

Chapter 4

THE CORPORATE JEWELLERY HOUSES IN SILIGURI

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I have given an account of how the corporate jewellery houses operate in Siliguri jewellery market. We have seen in Chapter 3 that the Siliguri jewellery market was controlled by the traditional *swarnakars* for many years until the first entry of the corporate jewellery outlets in the year 2002. The corporate jewellery houses have dented the monopoly business of the traditional *swarnakars* (small and medium) by establishing their franchise and direct showrooms into their domain. Keeping in line with the objectives of the present study, I have selected three corporate jewellery houses, namely, P C Chandra Jewellers, Tanishq and M P Jewellers, for studying their modus operandi and to understand how their business conflict with the interests of the traditional business. The term “corporate jewellers” has been used in a broad sense to identify the jewellery business module, which involves a big investment of capital and operates at the national or global levels on formal terms. These houses follow a “rational” division of labour where the workers are formally recruited based on specialisation with a higher division of responsibilities among different working departments and sections. Here the working relations are maintained through a set of rules and regulations of the trade. The workers are placed in different departments and sections. Formal education up to the required standard is mandatory. The work organization is hierarchical in nature, which follows administrative order, where decisions flow from the top to the bottom and their efficiency is measured in terms of customer satisfaction. The chapter discusses (1) the entry of the jewellery house in Siliguri market, (2) the structure of three corporate jewellery houses, and (3) the modus operandi of these business houses.

4.2 The Corporate Sector in the Jewellery Trade in Siliguri

The geographical position of Siliguri has made this place very significant for trade and business in general. The North-Eastern states of India became inaccessible for the rest of the country after the partition of India in 1947. It is Siliguri and its adjoining areas that connected the rest of India with the North-East. Siliguri is the smallest corridor that acts as a bridge between the North-Eastern states and rest of India. Over the years, this

narrow terrain has developed in terms of transportation and communication and has become the hub of rail, aerial and road connectivity. Siliguri has fast developed into a business hub for a large part of North-East India. The raw consumable materials from North Bengal and the North-Eastern states of India are transported through this place. Slowly it has grown as a commercial hub and has now become the third-largest metropolitan city in West Bengal. The rapid growth of Siliguri and its adjoining areas has tempted the corporate jewellers to set up their business wings in this place to capture the North Bengal market as well as that of the North-Eastern states of India. For the last sixteen years, there has been a rapid growth of the city after the corporate brands entered the market. These corporate jewellers trade on the claim of “purity” of gold jewellery and for which they issue the necessary certificate to the customers. The growing purchasing power of the burgeoning middle-class residents and the solvent business community sustains a high jewellery demand. These three corporate houses have worked out distinct business and marketing strategies intending to expand their business.

4.2.1 A Case Study on P C Chandra Jewellery Apex Pvt Limited showroom at Hill Cart Road

P C Chandra jewellery house was set up in Kolkata some eight decades back. Late Purna Chandra Chandra (P C Chandra) founded this jewellery corporate house in 1939 in Kolkata. He started his business as a small *swarnakar* but his ambition and hard work brought him business success. Besides jewellery business, he had an interest in chemical industries, real estate, rubber plantation, hospitality, housing projects and so on. His entrepreneurship made P C Chandra a reputed corporate group in West Bengal. Now it is one of the leading business houses in Eastern India. It is one of the leading jewellery manufacturing companies in Kolkata had set up its wings in Siliguri Metropolitan area in the year 2002 under the corporate title of P C Chandra Jewellery Apex Pvt Ltd. Siliguri was the first jewellery franchise they took as an experiment to run their business outside Kolkata. They have seen a huge influx of population in North Bengal towns in recent decades and the rise of purchasing power of the people, particularly the people with a business background. They also noticed that people from Siliguri, Malda, Alipurduar, Cooch Bihar, Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, Moinaguri, and Terai region of North Bengal, and people from North-East states, especially Assam, used to

travel to Kolkata for purchasing jewellery. The franchising is based on the marketing strategies adopted by this company to enhance their business module in Siliguri city. Mr. D Majumdar, who had worked in P C Chandra jewellers as a salesman, and presently working in M P Jewellers, said that one of the middle traditional *swarnakars* from Siliguri has brought P C Chandra jewellery franchise to this place. This jewellery showroom is located at Rajani Centre, Hill Cart Road, near Meghdut Cinema Hall.

He says, *“I have heard that the franchisor has invested Rs 5 Cr to set up this franchise in Siliguri. The franchisor had his own jewellery business other than his multiple businesses. He is a big-brat hold high economic position in Siliguri. I was recruited in this company as a sales representative directly through franchisor, although I have not met him personally. P C Chandra Group did not directly recruit me, which is why when the company shifted from franchise to directly-control showroom I was ejected from P C Chandra. I have served eight years in P C Chandra.”*

The business structure of the franchise outlet of P C Chandra had different structural and functional arrangements. Structurally there were stock department, marketing department, sales department and finance department, as per Mr. Majumdar’s information. The functional aspects of the franchise were controlled by the franchisor as the franchisor has made a legal contract with P C Chandra to work hand-in-hand to split the profit between them.



Figure 4.1: Structural Aspect of Franchise

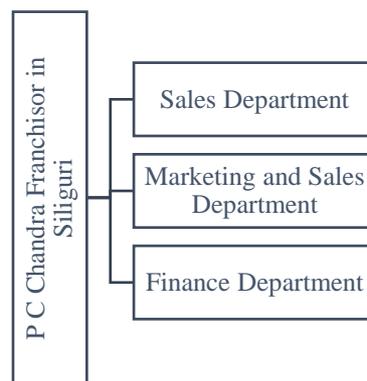


Figure 4.2: Functional aspects Franchise

The manager (named not mentioned) who temporarily came from Kolkata to monitor the upgraded jewellery showroom to a two-storey building, in August 2018, said that they have seen huge business potential in the city. The demand of the consumers had

motivated them to set up their branch in Siliguri. Initially, they looked for a franchise, for minimising the cost and risk. Now with business success, they have set up their outlet, which is controlled directly from Kolkata head office since 2017. Tasting success, the jewellery house extended its branches to other 24 towns in West Bengal and 7 cities in India. After Siliguri, they have opened branches in Malda, Cooch Behar, Raiganj and many other places. The company also exports its products to Dubai, Singapore, Turkey and the UK.

Siliguri showroom is run by the hierarchy of officials who were recruited in several specialised departments, namely Administrative Department, Finance Department, Sales Department, Advertisement Departments and Astrological Department. Each department has its departmental head to coordinate the work of all the staff and a branch manager who is in overall charge of the Siliguri showroom. The recruitment of the sales representatives was done by an interview conducted either in Siliguri office or in Kolkata head office. The qualified can apply for their specified and specialised department on their official websites. They also accept the resumes from a candidate who personally visit Siliguri jewellery showroom. The minimum qualification is graduation. The sales representatives do not need any specialization or prior training but for the positions of the departmental managers, the experienced candidates are preferred. One can find both fresh and experienced employees in the shop. After recruitment, both fresh and experienced candidates are sent to Bowbazar, Kolkata, for training. The training period is for one week or two weeks. The higher officials such as showroom manager, or departmental managers are mostly recruited from Kolkata. These officials are deputed to Siliguri showroom with specific work responsibility. Sometimes the existing employees of this showroom have to undergo training when there is a change in business model and policy or case of introduction of a new scheme. All total there are twenty-eight employees in this showroom, including a security guard and the minimum salary for a freshly recruited staff is Rupees 12000 per month. All the employees receive an annual increment in their salary. The salary also increases with the experience and with the workload.

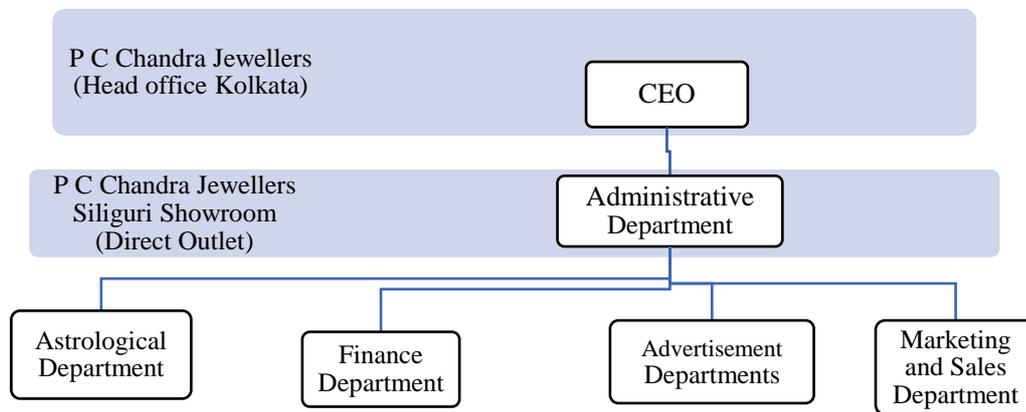


Figure 4.3 Structural and Functional Hierarchy of P C Chandra Jewellers Direct Showroom in Siliguri

The manager of the showroom claimed that the company values the *karigars* and take good care of them. He elaborated the company’s policy says, “*We have specialised karigars for making various types, designs and styles of jewellery; they make unique traditional Bengali designs, which cannot be replicated by the local jewellers. They create jewellery based on the suggestive design provided to them by our jewellery design expert. The unique skill of our craftsmen is the key to our business success. We value our karigars as most of them have worked in our workshop for several decades. For them, it is like hereditary occupation, as we prefer karigars from the families of the retiring ones. Few karigars, who do not work exclusively for our company an agreement for one year was prepared for them before joining the company to know their skills and commitment to our brand. It is one of the risks that we take when we enrolling new karigars to our company. It is the risk of stealing jewellery designs and raw materials which were given to them by our jewellery designer.*”

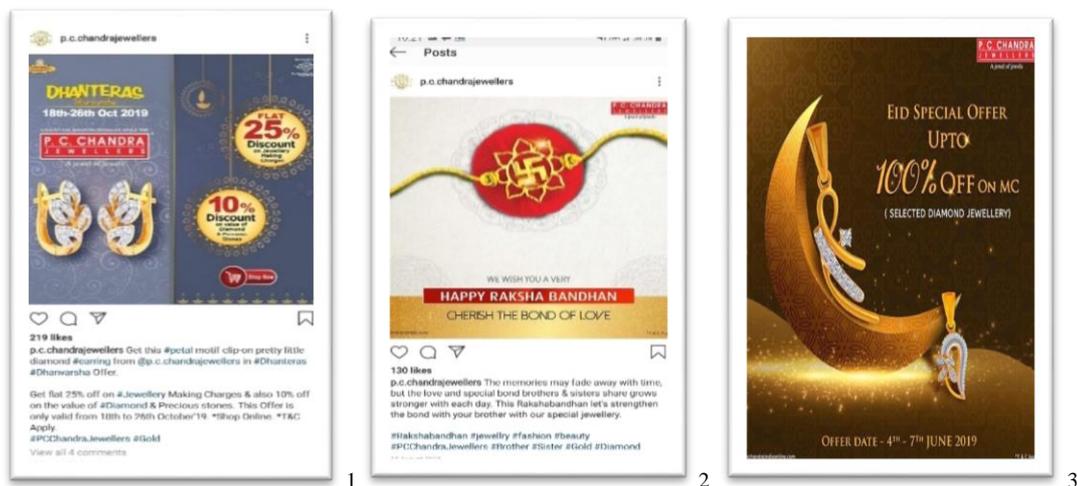
To control the risk, the company takes care of their *karigars* and employees by giving them incentives, medical and health care benefits (Employee State Insurance), bonus, and extra pay for extra work, educational loan for their children and casual leave. These are the measures taken to have greater work commitment from the workers. P C Chandra has only one jewellery-manufacturing workshop located at Bowbazar, Kolkata, from where they supply gold jewellery to their respective franchise and direct jewellery showrooms. For this reason, Siliguri showroom does not have any separate jewellery-manufacturing workshop. The showroom also does not have *karigars* to repair gold jewellery in line with the demands of the consumers. The Siliguri showroom

only collects the jewellery and sends it to its Kolkata based showroom for repair or alteration. In such cases, the consumers need to wait for twenty to thirty days to get their repaired/altered jewellery back. Since the workers do specialized work, they do not have comprehensive knowledge about how the whole business runs. The showroom managers and sales representatives lack the knowledge of the basic procedures involved in jewellery making. They are only concerned with procuring and selling jewellery at the outlet. The managers and the salespersons feel that they cannot always satisfy the customers with the kind of designs they offer because the designers do not directly correspond with the customers.

P C Chandra's marketing strategy is to promote the popularity of the brand among consumers. To achieve this and to reach out to a larger population they segregate their brand from others by investing more in marketing and advertisement. Leading film stars such as Deepika Padukone, Sonakshi Sinha and Yami Gautam feature as brand ambassadors in the advertisement projects of P C Chandra. All the corporate jewellery houses go for aggressive and expensive advertisements as a marketing strategy. Expensive advertisements bear the testimony of the good health of the company and add to the brand value of its products. Companies in competition exhibit their power in the world of advertisement as well. The growth of the business depends on the perceptions of regular consumers regarding the brand. Consumers' perceptions are based on factors like the availability of offers, unique traditional designs, lightweight jewellery, intricate artwork, which add unique value to the jewellery. The company makes various offers and promotions during festive seasons such as *Dhanterus*, *Rath Jatra*, *Sharad Upohar*, *Rakhi*, *Akshaya Tritiya*, *Teez* and so on, to ignite buying passion in the consumers.

Their marketing strategies vary with the seasons, occasions, festivals and the need of the consumers such as birthday, rice-eating ceremony, valentine's day, friendship day turning money into gold jewellery. They capitalise on *Dhanterus*, *Durga Puja*, *Diwali*, *Akshaya Tritiya*, *Eid-ul-Fitr*, *Raksha Bandhan* or *Rakhi*, because these festivals draw consumers towards purchasing of gold jewellery in Siliguri. Giving seasonal discounts is their primary objectives to splurge the consumer. They target working-women and teenagers of the upper class and upper-middle class to exhibit jewellery as a fashion statement during occasions and festive season other than investment. Lightweight

jewellery has become a new trend in metropolitan cities like Siliguri, and this is the primary marketing strategy of P C Chandra to reach out to the consumers at every nook and corner of Siliguri through attractive advertisements. The company offers discounts in jewellery making charges, offers attractive cashback on purchase over a specified amount and gives gifts to the premium customers (the frequent buyers or those who purchase exclusive jewellery). Besides putting up big billboards in at important city points, the company gives advertisements in regular columns in local print media (*Ananda Bazar Patrika, Uttar Banga Sambadh, The Telegraph, Sananda, Ananda Mela, Bartaman* and so on) and Local Broadcast media (CCN and Local Radio Channel).



Picture 4.1: Promotional Ads for Dhanteras, Raksha Bandhan on Instagram and Eid on Facebook

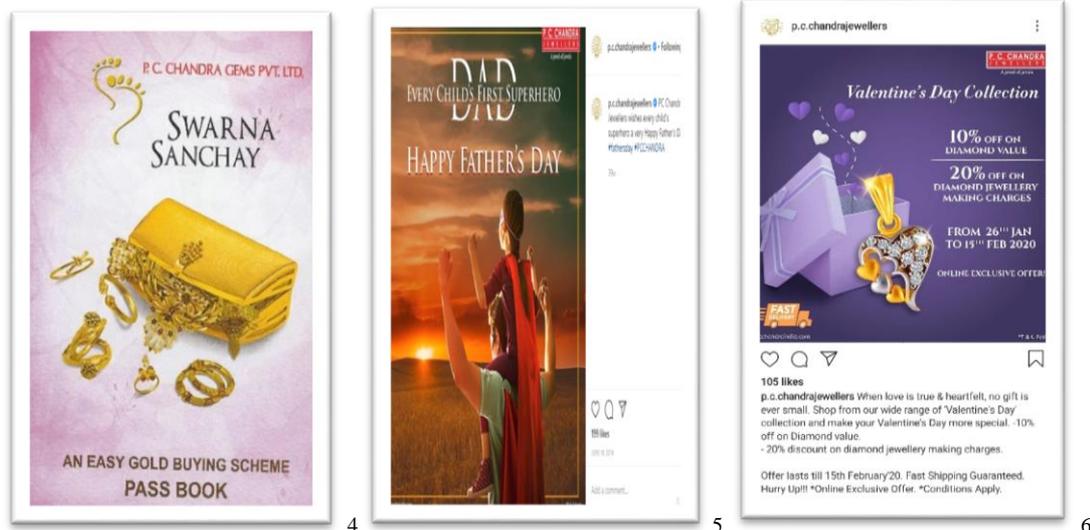
P C Chandra Jewellers in most of the advertisements showcase wedding jewelleryes. Recently, in 2017 ads, they portrayed Bengali women’s wedding to non-Indian groom, which portrayed the acceptance of inter-community marriage, in this contemporary society. They have always been highlighting the Bengali Culture of Kolkata in association with the wedding gold jewellery. The respondent of my study (name not

¹ P C Chandra Jewellers Dhanteras Dhanvarsha, Retrieved October 26,2019 (https://www.instagram.com/p/B3v_uHIIZYB)

² P C Chandra Jewellers Happy Raksha Bandhan, Retrieved August 15, 2019 (https://www.instagram.com/p/B1L_xPSAY-h/)

³ P C Chandra Jewellers, Eid Special Offer, Retrieved June 7, 2019 (<https://zh-cn.facebook.com/pcchandrajewellersindia/photos/shine-like-the-moon-in-a-world-of-stars-celebrate-eid-by-adorning-yourself-in-th/1951802961591691/>)

mentioned) said that their *karigars* are specialised in works as they are continuing this occupation for several generations. P C Chandra has always enjoyed a higher brand value among the Bengalis as they are known to provide exclusive Bengali Traditional jewellery designs even in their modern contemporary jewellery designs. They have expertise in the art of incorporating traditional touch to the jewellery art form that has proven to attract the Bengali consumers to cherish the presence of an authentic art form in the jewellery, they adorn. In every advertisement, they celebrate the pure and unbreakable relationship between the parents and daughters by portraying the purity of bond is equivalent to the purity of gold. Here, this company also tries to highlight the inter-community marriage without moving away from their tradition of uplifting Bengali traditional wedding jewellery advertisement. Keeping in mind the dominating use of internet in the lives of common people, this company has put up excellent marketing strategies by advertising on popular internet sites. Regularly efforts are made to reach out to the customers through telephone calls, via messages, emails, Instagram and Facebook messages. The company has started an online store where they display an exclusive range of gold, diamond, silver as well as gemstone jewellery. As they provide certified and genuine jewellery product to the online buyers which made purchasing of jewellery convenient for the consumers in any parts of India. For the company, the direct contact method is considered the surest and safest method to be in personal contact with the consumers. Sometimes P C Chandra gives offers on certain materials such as “20 per cent discount on diamond jewellery and lifetime exchange on Diamond Stone”—said one of the sale representatives of P C Chandra Jewellers. When the gold price rises, they offer monthly Gold investment schemes named *Swarna Sanchay* where the consumer can invest in gold jewellery. The tag line for the advertisement of the scheme, *Swarna Sanchay—An Easy Gold Buying Scheme* is “*You pay 12 instalments, we will pay the 13th*”. The mode of payment is made through either cheque or pay order or demand draft by visiting a nearby showroom or by registered post acknowledgement due and through courier. When the payment is done through registered post or courier then it must be ensured that it reaches within the date of submission. The consumers also feel happy being personally contacted by the company, said the Manager.



Picture 4.2: P C Chandra Advertisements and Promotional Offers

P C Chandra gives promotional offers such as *Rath Yatra Golden Offer* (14th–22nd July 2018), *Swarna Mrigaya* (20th–24th June 2018), *The Rajo* (3rd–18th June 2018), *A Rakhi to Remember* (29th–7th August 2018), *Sharad Upohar* (15th–7th October 2018) and so on. Other than these festive days and seasons, they try to promote their business by introducing *free service week* in which one gets new jewellery in exchange to an old piece. Under the banner *Celebrate women every day* they encouraged people to share their stories on their social platform via online pamphlets to promote feminism like the way they have done for Rani Rampals, Hina Das and Santha Kumari. To congratulate an Indian-American economist, Abhijit Vinayak Banerjee on their social platform for receiving Nobel Prize they introduced the banner *India is Proud Again: Golden Victory*, and also celebrated Youth Day, Father’s Day and so on.

The salespersons often develop an informal relationship with the customers, which help the latter to feel secure and confident in purchasing jewellery. The performance-bonus given to the salespersons motivates them to put extra efforts to attract the customers and enhance the sales in Siliguri showroom. It is interesting to note that the company

⁴ P C Chandra, Swarna Sanchay: An Easy Gold Buying Scheme Pass Book, Retrieved June 16, 2019 (<https://www.facebook.com/PcchandraJewellersDelhiBranch/photos/swarna-sanchay-an-easy-gold-buying-scheme/237608656341079/>)

⁵ P C Chandra Jewellers, Every Child's First Superhero: Happy Father's Day. Retrieved June 16, 2019 (<https://www.instagram.com/p/BywiN-dADcS/>)

⁶ P C Chandra Jewellers, Valentine's Day Collection, Retrieved February 9, 2019 (<https://www.instagram.com/p/B8VTC75h1vu/>)

head office is in Kolkata but the company works out different strategies for different branches spread all over the country in line with the local culture and consumer preference. Another business and marketing strategy of the company is to use 'hallmarking of jewellery'. The jewellery buyers are driven by the fear that they would be cheated with jewellery made of impure gold. As hallmarking is a symbol or certificate of purity, thus P C Chandra promotes "Certification of hallmark jewellery".

One saleswoman said: "All yellow colour jewellery is not 22 karat gold, where is the guarantee of purity? The guarantee of purity is provided by our company in terms of the quantity of gold used in jewellery. P C Chandra is offering online exclusive 14 karat gold jewellery starts from Rs 1884, 10 karat gold jewellery on Amazea Collection starts from Rs 2853, 14 karat and 18 karat Gold jewellery on Diamond Collection starts from Rs 6526, 14 karat and 22 karat gold jewellery on Little Jewels starts from Rs 1884, 22 karat Gold jewellery on Mugdhaa Collection starts from Rs 28575 and 22 karat gold Jewellery on Goldlites Collection starts from Rs 3755."

In these ways, the big jewellery houses take advantage of the situation since the small traders cannot afford to offer hallmark certified jewellery as the small traders could not afford to travel to Kolkata to procure this since it requires extra expenditure and administrative hassles. Until 2018, the big traders, with their social capital and connections in Kolkata, utilized these schemes and hallmark jewellery to drive the Siliguri consumers towards their showroom. For this reason, one can see a movement of the customers from small traders to corporate jewellery sectors.

Another business strategy that P C Chandra has incorporated in providing a platform for the astrologer to connect to their customers who believe in astrological prediction and positive energy of gemstone. The demand for astrology and astrological jewellery is rooted in Indian tradition. It is a kind of spiritual narcissism that study human future in a scientific calculation. The connection between the astrological stone and astrological birth chart has its roots in the ancient Vedic society. Since then, people are continuing the Vedic mode of astrological calculation for understanding and predicting the future of the people, said by one of the astrologers of P C Chandra. Interesting to know that it is a subject where prediction comes true and the measures to keep prediction stronger, gemstone plays a positive role in it. Thus, wearing jewellery with

colourful gems not only beautifies the body but also plays a significant role in bringing good fortune to the wearer after adorning the right choice of gems. Astrological gems are measured in *Ratti* (unit/weight to measure the authenticity of the gemstone) and the process of wearing gems is done with the help of an Astrologer. Getting a skilled astrologer for future prediction is a challenging task. P C Chandra has made astrologer available in their showroom to target the consumers at a wider level as jewellery made up of gems will multiply the beauty of the jewellery because of its shapes and colour. Sometimes, a gemstone was identified lucky because it relied upon peoples' Zodiac/Sun Sign. By hitting up the psychological curiosity to know about the future, the company has opened the Astrological department in Siliguri showrooms where three astrologers were selected based on an interview held in Kolkata.

One of the saleswomen, a gemstone expert (Mrs. P Mahato) said three astrologers are recruited based on a selection process where they have to qualify the written exam followed by interview conducted by the P C Chandra group team members and renowned Indian astrologer/*Guru*. The need for the government-registered astrologer is high so four days a week these three astrologers visit this Siliguri showroom. A trust automatically builds among the customers to believe these qualified astrologers. They can predict health, career, family life, marriage, education and social relations of people so that they can assume to protect or uplift people's life from illness or any difficulties. They prescribe gemstone as a remedy to get rid of difficulties or any problem of life. They provide psychological as well as spiritual strength to the listener. Rupees 300 is charged per visit. As there is a higher demand of astrologer in Siliguri so P C Chandra has made the availability of astrologers in Siliguri showroom for four days a week and this has benefitted P C Chandra because customers are flowing to their shop. Bringing new customers to the showroom is a difficult task and this strategy has hit the psychology of the people to consult an astrologer at times of personal uncertainty.

Mrs Mahato says, *"mostly it is the subjective belief of the people on astrologers that they can provide some personal advice to make the present unpleasant situation better"*.

This popularity in astrological belief has built a communication strategy by steering the customer to visit their showroom. These have made easy inflow of customers to their showroom. Even the company emphasise on the high-quality jewellery and astrological

stones so it became easy for the customers to verify the authenticity of the prescribed gemstones with the astrologer and would get certified gemstone if they buy astrological stone from the company.



Picture 4.3: Promotional Offers on Grohoratna Jewellery, Astrological Consultation and Astral Products.

However, they do not compel the customer to purchase astrological stone from their showroom. P C Chandra has recruited a gemmologist, named Mr. A Choudhury (a certified professional appraiser and a salesman), enrolled at Kolkata showroom and got transferred to Siliguri showroom, two years back. He is the person who is capable of grading and evaluating astrological stones. He says that a jewellery company need to understand the gems stones for satisfying consumer requirement by constructing a belief that it is the ultimate solution for all forms of problems. As the whole world depends on the belief and people come to visit astrologer as they want to know about their life, future desires and it connects themselves with spirituality, what Max Weber says as “enchantment” that connects sensible people with otherworldliness. The cost of the astrological stone they trade depends on per ‘Ratti’ weight of the stone. For example, the cost of yellow sapphire per Ratti is ₹10000. This yellow colour gemstone has a high aesthetic value and it is an alternative for a diamond, said Mrs P Mahato. The cost of the gemstone depends on its yellow hues and its clarity. These two factors have made customers prefer to purchase astrological gemstones from them. From birth

⁷ P C Chandra Jewellers Grohoratna Offers, Retrieved on December 18, 2019 (<https://www.instagram.com/p/B54INxpA3fl/>)

to marriage, major life decisions like *Namkaran Sanskar* to matching horoscopes for marriage are taken following the planetary situation in an individual's horoscope with suitable gemstones being suggested to ensure safety from ill effects of planets. Sometimes, they gave discounts on gemstones.

While interviewing one of the astrologers of P C Chandra, the interviewee stated that P C Chandra is a huge platform for him. His recruitment is done based on an interview. An astrologer who holds a professional government degree in astrology with a minimum of four years of work experience and who is willing to travel to other showroom gets selected in this company. He has owned his chamber at *Behala* but as he walked inside P C Chandra, he hardly gets time for his chamber. He says that the brand name of the company has made him popular in his field. Customers from a different class, caste and religion visit him. Even, People from Bangladesh visits him quite regularly and people from Germany, Sweden and Canada consult him through emails before venturing into new projects.

P C Chandra Jewellers was the pioneer in introducing hallmark jewellery in Siliguri market. The concept of hallmark jewellery struck the chord with the consumers since it was the symbol of purity of gold. Soon it overtook the market of KDM jewellery and compelled the local jewellers to go for hallmarking of their jewellery. P C Chandra Jewellers had an upper hand over the local traditional jewellers when it comes to attracting the rich crowd of Siliguri. There was a shift of the consumers towards hallmarking of jewellery that was witnessed for the last five years. It took time for the local jewellers to store hallmark jewellery, while the other corporate jewellers entered the Siliguri market after a few years of this company. Therefore, this was the golden period for P C Chandra jewellers to deepen their roots in Siliguri market. It attracted those consumers who earlier used to go to Kolkata for buying jewellery. They have also added a section on trendy low-cost jewellery for not so well-off consumers. In a way, P C Chandra brought about a major transformation in the perception of jewellery trade and it also caused a shift of a section of middle-class consumers from the traditional small-scale jewellers (*swarnakars*).

The strength of the company is the traditional Bengali design jewellery and its strong brand image across India. As this is a family-owned business, the company has the

experience and knowledge of consumer expectation, jewellery market trend and the business module. It offers separate jewellery options for women, men, and children. P C Chandra primarily targets the women who prefer to buy traditional designs jewellery embedded in gold rather than diamond. They also have gold jewellery studded with gems and they promote different coloured stones in gold jewellery in different traditional styles, modern styles and *meenakari* styles. Siliguri's P C Chandra targets the Bengali upper-middle-class and upper-class women, and store ornaments to meet their means and taste. It offers jewellery for every possible social and cultural event, which attract a wide range of buyers. The manager of the Hill Cart Road showroom claimed: *"Our brand name is everything. We do not have to give much effort to target and retain the consumers. It is the trust of the consumers, built over the years, which is our biggest asset"*.

After P C Chandra Jewellers some other corporate jewellery houses have opened their outlets in Siliguri yet the company does not feel insecure or feel competition with them because it is comfortably and securely placed in the heart of Siliguri market. It has an efficient group of employees, many of whom are local graduates. The employees are sent to jewellery outlets in other parts of the country for training and experience. The employees are given promotions in terms of designation and salary increment based on their experience and skills. P C Chandra has set up its franchise in other countries as well. The company offers an opportunity for customers to exchange their old jewellery for new ones. The customers exchange their old jewellery to keep up with the latest fashions. As the company focuses mostly on Bengali style jewellery but the young generation loves experiments with various contemporary mixed designs, which sometimes make it a challenge for the company to keep up with the changing expectations of changing times. In Siliguri, one of the biggest challenges is to cater to the Nepali community as they prefer 24 karat gold jewellery which is not easily found in any shop. The Nepali customers prefer designs, which are to some extent different from those preferred by the Bengali customers. One can thus see some culture-specific variations in jewellery demands. Culture is one of the drivers for domestic demand for gold as it is a part of a tradition. As the company also loves experimentation, it has recently put up a small silver jewellery counter inside their Siliguri showroom. It is found that P C Chandra Jewellers recently has started displaying light gold jewellery for kids and adolescents. They are putting words, as "Kids also feels good" after

wearing gold jewellery. This reflects that they are targeting the emotional and sentimental value of parents to raise their standard of living after their children wear simple designed lightweight gold jewellery regularly. When promotional offers come P C Chandra do advertise their products as a central aesthetic for continuing culture and tradition of the Bengali community.

4.2.2 A Case Study of Tanishq Jewellery Showroom at Sevoke Road

Tanishq is the leading corporate jewellery brand in India, which is a division of Titan Industry Limited; a company-sponsored by the Tata Group, whose headquarter is in Bangalore, Karnataka. They started making jewellery watches and jewelleries in 1994, under Titan. In 1995, Titan launched a brand name as Tanishq for launching jewellery and had challenged the family of local jewellers, by setting up a production unit in Hosur, Tamil Nadu. The factory spread over 135,000 sq. ft. The company was formed to arrange jewellery and jewellery watches for European and American market and to grab the domestic market of India.

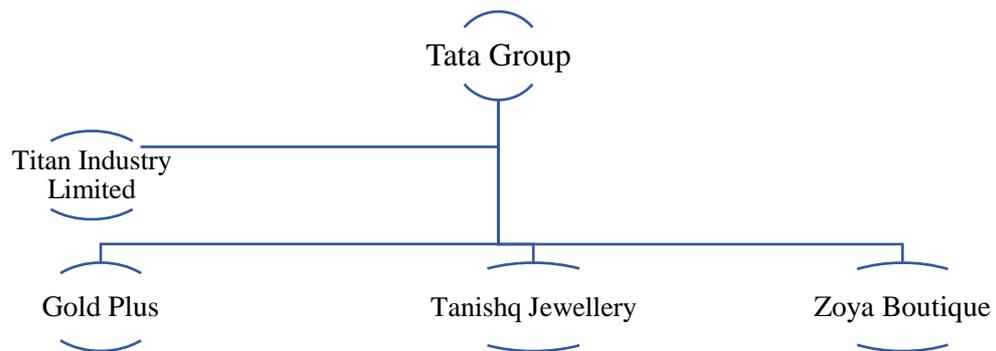


Figure 4.4 Location of Tanishq Jewellery under Tata Group

The TOPSEL Pvt. Limited, who is the business partner of the Titan Industry Limited, launches Siliguri Tanishq showroom. This group has opened the showroom at Sevoke road, opposite Payel Cinema Hall, in September 2003 and had captured the Siliguri market by spreading awareness to the public related to the purity in gold jewellery, which can be judge through the *karatmeter*.

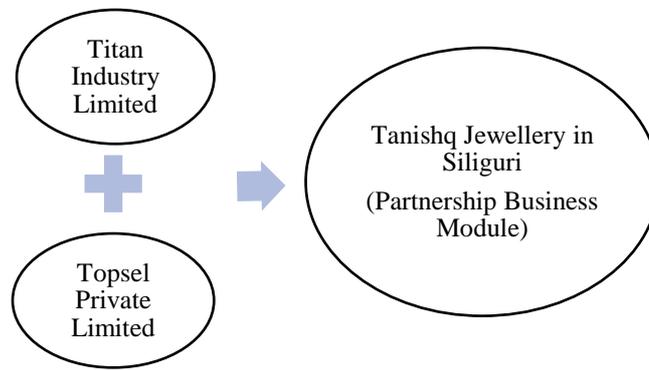


Figure 4.5 Structure of Partnership Business Tanishq

Karatmeter is a mechanical device first introduced by Tanishq where the consumer can measure the purity of gold in a non-destructive manner. Their jewellery styles and designs are mostly based on contemporary with a little tint of tradition is found in design that makes their jewellery unique. They provide 22 karat gold jewellery, having a wide range of coloured gems and gold jewellery studded with diamond jewellery. On an interview with the acting Manager (name not mentioned) says that the managers who have a greater knowledge of gold and retail management through studies run this showroom. The other managers and the working staffs are hierarchically placed depending upon their workload. Sales representatives, who directly contact with the customers, are not the direct members of Tata group or from the Titan Pvt Ltd; rather they were recruited from Topsel Pvt Ltd, which is situated in Matigara, Siliguri. In the year 2003, six employees including peon and gatekeeper have started working in this showroom and at present, there are eighteen employees employed as sales representatives to deal with the Siliguri consumers.

The Recruitment Department of Topsel Pvt Ltd Company does the recruitment of the employees. They recruit sales representatives with a minimum qualification of graduation with or without any experience in jewellery selling but the preference was given to those who have completed a Post-Graduation in sales with internship experience than the newer candidates. After recruitment, the new employees need to go for special training programmes conducted by the Tanishq before working in the showroom. The company follows this constant protocol before placing the new employee to their company. A strict functional hierarchy is maintained by the Tanishq where people are placed in a vertical position to look after Tanishq Store in Siliguri where the information flow from top to down to the Store Manager and Retail Sales

Officer. It is observed that the employees of Siliguri Tanishq with a chain of command follow a centralised structure where the employees are going to work on the command of Tanishq Store Manager. The store manager is responsible for formulating business strategies to retain consumers, manage the financial updates of the store, take care of employees' health and safety, respond to consumers' demands and queries, and manages the whole Tanishq store. Retail Sales Manager is the person who handles the jewellery sales, checks on the activities of the sales representatives, and builds a cordial relationship among the sales representatives to deal with consumers. He is the person who studies the market trend of Siliguri jewellery market and reports to the Regional Manager/ Area Business Manager when they visit the showroom for inspections thrice a month.



Figure 4.6: Organisation Chart of Siliguri Tanishq Jewellery

Tanishq has both written and unwritten rules and regulations that prescribed how all the employee should approach their consumers and interact with their colleagues. Their interactions are mainly based on impersonal relations where the employees are related to each other only through work. It is found that a tentative salary for the acting manager is ₹35,000 per month and other employees get minimum ₹12,000 per month. Apart from the fixed monthly salary, the salesperson receives incentives based on the number of jewellery he or she sells. It has also been observed that recently Siliguri Tanishq has recruited a local karigar (who has received his training from Hosur), for instant jewellery polishing to the consumer for free.

The Tanishq showroom in Siliguri is larger having twelve counters for separate jewellery products and the interior decoration highlights the exquisiteness of the working environment. The major role of this showroom is to sell the products so the sales professionals of the Tanishq showroom lack information about manufacturing, designing of jewellery products and are unaware of the business strategies of the Tanishq. Their task is to display the jewellery, take care of the consumers' priority, and maintain the consumers' files. They have good communication skills and have a deeper knowledge of the authenticity and certification of the product. They patiently listen to the consumers' desire for purchasing jewellery before showing them their jewellery collection and after getting an idea about their choices and tastes of jewellery, they guide them in selecting the product, the customers wish to buy. As the store manager responsibility is to supervise the workers, administer the financial aspect of the business (to keep a track on sales and jewellery schemes), and to keep a detailed track of consumers on the computer; for this reason, the store manager should be computer literate and should have the capacity of managing consumers. In short, Tanishq Jewellery showroom sells the finished jewellery products to the consumers that are procured from the Tanishq factory situated in Hosur, Tamil Nadu, by Carrying and Forwarding Agent (CFA) who works under the Tonsel Pvt Ltd.

Tonsel Pvt. Ltd manages the network between the jewellery production unit (situated at Hosur) and the retailing unit (Siliguri Tanishq showroom), where the product is carried through Carrying and Forwarding Agent of Tonsel Company. The Area Business Manager of West Bengal, Regional Manager of North Bengal and Eastern India keep a track on the product availability in the respective Tanishq showrooms. Siliguri Tanishq follows certain business operandi—firstly, they promote the brand image by highlighting the entry of a global brand to a small place, as to make Siliguri consumers feel the accessibility to the world-class jewellery. Secondly, as it has the largest certified diamond retail outlet in the country, they try to generate a feeling of being privilege among the Siliguri consumers that they can access their Nationalised Jewellery brand for post-sales service, as it is not available to other cities. For example, consumers purchasing jewellery at Bangalore Outlet can now get the post-sales service at Siliguri. This feeling gives consumers the confidence of trust in this brand and, thirdly the most important strategy is to emphasise on the certification of purity of gold through their *karatmeter*. They always try to know about the consumer preference for

purchasing jewellery, provides offers and discount on the jewellery products and jewellery making charges, have arranged an instant free repair and polishing of jewellery for the registered consumer.

Targeting and maintaining consumer satisfaction is the primary aim of the market strategies of Tanishq business are concerned only with consumers. Being a structurally hierarchical organisation, Tanishq strives for professionalism and excellence in the development of management. Their marketing strategies are based on National Promotion of their Brand Image, Pricing of the Jewellery and building a Client Relationship with the jewellery consumers. National Promotions of Brand Image is done through advertisements in local newspapers in *Ananda Bazar Patrika, Uttar Banga Sangbad, Dainik Jagaran, The Statesman* and *The Telegraph*; and hoardings within Siliguri city. Their aim is to provides satisfaction to consumers before purchasing any products. They provide pure gold (99.99% of purity of the gold) as gold coins and gold bars; and, on the other side, they provide 22 karat gold (91.6% of pure gold mixed with alloy) in jewellery which is called *gold plain*. Along with this, they also provide the *Studded product* of 18-karat gold (75% of pure gold mixed with alloy, silver and copper) for diamond jewellery, and the platinum as well as silver coins. Tanishq never compromises with the purity even while making of lightweight jewellery. For lightweight gold jewellery, they provide 22 karats of certified gold and 18 karats of gold in diamond jewellery. When asked about the reason for the variation in karats of gold in gold jewellery and diamond jewellery, the manager (name not mentioned) said, *“Diamond is hard stone and gold is a soft metal. To hold the diamond with gold, 18-karat gold is required where alloy, zinc is mix with gold to make the substance hard to hold it. For these reasons all the diamond jewellery is made up of 18 karats or lesser gold.”* Moreover, Tanishq being a nationalised corporate jewellery outlet always try to maintain the purity of the gold as well as diamond jewellery. Even they were the first jewellery company to launch pan-India jewellery retailing in the 1990s for keeping a record of authentic customers purchasing jewellery over ₹ 1 lakh. At present, the amount increased to ₹ 2 lakhs in purchasing jewellery.

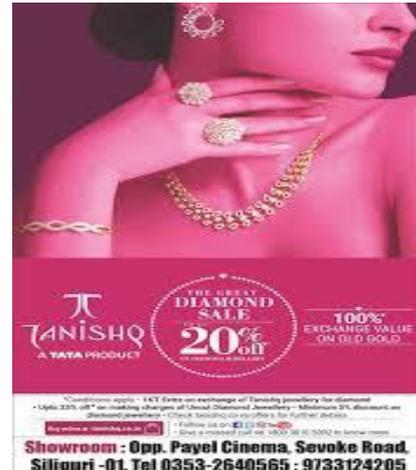
Pricing of the jewellery products depends on the occasions where they provide offers on jewellery making charges and discounts on gold/diamond jewelleryes. Their strategy is to engage the consumers all over the season by advertising wedding jewellery during

wedding seasons; jewellery for special occasions, at the time of festivals (Dhanterus, Akshaya Tritiya, Lakshmi Puja, Diwali etc.), for everyday wearing jewellery (simple and lightweight), diamond jewellery, gems stones jewellery with Kundan and solitaire. As Siliguri is a melting pot of different cultures so Tanishq is planning to keep all forms of jewellery in Siliguri Tanishq showrooms. At the same time, one of the fortes of Tanishq is to make heavyweight jewellery due to the higher demand for such products in South and North India during the marriage seasons. These forms of jewellery target only the affluent section of society. Similarly, in Siliguri, it could cater to the desires of only a hand full of affluent families and so the company stocked their store with lightweight diamond jewellery in the year 2006 as a fashion collection for young generations and for middle-class Siliguri people who can get access to Tanishq diamond collections at affordable price. Tanishq has also promoted a new collection of jewellery based on this location, by setting up their store with North Indian style and contemporary form of jewellery. After opening up their showroom, they realised the importance of Bengali design jewellery, which had made them incorporate Bengali style jewellery into their jewellery collection along with South Indian and North Indian Jewellery. This Bengali design jewellery collection ranges from low weight jewellery to traditional Bengali wedding jewellery, like *shakha badhano*, *pola badhano*, *lohabadhano* so on. Side by side, to reach out to the consumers by giving discounts and promotional offers as *Valentine Special Offers*, *The Great Diamond Sale*, *Plain Gold Jewellery* and *Shop Exclusively Jewellery*. These ways promote new collections of jewellery based on consumer choice and demands.

As claimed by the sales representative, “*we deliver what we promise to the consumers when it comes to karat, weight, design, fashion and trend for both traditional and contemporary jewellery.*”

Furthermore, to elevate their brand name they use social media for communicating with customers through Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitters and on their official website. They urge the consumers to visit their showroom in every occasions and festival through their advertisement. Picture 4.4 demonstrates the *Rivaah* collection for Bengali bride—a path to advertising Bengali designed jewellery in hoarding, newspaper ads or in social media. This reflects that the marketing strategy of the retail–sales manager of this showroom has realised the locational value of jewellery demand

in Siliguri. Despite this, Siliguri Tanishq showroom also stored community-specific wedding jewellery collections for Bihari, Marwari, Muslim communities.



Picture 4.4: Bengali design Wedding Jewellery

Picture 4.5: Discount on Diamond Jewellery

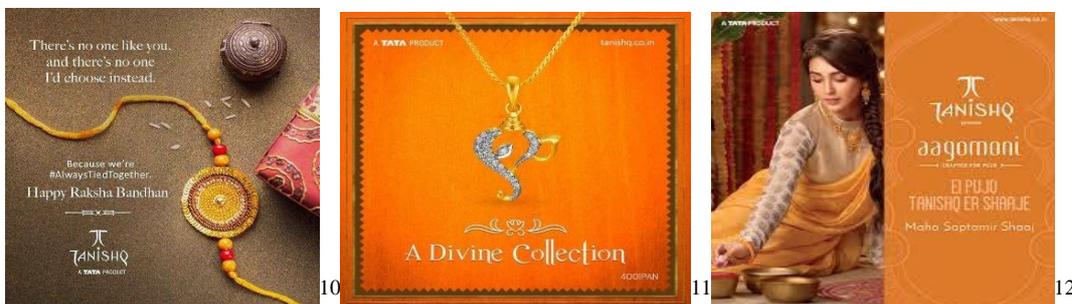
One of the salespeople says that diamond and contemporary wedding collection are mainly for the Christian community and to those who prefer only diamond jewellery. Other than these, while visiting Tanishq website, one can get the wedding collections of Bihari bride, Contemporary bride, Diamond bride, Gujrathi bride, Kannada bride, Malayali bride, Marathi bride, Marwari bride, the Muslim bride, Oria bride, Punjabi bride, Rajasthani Bride, Sikh bride, Tamil Bride and Telugu bride. These show that Tanishq is trying to generate a social relationship with various consumers having a different ethnic background to enhance their brand name. It was also observed that Tanishq has made Deepika Padukone as its brand ambassador to create a positive image among the mind of the viewer. We can also find Mimi Chakroborty, Bengali actor promoting Bengali style and designed jewellery during Bengali festive seasons. Picture 4.5 shows that they are providing discounts on diamond jewellery and offers 100 per cent exchanging value on gold jewellery. This type of promotional offers drives the

⁸ Siliguri Times Advertisement in Facebook, Tanishq, Retrieved on November 27, 2019 (<https://www.facebook.com/siliguritimes/posts/tanishq-presents-wedding-offer-exchange-old-gold-at-zero-loss-get-upto-25-off-on/2591671547565671/>)

⁹ Siliguri Times Advertisement in Facebook, Tanishq, Retrieved on November 27, 2019 (<https://www.facebook.com/siliguritimes/posts/tanishq-showroom-opp-payel-cinema-sevok-road-siligurioffer-valid-upto-16th-septe/2450512568348237/>)

consumer to visit their nearby showroom to alter their old jewellery with a new one or to exchange old jewellery to make certified branded jewellery.

Tanishq has been the forerunner of dissemination knowledge about the quality of jewellery products to the consumers where the consumers are not only buying Tanishq jewellery for the status symbol but also as a good investment. It has targeted urban independent women from Upper Class and Upper-middle Class to opt for Tanishq Jewellery. Therefore, the company tries to build a connexion with the diversified consumers in Siliguri where they promote religious symbolic jewellery in festive seasons for increasing their sales. For example, celebrating Diwali, Raksha Bandhan, Akshaya Tritiya, Eid etc.



Picture 4.6 Three photos indicate promotional offers and celebration of festivals

Titan has merged Gold Plus with Tanishq Jewellery for easy accessibility for the jewellery consumers (locally or regionally) who cater to purchase traditional design gold jewellery. This Gold Plus has provided lucrative options to the consumers with purity certificate to those customers who can buy 22 karats of gold jewellery, 18 karat gold jewellery and platinum Gold Plus jewellery. The company also benefited the consumers by arranging two types of jewellery purchased schemes—*Tanishq Golden Harvest Scheme* and *Swarnanidhi*. *Tanishq Golden Harvest Scheme* is a scheme where consumers have to pay instalments for 10 months. Therefore, for opening an account for *Tanishq Golden Harvest* scheme, a consumer has to visit nearby Tanishq showrooms by carrying their Identity Proof (at least Adhaar Card and PAN Card with

¹⁰Tanishq Happy Raksha Bandhan, Retrieved on August 26, 2018 (<https://www.instagram.com/p/Bm75Zy2ng5O/>)

¹¹Tanishq A Divine Collection, Retrieved on September 18, 2018 (<https://www.instagram.com/p/BnngES0j1KY/>)

¹² Tanishq Aagomoni. Retrieved September 16, 2017 (<https://www.instagram.com/p/BZF5pSPAU4f/>)

photos). After an account has been opened, the consumers had to pay the rest of the instalments by cash, card, online-transaction, Automated Clearing House payment method, or through a Post-Dated Cheques. *Swarnanidhi* Scheme starts from the 1st Jan of every year (first instalment), and the second instalment will be on 15th Feb of the year. The process will carry upto the last eight month that is August of that year. The date of redemption will be on 1st of September of that respective year by measuring the total grams of gold the consumer had to pay for the last eight months. These Schemes mainly target the business class people who can easily plan to save themselves from Income Tax deduction and it helps to reach out to middle-class population who can become be a part of Brand user by using these schemes. Next, for retaining consumers to their shop, they maintain the personal record of the consumers after selling jewellery so that they can communicate with their consumers by keeping a track on customers birthday/anniversary for giving a surprise telephonic calls/messages in a such a way that the consumers sometimes falls on the trap by investing on these schemes.

One of my respondents named, Mrs. S Mitra, aged 46, said “*On my birthday Tanishq made a personal phone call to me. After wishing, they insisted on visiting their store as they were offering price discounts on jewellery on her birthday. Coincidentally I was passing by the area at the time I received the call so I attempted to explore the offer made by them. To my utmost surprise, I was welcomed with a birthday cake by the Tanishq team. I was delighted by this gesture and I felt so special. Although I knew the special treatment is because of my purchases over lakhs of rupees, at the same time, I was touched by this surprise! This will alter my decision making in my next jewellery purchased.*” This way they try to build a relationship with the consumers.

The company promotes more in a social and cultural event, especially on wedding jewellery and by promoting a sub-brand named ‘Mia Collection’ for daily use for working women and the youth. With the increase in working women, people began to visit more to Tanishq for purchasing diamond jewellery. These working people have increased the sale because impulsive buying is a new trend observed among them for purchasing jewellery.

Mrs. S Mitra, says, “*Being economically independent, I have my own choice to choose what I want from myself. I prefer to wear modern designed diamond jewellery and*

traditional designed gold jewellery. I purchase jewellery from Tanishq for its Nationalised Brand name and adornment but not for investment.”

Side by side, to know about the consumer's perception towards their brand and product, they have to survey the consumers after purchasing the products. This survey is to monitor the consumer's background, repetition of consumers to their shops, and about consumers' view on their products and services. It also helps them to know about consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction after purchasing their jewellery so that they can overcome the peeve areas for retaining the consumers. Packaging of the jewellery products provided by the Tanishq ranges from different size of boxes to accommodate varieties of jewellery, decorative carrying bag and colourful ribbons/tissues are kept inside the bag that fascinates the consumers. Even the jewellery boxes were made of wood and plastic. Embossed traditional jewellery boxes were given to the premium customers who purchase high price jewellery from their store. The packaging of jewellery depends on the amount of jewellery purchased by the consumer.

Tanishq capitalises on digital social media by joining hands with Carat Lane to recraft their jewellery according to the consumer needs to create a strong essence of promoting their brand that should reach to the consumers. The growth rate of Tanishq is tentatively 22 per cent in the year 2011-2012 when the gold price was high and the economy of the country was going slow. However, the company took its subsidiary business by launching Carat Lane, which has given the highest national turnover of about 42 per cent in the financial year 2018–2019, said by the manager. He says that Carat Lane has pulled many consumers from middle-class and upper-middle-class to buy this lightweight jewellery. As the fluctuation in gold price does not hamper their growth rate of the company because their company depends on the purchasing power of the affluent sections of the society who do not get affected with the fluctuation of gold price. Due to these reasons, the company advertise on every possible socio-cultural occasion in Siliguri. The strength of Tanishq is to keep a hold on the consumer's trust on the purity of jewellery they provide, make available of exclusive traditional/contemporary jewellery design to their showroom and by building a strong communication strategy with their customers. Moreover, they keep on planning for bringing different forms of jewellery in Siliguri showroom that their customers wish. They mainly target those groups of consumers who hold elite positions (Class situation

by Weber) such as businessperson, doctors, and professors. In short, all the elite categories of the peoples are the consumers of Tanishq showrooms. Weakness felt by Siliguri Tanishq is that they were unable to cope up with the jewellery of Bengali traditional designs that P C Chandra Jewellers, Senco Gold and Diamond Jewellery, Anjali Jewellers and traditional swarnakars in Siliguri provide. Other than designs, they are unable to make lightweight gold jewellery and instant repair of jewellery that traditional jewellers easily provide to the consumers. They have opened job opportunities to young men and women as sales representative having minimum educational qualification as Graduates. Even they have recruited karigars from Siliguri (as mentioned above). They feel challenges in running their franchise in Siliguri rather they feel P C Chandra Jewellers, Reliance Jewellery, Senco Gold and Diamond Jewellery, Swarnashuk and P C jewellers as their competitors because after coming up of several corporate jewellers the consumers get divided among these showrooms. Although M P jewellery showroom is beside Tanishq showroom, still they do not take them as competitors.

4.2.3 A Case Study on M P Jewellers & Co Private Limited Showroom at Sevoke Road

The journey of M P Jewellers has started as a corporate hub in Kolkata in the year 2005. The business has evolved to become a corporate jewellery house from a different background .i.e. the background of Gemologist. Mr Phanindra Bikash Roy Chandra has established his business in the year 1945 to study the gems, their formation, and compositions where he used to associate it with the study of astrology. His business was all about this but he had a passion for setting up a jewellery business along with their selling of gems stones jewellery and reading astrology. His immense contribution in the field of astrology and willingness in establishing a brand known for precious gemstone has made him set up MP Jewellers & Co as a jewellery corporate house at Gariahaat, in Kolkata. His elder son named Biplabankur was a renowned astrologer in Bengal, who has continued his father's passion and profession till date. In the year 2008, M P Jewellers has extended its showroom at Sevoke Road, Siliguri, with the dream of capturing the North Bengal jewellery market as the demand for gold jewellery is sky-scraping in North Bengal. Siliguri consumers have too much affinity for gold jewellery, especially the Bengali community. They have observed that Bengalis have a strong

faith in astrology and belief in the remedies connected to wearing gemstone jewellery. This faith has pushed Siliguri consumers to visit the M P Jewellers in Kolkata for buying authorized gemstone jewellery from their store, at Gariahaat. This is one of the reasons that pulled the company to set up their direct jewellery showroom in Siliguri. The second reason is that the people from Siliguri, Malda, Birpara, Alipurduar, Cooch Bihar, Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Moinaguri from North Bengal occasionally visited their Kolkata showroom for purchasing jewellery and astrological jewellery. They got a positive response from these areas, which led them to set up their direct showroom in Siliguri, as this is the junction of all these areas. Mr D Karmakar, a sales representative at their Siliguri showroom has said that astrology and prescribing gemstones to their customers was the family tradition of M P Jewellers so his elder son named Biplabankur is specialised in astrology and was the first person to participate in an astrological conference in 1972. Then the manager said, *“this jewellery house started their journey from a small jewellery workshop where they used to manufacture the astrological jewellery”*.

The progress in trade reflects when the company expanded its branches in adjacent areas in Kolkata till 2004. In 2005, they have registered their jewellery house into a corporate setup for extending their trade inside and outside the West Bengal. For acquiring a corporate brand name, the company had share invested a limited amount in the jewellery share market, said by Mr. D Majumdar. Due to this, the company has modified the name from ‘MP Jewellers & Co.’ to ‘MP Jewellers & Co Private Limited’. The manager of the direct Siliguri showroom, named Mr Shibanku Roy Chowdhury, said that the company has gathered compassion from their customers for their translucence in jewellery products. Within this few years, this corporate jewellery house has spread its wings outside West Bengal such as Assam, Delhi, Haryana, Meghalaya and Tripura. In total, they have 32 jewellery showrooms all over India and 13 jewellery showrooms in West Bengal. Furthermore, it has prospered in the gems and jewellery industry in West Bengal, Assam and Tripura show that the company targets the places where the culture of Bengali community prevails.

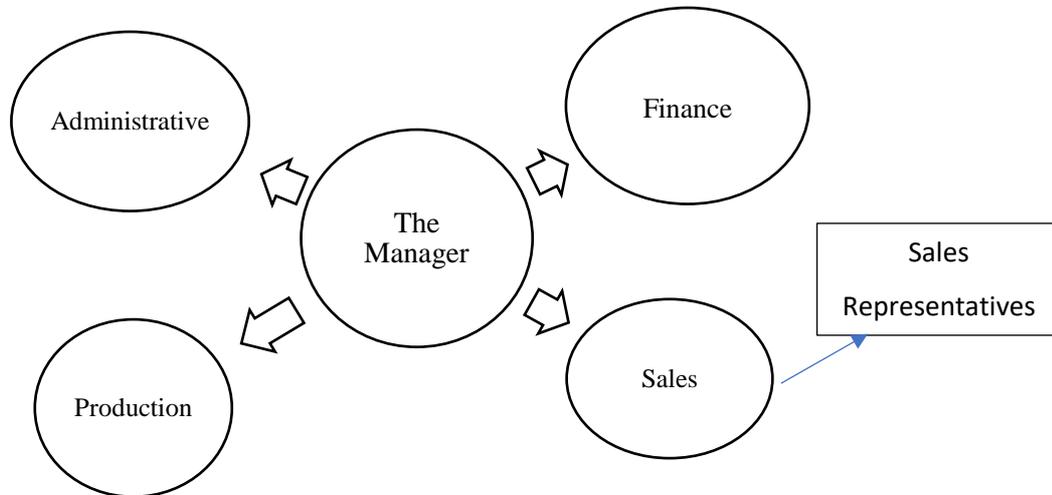


Figure 4.7: Organisational Structure of M P Jewellers Siliguri

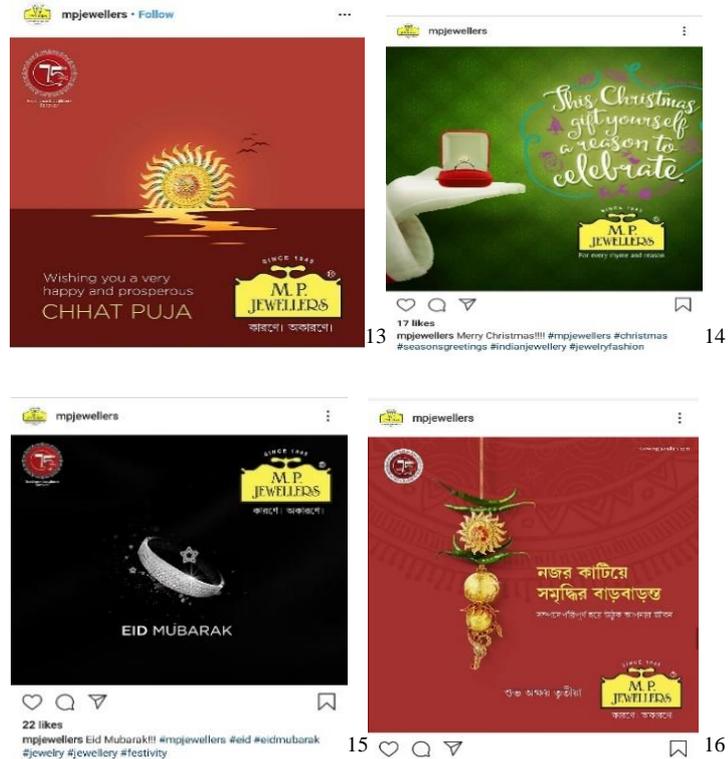
Siliguri M P Jewellers showroom is controlled by the chains of commands over various levels from their head office, Kolkata. The managers of Siliguri showrooms and the manager at the Kolkata head office share the responsibilities efficiently to run their business. The manager of this showroom said, he is the only person to take care of finance, sales and production. In total, fourteen employees are working in Siliguri showrooms. The recruitment of the salespersons was done through an interview conducted either at Siliguri office or at Kolkata head office. The competent candidates can also apply for their specified and specialised department by visiting and submitting their resumes to Siliguri jewellery showroom manager. The minimum qualification required for any department/post should be a certified Bachelor Degree holder. They prefer to recruit a fresh candidate for the post of a salesperson with an experienced candidate in the shop. The salary for the fresh candidate is ₹ 10000 per month but the salary increases in terms of incentives based on the profit margin earned by the showroom. There is a loyalty bonus given to the sales representative who shows more sales per month than the other. It is also found that every year the salary increases by 5 per cent to 10 per cent depending on the nature of work like maintaining the customers' record, cooperation among the employees and completed the sales target. It is observed that all the salespersons feel privileged to be a part of this company because the workload is shared and distributed equally among the employees. All the employees are informally connected with each other. The manager said that all the employees are entitled to twenty-four Casual Leave and few emergency Personal Leave annually.

One of the sales representatives of M P Jewellers said, *“This is the best part of this jewellery showroom. The manager is so good and understanding who grants leaves to us without any hesitation. This unguarded nature of him has increased my loyalty in working in this supportive environment. We employees take very limited casual leave whenever we need it because if we save the casual leave then at the end of the year we receive a certain amount at the end of the year, which is calculated by the number casual leaves left multiplied by the per-day salary of that employee. So I don’t take unnecessarily casual leave.”*

The overall wellbeing of the employees is the major concern taken the company because without the employee's company would not survive. The company ensures freedom of speech, good working environment, provide family time and importantly they conduct a regular health checkup for every employee including a security guard and gatekeeper. The company also provides ESI health treatment card to all of their employees and creating an Employment Provident Fund account was mandatory for employees. This indicates that M P Jewellers consciously invest in retaining their employees. Thus, an employee retention strategy was their business strategy along with retaining the customer. The growth of the business solely depends on central marketing which is regulated by the company head office so the Siliguri marketing manager does not have to go for any additional efforts for a separate advertisement for Siliguri showroom. Their growth of the business solely depends on the central marketing the employees of the Siliguri showroom have less additional efforts to put their ideas on marketing and promoting companies uniquely in Siliguri city. Thus, their major role at the outlet is to sell the jewellery and to rely on referral consumers to reach out to the wider network.

Their marketing strategies is to convince the consumer to cherry-pick M P Jewellers as they provide heavy look light-weight gold jewellery. The company proposes various offers and discounts to boost consumers’ urge in the acquiring of jewellery during festive seasons. Their marketing strategy is to publicize their brand during occasions and festivals. All these advertisements (Picture 4.7) in forms of digital pamphlet manages to target the sentiments of each community to their respective cultural roots to make them feel less cultural competence and to make their brand universality in

managing the market. Thus, we can find a celebration of Chhatpuja for Bihari Community, Christmas for Christian community, Eid Festival for Muslim community and Akshaya Tiritiya for Bengali/Hindu Community.



Picture 4.7: Ads on Social Media (Instagram) on various occasions to lure the consumers towards their brand

It reflects the cognitive perspective of the company to hit the sentiments of all the communities to feel the same importance and recognition to lure them to purchase gold jewellery from their brand. Their way of managing the showroom is to manipulate the consumers through advertisement and also take feedback from the customers to know their views on their jewellery products and behaviour of the employees and the promotional offers they provide. Taking account of consumers' insights is an important

¹³ M P Jewellers Chhat Puja, Retrieved on November 30, 2019 (<https://www.instagram.com/p/B4XF1R5g1xp/>)

¹⁴ M P Jewellers This Christmas gift yourself a reason to celebrate, Retrieved on December 25, 2016 (<https://www.instagram.com/p/BOb7DiajpHw/>)

¹⁵ M P Jewellers EID Mubarak, Retrieved on November 30, 2019 (<https://www.instagram.com/p/ByUcVuEgGWs/>)

¹⁶ M P Jewellers Wishing Everyone Akshay Tithia, Retrieved on May 7, 2019 (<https://www.instagram.com/p/BxJzu9XHUvC/>)

factor for understanding the consumer aspirations related to jewellery when they provide offers to them. Usually, it has become a tradition to provide promotional offers during *Dhanterus*, *Diwali*, *Rakhi*, *Akshaya Tritiya*, *Chhat Puja*, *Teez*, *Eid* etc. Based on the consumers' aspiration, the manager proposes various offers even in unseasonable days.

Their main purpose is to get hold of middle-class and lower-middle-class consumers who visit small *swarnakars'* shops and those who hesitate to visit the corporate jewellers. Their marketing strategies depend on the advertising of trendy gold and diamond jewellery and heavy look lightweight wedding traditional design jewellery. Advertisement is done in form of printed media in local newspapers (*Ananda Bazar Patrika* and *The Telegraph*) and magazines, local as well as national broadcast media (television) and through network media where they communicate their consumers with a constant update of their new collection in form of telephone calls, message, Facebook and Instagram. A short-term sales promotion offer gift coupon to the consumers encourages to purchase jewellery from their showroom. Along with these, M P Jewellers brings new young faces as their brand ambassador, which allows new models to promote their working capability with Corporate Brands. They believe in direct marketing to preserve their consumer where they update their promotions through phone calls, short message service and emails to their registered customers in a hope to fetch new consumers to their showroom. Other than these, they create awareness to the consumers to go for 'hallmarking of jewellery'.

Before the introduction of GST, the company had few jewellery schemes. After that, they have discontinued their monthly scheme in Siliguri. One of the respondents (name not mentioned) working in the respective showroom said that it became an extra burden to continue the gold scheme as it was difficult to maintain customer's account. They only 'offer on price' as discounts schemes on respective wedding months and festive seasons. Packing of jewellery appeals the consumer to visit the showroom for gifting purpose. They use spongy plastic colourful boxes for different shapes and styles of jewellery placed inside a paper bag. M P jewellers do not give much importance to the packaging of the products but the consumers are fond of their packaging. Their manufacturing unit is in Kolkata, near Bowbazar, from where they receive jewellery products and astrological jewellery to their showroom. Like P C Chandra Jewellers, M

P Jewellers also offers Astrologers at their showroom for their consumers who believe in astrology and astrological gemstone. They termed it as 'Special Service for Customer'. It is found that only one astrologer is appointment to Siliguri showroom for one day at the last week of each month. The customers need to take a prior appointment by visiting the Showroom as he have to travel from Kolkata to Siliguri. Mr G Sarkar, a sales representative of M P jewellers, says that if the number of candidates is more than seven then the astrologer visits their showroom, otherwise the customer can get the service through online consultation with the astrologer. The consultation fee of the astrologer is ₹ 250/-.

The strength of M P Jeweller is the specialised technique in making lightweight wedding jewellery. This helps the middle and lower-middle-class consumers to opt for low weight hallmark branded exclusive design at an affordable price. They provide certified astrological jewellery to the consumers. An appropriate division of work to maintain the major departments like finance, production and sales do not exist in Siliguri showroom, which is the weakness for M P Jewellers in Siliguri where the manager himself is single-handedly looking after all the departments in an informal organised manner. The Siliguri jewellery market is highly competitive in terms of cultural trend and consumer preference. The retailing sector of traditional *swarnakars* (like Ratna Bhandar, Bidhan Jewellery, Diamond and Silver Jewellery in Siliguri, Raj Jewellers) offer products at the highly competitive manner and has developed their business to compete with a corporate big brand like them.

The manager said, *"Tanishq and P C Chandra is our competitors, as they operate in larger business volumes nationally and internationally, supported by larger sections of investors and other financial resources compared to us, that makes them possible to provide opportunities to the consumers by providing discounts and buy-back offers"*

Retaining the consumer is the focus of every company. They compete to retain their customers based on factors like pricing of the jewellery, after-sale service and quality of the jewellery. If they do not compete then it would decrease their market share, which will adversely affect their company. Competition with the competitors is based on the measures taken by the company to sustain its consumers. Subjective discounts offered by the competitors sometimes affect their marketing strategy where they were bound to

reduce the price to sustain the consumers. Sometimes in this way, they face challenges to cope up with the other bigger branded corporate jewellers in Siliguri. So, the company has taken a measure to target the Nepali population residing in Siliguri, Darjeeling and its adjacent hill areas for increasing their jewellery sales. Then again, as they do not have any jewellery-manufacturing unit in Siliguri so the customers need to wait for twenty to thirty days to receive their repaired jewellery, which comes from Kolkata manufacturing units.

4.3 Underpinning Factors for the Growth of P C Chandra, Tanishq and M P Jewellers in Siliguri

In the corporate jewellery business, various departments are involved with various responsibilities to maintain the functioning of the network of jewellery outlets. P C Chandra Jewellers and M P Jewellers have started their business as a traditional *swaranakar* (merely a small jewellery shop) and have developed their business nationally. Their transition and struggle to reach this place has its long history, which is not in the case for Tanishq. The natures of these corporate jewellery businesses in Siliguri are of three forms that are direct showrooms, franchise showrooms and partnership showroom where each corporate business model focuses on the fulfilment of consumers demand to make their jewellery products available to the customers. It is an easy method for the corporate jewellers to go for a franchise when they are unable to spread out their business to a distant location. They decide to take a chance by communicating with the mediator who can set up their business to that outreached location. This mediator opens the franchise for a while in a form of contract, which benefits both of them. The responsibilities are share that makes the Head Office had lesser pressure in maintaining the Brand Image and increasing the reach. This type of business is more common in bigger corporate brands. It is observed that P C Chandra jewellery showroom and Tanishq has expanded its business in Siliguri through a franchise/partnership method. For P C Chandra Jewellers, after the completion of the contract of a franchise in the year 2016, they have expanded their franchise showroom into direct showroom because it is much easier for the administration of the direct showroom. On the contrary, M P Jewellers from the very beginning had set up their chain of business in the form of the direct showroom. Whether direct/franchise/partnership jewellery showroom, the gold jewellery has to be procured from the production unit, which is generally far away from the retailing outlets. This

involves many specialised departments that are working in a synchronised way to provide the consumers with a hassle-free experience. Tanishq has its production unit at Hosur in Karnataka, similarly, P C Chandra Jewellers has it at Bowbazar in Kolkata and M P Jewellers has its production unit at Gariahaat in Kolkata. To achieve this target, M P Jewellers and later on P C Chandra Jewellers directly took the responsibility to monitor the Siliguri showroom from their head office. The finished jewellery products were sent from the production unit to every jewellery showroom that the corporate company has set up in various states and localities. This brings similarity in the structure of the business of the aforesaid corporate jewellery brands where direct showrooms have some relationship with the production unit and the management system rather than franchise. P C Chandra is more organisationally and empathically connect with the employees and customers.

The relationship between the production unit and Siliguri Corporate Jewellery Showrooms are based on their respective Carrying and Forwarding agent. For Tanishq, the Titan Company has its agency for transporting the jewellery products to their respective state and locality. As the production unit of the Tanishq is located too far compared to P C Chandra Jewellers and M P Jewellers, so they take one and a half months for after-sell service. Whereas the other two jewellery showrooms take 25 to 30 days for after-sell service. The production managers of these showrooms keep a track on every jewellery that is sold from the jewellery showroom. To enhance Tanishq's business they used "shop-to shop" concept to sell their jewellery to the other jewellery retailers. It has distributed their jewellery products to the consumers with a less distribution cost and has captured the consumer market before opening Tanishq showroom directly or by a franchise with a huge cost and business risk.

The marketing strategies of the corporate jewellers depend on the employees engaged in running and maintaining their workload for the smooth functioning of the jewellery business. This jewellery business is run in the form of direct and franchise jewellery showrooms. All the three corporate jewellery showrooms—P C Chandra Jewellers, Tanishq and M P Jewellers—have their marketing managers who play an integral part of their respective business for promoting and maintaining a network of relations with the jewellery consumers and the Siliguri Jewellery market. The production unit of Tanishq located at Hosur offers the purity of the gold jewellery that is measure through

karatmeter, which is readily available at the Siliguri showroom. Their jewellery styles and designs are very contemporary with a little tint of tradition in design that makes their jewellery unique. They provide 22 karat gold jewellery, having a wide range of coloured gems and gold jewellery studded with diamond jewellery. It becomes easier for the Siliguri consumer to judge the purity of gold in a non-destructive manner with the help of that mechanical device. This keeps them ahead of the other two corporate jewellers because the consumers can directly judge the quality of gold through *Tanishq karatmeter*, which is equivalent to BIS Hallmark but they do not provide any certification of BIS 'hallmark' jewellery to the consumers. The first jewellery house promises the quality and purity of all forms of jewellery in the name of their brand 'Tanishq'. This one loophole for not providing BIS Hallmark jewellery may lead to a backdrop of the growth of the company. On the other hand, the other two jewellers provide Certification of BIS Hallmarked Gold and Diamond jewellery and Certified Astrological Jewellery.

Another factor for the growth of the company depends on the price of gold jewellery. It is the crucial factor that influences the purchasing habit of the consumers for its volatile nature of gold price, which is determined by the international gold exchange rate. This fluctuate price of gold constitute a second important part of the marketing strategy. These corporate jewellers play tricks by luring the consumer by giving discounts on certain purchases, gifts on a certain amount of purchase, discount on making charges and giving warranty on the products. P C Chandra Jewellers provide more offers and discounts on gold price to the consumers compared to Tanishq and M P Jewellers. For the convenient of the consumer, the corporate jewellers have introduced tagging the weight of the jewellery with the price printed on it. This has made it easy for both the consumers and salespersons to calculate the present rate of gold jewellery.

The third factor is the location of the showroom and its easy accessibility. It determines the hub of the gold jewellery product from where the gold jewellery products are distributed to their respective showrooms and shops. Besides, from another aspect how the consumer receives gold jewellery from the production place. This dissemination of the readymade gold/diamond/silver/astrological jewellery from the jewellery-manufacturing hub of the respective jewellery showrooms takes a crucial part in

maintaining and spreading their business nation-wide. These corporate jewellery showrooms have to deal with the transportation cost, the security of the product, coverage of the product and the location of the product to be sent to various outlets. Location or the Place of the showroom decides the consumer preference towards the varieties of jewellery. With the help of the consumer's preference and tastes, the marketing manager and the human resource manager of the showroom inform their jewellery manufacturing hub to manufacture those types of jewellery, which is mostly preferred by the consumer. For example, both P C Chandra Jewellers and M P Jewellers, whose manufacturing units are located in Kolkata, West Bengal, therefore, the pattern, design, style and types of jewellers are manufactured by keeping in the mind that Bengali consumers are going to wear it. The target consumers are Bengalis for the P C Chandra Jewellers and M P Jewellers compared to Tanishq. Tanishq has recently (nine years back) started introducing Bengali styles, designed and types of jewellery in their Siliguri showrooms because the majority of the consumers residing in Siliguri are Bengalis. Tanishq and M P Jewellers are planning to keep Nepali gold jewellery to their showrooms so that they can target the Nepali consumers who are residing in Siliguri, Darjeeling and in neighbouring the hills. The accessibility to the outlet plays a crucial role in planning for brand promotion.

Lastly, promotional value is the central aspect of every marketing strategy of corporate jewellers and an underpinning sector for company's growth. The corporate jewellers will plan various means to keep in contact with the jewellery consumers. These various means are advertisements, exchange offers, discounts, and celebrating auspicious days like birthday or anniversary; reduce in making a charge of the jewellery, lucky draw, and gifts. Tanishq, P C Chandra Jewellers and M P Jewellers do advertise similarly by introducing their respective brand ambassadors. Advertisement is an important ingredient for promotional and marketing strategy for capturing the gold jewellery market in Siliguri. The Marxist cultural theory emphasised on production and consumption of the cultural artefacts where material objects are the central things of aesthetics. Jewellery is considered a cultural product so when it is promoted through advertisement in television, newspaper, hoardings, magazines and brochures reproduced societal sense of aesthetics, which is artificial (fetish). Through this, they help to change the mind-set of the consumers to purchase jewellery because the targeted consumers are women who are obsessed with the beauty care and social status regime.

It is found that P C Chandra Jewellers recently has started displaying lightweight gold jewellery for kids and adolescents. They are putting words, as “Kids also feels good” after wearing gold jewellery. This reflects that they are targeting the emotional and sentimental value of parents to raise their standard of living after their children wear simple designed lightweight gold jewellery regularly. Along with this, the underneath meaning of the advertisements also targets sectional consumers who feel depressed about their beauty. We have noticed that Tanishq, M P Jewellers and P C Chandra Jewellers have de-constructed the regular notion of the concept of beauty. Therefore, the commodity, the jewellery, the brand name all together enhanced the social status of the women. Side by side, the brand ambassador takes part in promoting their brands by luring the consumer psychology to recall the jewellery product they have noticed an advertisement. If I say Tanishq, presently, Deepika Padukone, the Bollywood diva is the brand ambassador of Titan Tanishq, Kriti Kharbanda, a Bollywood actress, has signed for P C Chandra Jewellers and M P Jewellers brings new young faces as their brand ambassador. Tanishq does not give prior advertisement as promotional offers the way P C Chandra provides for the consumers. M P Jewellers provides less promotional offers compared to Tanishq and P C Chandra Jewellers. These give an idea about the marketing strategies the corporate jewellers adopt for luring the consumers to purchase jewellery from them.

After all, the employees who are working in their respective direct showrooms or franchise jewellery showrooms apply these marketing strategies for sustaining and for the development of the nationwide jewellery business. Some form of pyramid structure maintains every showroom where the authority is going to coordinate all the factors to maintain the business. Side by side, in marketing the main target group is the consumers. These salesmen or saleswomen play their active role in retaining their consumers by giving promotional offers; or in case promotional offers are not available, during those time the employees suggest the consumers come forward for the upcoming offers which they were planning to provide for the consumers. Sometimes, they give promotional calls and promotional messages for promotional offers to consumers who have visited their showrooms ones.

4.3 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter helps in understanding the mutual existence of the first three major corporate jewellery houses who have captured the Siliguri jewellery market, which was predominantly run by the traditional *swarnakars*. P C Chandra Jewellery Pvt Limited Company is the first had entered into Siliguri market in the year 2002, followed by Tanishq in 2003 and M P Jewellers in 2005. Their entry has changed the nature of jewellery trade and structure of Siliguri jewellery market because it is observed that over the last two decades, they have changed the perceptions of the Siliguri consumer while purchasing jewellery.

Firstly, the root cause for underpinning their growth in Siliguri is the recent exposure and demand of machine-made jewellery among the consumers, which the traditional *swarnakars* are unable to replicate. The huge influx of people from North East and North Bengal to the P C Chandra Jewellers and M P Jewellers located in Kolkata invited them to provide their product directly to Siliguri market. The TOPSEL Pvt Limited realised a huge prospect in Siliguri jewellery trade market who has brought the Tanishq jewellery showroom in Siliguri. Tanishq being a nationalised brand has captivated the consumers by promoting their brand image in the mind of the consumers and by spreading awareness regarding the Certified Hallmark Jewellery to them. The dominating factor for the growth of Tanishq Brand is the Karatmeter by which the consumers can judge the purity of gold in a non-invasive manner. Siliguri is a multicultural city that has made a way for the affluent business traders to convert their black money into white money by purchasing gold jewellery and this is one of the reasons for the exponential growth of the corporate jewellers. These corporate jewellers help in providing quality gold jewellery with the certificate to the consumers willing to converting their black money into gold investment.

Secondly, it is found that specialised departmental managers maintain the structure of P C Chandra Jewellers and Tanishq but a single manager who looks after all the departments runs the structure of the M P Jeweller. It is clear that although M P Jeweller shares a big name among the popular Jewellery brand in West Bengal except their business structure is very much unorganised.

Thirdly, the network between the production unit and jewellery showrooms is maintained by carrying and forwarding unit of each corporate houses but none of the corporate showrooms has a proper knowledge about the nature and structure of production unit and the types of jewellery, the production unit send to their showroom for retailing. Interestingly, when asked to the M P Jeweller manager regarding the carrying and forwarding unit, he was unable to comprehend the concept.

Fourthly, the main marketing strategy of the three corporate showrooms is to change the mind-set of the Siliguri consumer regarding the purity of gold, certification of gold and use of branded jewellery as a way of status-enhancement. Both P C Chandra Jewellers and Tanishq follow a similar path to lure the consumer that is through advertisement and promotional offers in a very frequent manner. It acts as a reinforcement and reminder to the consumers regarding their presence in the market, but on the other side M P Jewellers are confined to their promotional offers, which are not as frequent as a counterpart and depend mostly on retaining the consumers.

Lastly, they are utilizing the concept of marketing in a product, price, place and promotion in their business to expand their corporate jewellery trade. Apart from the benefit gained by the corporate brands and the consumers, there is also one section of the society, which is getting mutually benefitted because of the business structure of these brands. They are the unemployed youth who are constantly looking for jobs. They get an opportunity to support their family.