate gifting, and premium segments will allow Cadbury to balance mass appeal with premium value. By blending convenience with innovation and Indian tradition with modernity, Cadbury can strengthen its position as the preferred festive gifting brand in India.

III. Conclusion

This study explored how hedonic and utilitarian motivations influence the festive-gifting purchase of Cadbury Celebrations in Mumbai. The results show that both hedonistic and utilitarian drivers play important roles, albeit in somewhat different ways.

On the hedonic side, consumers purchase Cadbury Celebrations for enjoyment, emotional connection, and the symbolic meaning of gifting. The act of giving or receiving this festive chocolate box is perceived as creating joy, reinforcing relationships, celebrating traditions, and indulging in a pleasurable experience. Such motivations resonate strongly during festivals when the mood is celebratory and social ties are highlighted.

On the utilitarian side, practical considerations also matter. Factors such as reliable brand, convenience of purchase, appropriate size/packaging, value for money, and appropriateness for gifting occasions (rather than just self-consumption) influence the



decision. In other words, buyers are not only seeking fun and indulgence—they are also looking for a sensible gift choice that meets expectations of quality, social appropriateness and ease.

The interplay between these drivers suggests that Cadbury Celebrations occupies a hybrid role: It functions as a hedonic gift (pleasure, emotional value) but also as a utilitarian option (trusted brand, convenient choice, social-norm-fit) in the context of festive gifting. The dominance of one motive over the other may vary by consumer segment: for example, younger buyers or urban professionals may tilt more toward hedonic motives, whereas more budget-conscious or ritual-oriented buyers may emphasize utilitarian motives.

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