

A STUDY ON BRAND PREFERENCE TOWARDS SOFTDRINKS PRODUCTS AT TIRUPATTUR



B.Vasanthi, M.Com., M.Phil., M.B.A., B.Ed., SET (Commerce)

*Head & Assistant Professor, PG Department of Commerce
Marudhar Kesari Jain College for Women, Vaniyambadi, Vellore District*

Dr.M.Senthilraj, M.Com., M.B.A., MSW., M.Ed., M.Phil(Com)., M.Phil (Edu)., Ph.D., D.Litt.,

*Research Supervisor, PG & Research Department of Commerce
Principal, Marudhar Kesari Jain College for Women, Vaniyambadi, Vellore District*

Abstract

Brand preference is strongly linked to brand choice that can influence the consumer decision making and activate brand purchase. "Brand Preferences can be defined as the subjective, conscious and behavioural tendencies which influence consumer's predisposition toward a brand". Understanding the brand preferences of consumers' will dictate the most suitable and successful Marketing Strategies. One of the

indicators of the strength of a brand in the hearts and minds of customers, brand preference represents which brands are preferred under assumptions of equality in price and availability. Measures of brand preference attempt to quantify the impact of marketing activities in the hearts and minds of customers and potential customers. Higher brand preference usually indicates more revenues (sales) and profit, also making it an indicator of company financial performance.

Introduction

Marketing is the science of meeting the needs of a customer by providing valuable products to customers by utilizing the expertise of the organization, at same time, to achieve organizational goals. According to the American marketing. Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and process for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large. This definition, it is important to realize that the customer can be an individual user, a company, or several people who contribute to the purchasing decision. The product can be hard good, a service, or even an idea -anything that would provide some value to the person who provides an exchange. An exchange is most often thought of as money, but could be an individual or nonprofit organization.

Classical marketing is often described in terms of the four "P's, which are:

- Product-what goods or services are offered to customers
- Promotion-how the producer communicates the value of its products
- Price-the value of the exchange between the customer and producer
- Placement-how the product is delivered to the customer.

A complete analysis of these categories is often called the marketing mix. More detail on these categories can be found in the later entry on the marketing plan.

Marketing has both inbound and outbound activities. Inbound actives largely center on discovering the needs and wants of the potential customers is called market. Categorizing these needs in to groups is called segmentation. Organizing markets in to segments allows a producer to more logically decide how to best provide value to that group of potential customers. The analysis

of market segment needs; analysis of existing sales and profitability; the descriptions, design and introduction of new products; and the analysis of competitor offerings are also inbound activities that are important but not often seen by the public. Outbound activities include all aspects of informing the market that a product is available, delivering that product, and encouraging the purchase decision. These activities include advertising, promotion, supply chain, sales support, product training, and customer support. To the public, the most common interaction with marketing is where it touches the discipline of sales in the form of advertising. This interaction leads to common misconception that marketing is only this aspect of promotion.

Brand occupies space in the perception of the consumer and is what results from the totality of what the consumers takes in to consideration before making a purchase decision.

Brands identify the source or maker of a product and allow consumers-either individuals or organization to assign responsibility to a particular manufacture or distributor. Consumer may evaluate the identical product differently depending on how it is branded. Consumers learn about brands through past experiences with the product and its marketing program. They find out which brands satisfy their needs and which ones do not. As consumers lives becomes more complicated, rushed and time. Starved, the ability of a brand to simplify decision making and reduce risk is invaluable.

Importance of the Study

Brands can signals, a certain level of quality, so that satisfied buyers can easily choose the product again. Brand loyalty provides predictability and security of demand for the firm and creates barriers to entry that make it difficult for other firms to enter the market. Loyalty also can translate in to a willingness to pay a high price - often 20 to 25 percent more. Although competitors may easily duplicate manufacturing processes and product designs, they cannot easily match lasting impressions in the minds of individuals and organizations from years of marketing activity and product experience. In this sense, branding can be seen as a powerful means to secure to a competitive advantage.

Objectives

The study is made on soft Drinks customers to understand how they make purchase and to know their post -purchase preference. The specific objectives are:

1. To study the brand preference of soft drinks.
2. To study the source information or brand awareness among the respondents
3. To identify the various factors influencing the purchase of soft drinks
4. To study the level of satisfaction among the users.

Hypothesis

H₀ There is no significant relationship between the Area and Gender of the Soft Drinks Users.

H₀ There is no significant relationship between Monthly Income of Soft Drink Users and Quantity of the Soft Drinks used.

Research Design and Methodology

The following methodology is adopted for the purpose of the study.

Sample Design

The main study centers round the consumers having considered the indefinite universe on the time of the disposal of the researcher, it was decided at adopt the convenient sampling technique, the sample selected was 100 consumers.

Research Instruments

The study is based on primary data; a questionnaire is used in their study. The questions were based on the objectives of the study and were finalized after making preliminary discussion with concerned people.

Collection of Data

The researcher had a simulating experience in collecting data. Most of the consumer do not come out openly. The researcher had to use all tactics to get information from the consumers, most of the consumer had some reservation in their mind and they did not come out openly. However within these limitation the researcher tried her best to collect maximum information.

Analysis of Data

The data collected were arranged in a proper sequence and then these were tabulated. The primary data collected through schedule were analyzed to highlight all aspects of the study. The researcher has applied the following analysis, they are

- Tables
- Diagrams
- Percentage analysis
- Chi-square analysis

Review of Literature

Donnelly (1995) said intensity of colour and the flavours are the key drivers behind consumer acceptance of soft drinks. But packaging and labeling are not as important for winning over consumers, according to findings published in the journal Food Quality and preference. The study involved consumers at different stages of development and highlights the importance of adopting a “sensory marketing approach,” said the researchers from French research organization Adiant the University of Rennes,” companies need to continuously innovate to maintain market leadership,” wrote the researchers.” When the market is overloaded the challenge consists in creating innovative products able to attract and satisfy consumers”. This experiment showed the feasibility of the proposed multi-sensory design method based on mixed qualitative and quantitative approaches.” The study also demonstrates the importance of flavor and colour selection for new products. The global flavours market was valued at some US\$18bn in 2006 (Business insights). Meanwhile, the value of the international colourings market was estimated at around \$1.15bn in 2010, up 2.5% from \$1.07bn in 2007, according to Leatherhead food international (LFI). Natural colours now make up 31 per cent of the colourings market. Compared with 40 percent for synthetics according to LFI.

Adiant, Beverly (1998) said that the relative contributions of taste and health considerations on consumer liking and purchase intent of cola drink. Eight types of commercial cola drinks were evaluated by 305 adult consumers who also completed a brief questionnaire on food habits. Data were analyzed using factor analysis. These data suggest that in spite of current concern about reducing dietary fat, health remains secondary to taste in the selection of cola drinks for consumers in this population.

Beverly J. Tepper (1998) examined the relative contributions of taste and health considerations on consumer liking and purchase intent of cola drinks. Eight types of commercial cola drinks were evaluated by 305 adult consumers who also completed a brief questionnaire on

soft drink consumption habits. Data were analyzed using factor analysis. Results revealed that purchase intent of cola drinks was strongly related to degree of liking and to several key sensory attributes including saltiness drinks flavor and greasiness. These variables emerged as the first factor in the analysis. Suggesting that consumers perceive these characteristics as being most important in their choice of cola drinks. Second described a health dimension and was related to respondents attitudes towards fat in the diet. Third factor comprised two remaining sensory attributes (color and crunchiness) which apparently were of minor importance to the respondents. These data suggest that in spite of current concern about reducing dietary fat, health remains secondary to taste in the selection of cola drinks for consumers in this population.

Soft Drink Brand

In order to study the preference of respondents the researcher has studied different types of brands which the respondents prefer. The following table shows the preference of the respondents.

Soft Drink Brand

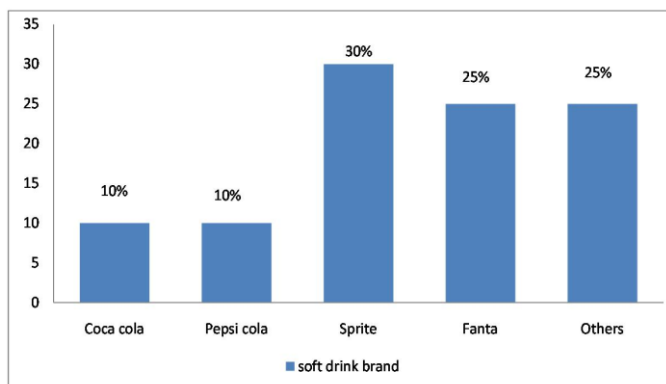
Brand	Frequency	Percentage
Coca-cola	10	10
Pepsi-cola	10	10
Sprite	30	30
Fanta	25	25
Others	25	25
Total	100	100

Analysis

The above table shows that 30% the customers are using Sprite. 25% of the customers are using Fanta & others brands. 10% of the customers are using coca cola and Pepsi cola.

Sources; Primary data

Soft drink Brand



Interpretation

From the above chart we can say that 30% of the respondents are using Sprite soft drinks.

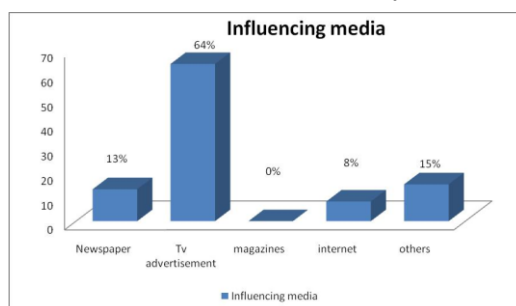
Sources of Media

In order to study the influencing media details of respondents the researcher has studied the source of media in which consists of all type of media. The following table shows the sources of media of the respondents.

Influencing Media

Influencing media	Frequency	Percentage
News paper	13	13
Tv advertisement	64	64
Magazines	0	0
Internet	8	8
Others	15	15
Total	100	100

Sources; Primary data



Analysis

The above table shows that 64% of the respondents aware the product through Tv advertisements. 15% of the respondents come to know by way of other people. 13% of them accept that they saw the brand in news paper. 8% of them accept that they saw the brand in internet. From this we come to know that Tv advertisement is the most reachable media for creating brand awareness among people.

Interpretation

From the above chart we can understood that majority of the respondents were influenced to buy soft drinks by Tv advertisement.

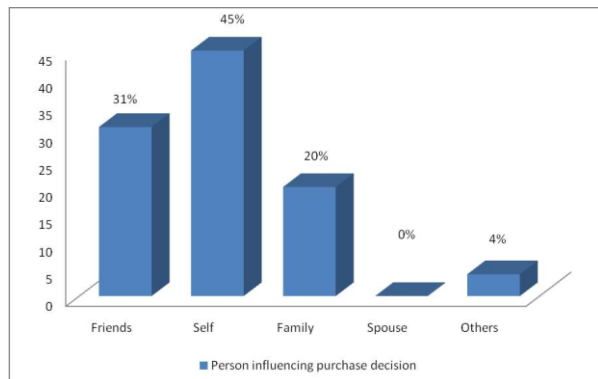
Person Influencing Purchase Decision

In order to study the purchase decision details of respondents, the research has studied the following table.

Person Influencing Purchase Decision

Influencer	Frequency	%
Friends	31	31
Self	45	45
Family	20	20
Spouse	0	0
Others	4	4
Total	100	100

Sources; Primary data



Analysis

From the above table it is understand that 45% of the respondents come to know about the brand through themselves. 31% of the respondents aware of the product through friends. 20% of the respondents come to know about the brand from their family members. Remaining 4% of the respondents to know through others. From this information self place a major role for creating brand awareness among people.

Person influencing purchase decision

Interpretation

From the above chart shows that majority of the respondents were purchase by themselves. So it is understood that majority of the respondents are purchasing soft drinks by their own decision.

Level of satisfaction selected brand:

In order to study the satisfaction details of respondents, the researcher has studied the level of satisfaction distribution of respondents. The following table shows the level of satisfaction distribution of the respondents.

Level of Satisfaction Selected Brand

Satisfaction level	Very high	High	Average	Low	Very low	Total
Price	38	29	33	0	0	100
Quality	22	29	44	4	1	100
Flavour and taste	36	39	20	3	2	100

Packaging	21	36	37	5	1	100
Brand	26	35	37	2	0	100
Advertisement	40	41	16	2	1	100
Availability	25	41	24	6	4	100
Color	24	38	27	6	5	100
Total	232	288	238	28	14	800

Sources; Primary data

Analysis

From the above table, it is interpreted that consumers have High (28.8) on price, quality, flavour and taste, packaging, brand, advertisement, availability, color, 23.2 of the respondents were very high on saying the satisfaction, 28 of the respondents have low on the above factors. 14 of the respondents have very low on the above factors. So, it is interpreted that the respondents were high on price, quality, flavour and taste, packaging, brand, advertisement, availability, color.



Interpretation

From the above table, it is interpreted that consumers have high (28.8) on price, quality, flavour and taste, packaging, brand, advertisement, availability, color, are using the soft drinks

CHI-Square Test

To prove the interpretation hypothesis was framed to analysis the relationship between the gender and area of the soft drinks users.

H₀ There is no significant relationship between the Area and Gender of soft drinks consumer.

H₁ There is a significant relationship between the Area and Gender of soft drinks consumer.

Relationship between the Area and Gender

Area/Gender	Male	Female	Total
Rural	14	34	48
Town	20	32	52
Total	34	66	100

Degree of freedom	1
Significance level of chi-square value	0.05
Table value at 5% level	3.84
Calculated value	19.8574

Since the calculated value higher than the table value @ 5% significant level the hypothesis rejected. So, it is proved that there is relationship between the area and gender of the soft drinks users.

Chi-Square Test

In order to analysis the relationship between Monthly Income and quantity Chi-square has been applied. The table which is shown below shows the details of Monthly Income and quantity

H_0 There is no relationship between Monthly Income and Quantity of the Soft Drinks.

H_1 There is a significant relationship between Monthly Income and Quantity of the Soft Drinks.

Relationship Between Monthly Income and Quantity

Monthly Income/ Quantity used	100ml- 250ml	250ml- 500ml	1 liter	More than 1 liter	Total
Below 10,000	7	9	17	7	40
10,001-15,000	11	9	6	5	31
15,001-20,000	1	7	2	3	13
20,000-25,000	0	1	4	4	9
Above-25,000	2	0	2	3	7
Total	21	26	31	22	100

Degree of freedom	2
Significance level of chi-square	value 0.05
Table value at 5% level	21.0
Calculated value	20.06

Since the calculated value is less than the table value @5% significant level the hypothesis accepted. So, it is proved that there is no relationship between Monthly income and quantity usage of soft drinks.

Summary

1. A data was collected from the general public are using soft drinks. The majority of the soft drinks users are female. This study shows that 66% of the respondents are female.
2. The study it is found that 57% of the respondents are unmarried. So majority of unmarried people prefer the soft drinks.
3. The study shows that majority of the respondents are coming under the age group of 21-25. Researcher can say that more middle age people are interested in soft drinks.
4. The study shows that majority of the respondents are students for using soft drinks. It is crystal clear that 40% of the respondents are students.
5. It is found that majority of the respondents are soft drinks users are getting monthly income below 10,000.
6. From the result, it is found that 52% of the respondents are living in town. So majority of the town people prefer the soft drinks.
7. The majority of 30% respondents are using soft drinks for sprite.
8. The study show that 64% of the respondents are TV advertisement is the most influencing medium while purchase of soft drinks.
9. It is found that majority 45% of the respondents influenced to purchase soft drinks by themselves.
10. The above table shows that 60% of the respondents are using soft drinks more than 2 years.
11. It is clear that 31 % of the respondents are purchasing soft drinks at festivals time. It is crystal clear that majority of the respondents are purchasing soft drinks only at festivals time.
12. From this study Researcher can understand 35% respondents are using soft drinks once in a month.
13. Most of 46% of the respondents view soft drinks as an aid to put off thirst.
14. Majority 62% of the respondents are giving opinion of the brand is good.
15. The study show 36% of majority of the respondents is purchasing soft drink at super market.
16. Majority of 46% of the respondents are prefer a selected brand for refreshment.

17. Most indicates that more number of respondents that is 40% is influenced to make a buying decision on the quality of the soft drinks only.
18. The majority of 31% of the respondents are purchasing 1 liter Bottle frequently.
19. From the above table show that 69% of the respondents are spending 100 rupees per month for soft
20. 64% of the respondents using soft drinks are preferred to change the brand if their brand is not available in the market.
21. The study show that 62% of the respondents buy more soft drinks, when the price is reduced.
22. The study show that majority of the respondents are switch over to other brand if their preferred brand not available in the market. It is crystal clear that 47% of the respondents are switch over to other brand.
23. From this study we can understand that majority of the respondents 33% are not at preferring to buy any brand in case of non-availability of existing brand.
24. From the above table, it is interpreted that consumers have high (28.8) on price, quality, flavour and taste, packaging, brand, advertisement, availability, color, are using the soft drinks.
25. The study has been made to find out relationship between area and gender. The result shows that there is a relationship between the area and gender of the soft drinks users.
26. The study has been made to find out relationship between monthly income and quantity. The results shows that there is no relationship between the monthly income and quantity of the soft drinks users.

Suggestions

1. Mass media like Television, Newspaper etc. are to be extensively used for the purpose of publicity.
2. The marketing executives whose products are not so popular will have to find the reasons why their brands are not preferred.
3. The marketing executives should try to improve their service through door delivery system, mail order method.
4. Semi-rural market and rural market are another area, which is fast growing in our country. Soft drinks manufacture should concentrate on growing market also.
5. There should be continuous research for the improvement of soft drinks products.
6. The company must concentrate on creating awareness for coca cola, and Pepsi cola, Fanta which are not preferred by consumers as a prefer more familiar brands like Sprite.
7. Most of the consumers said that variety of soft drink products are not available in grocery shops. Hence company should focus on improving the distribution of products to these outlets.
8. Increase in the competition of soft drink products there is a need to understand the awareness levels towards various brands amongst the consumers
9. Advertising plays a vital role in boosting the sales through brand recognition in the personal care industry. Advertising needs to be evaluated for its effectiveness. Increasing number of firms go for combination of print as well as television advertising.
10. All Soft Drinks companies should increase their distribution channel.
11. The companies should continue to work on the strategy of T.Q.M (Total Quality Management).
12. New techniques of promotions are required to create awareness about the entire range of companies products.

13. Customers feedback should be promoted.
14. The company should send their representatives to contact personally to the customers to avoid any communication problems.
15. The company should give more attention to all the segments.
16. The companies should come up with some attractive schemes to attract more & more customers.
17. Brand managers need to understand that consumer's learning and attitude towards brand extension differ at various levels of experience in using them. They need to make sure that the quality of the products is maintained over time because; associations based on direct experience with the brand are likely to be believed more than others influences.

Conclusion

"Customer are king" satisfying customer is the main task of the marketing. A study on brand preference will lead to success in business. Brand preference always changing one. A continuous study on brand preference makes to identify the changes and withstand in the market.

The sampling activity was a good first step into the area of marketing and sales. A good understanding of the market was accomplished as around 100 people were spoken. This even helped in the polishing of communication skills, a must-have to survive and make it big in the present world. It even gave a good understanding of brand preference of consumers when placed in different situations. It was a good opportunity to work on the skill of patience, as a large number of customers. It helped in developing the kind of relations one needs to uphold in the corporate world and it helped in building up the right attitude.

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