

A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF BRAND AWARENESS AND PRODUCT ATTRIBUTES IN PURCHASE INTENTION

Mr. Tinku Joy

Assistant Professor, Marian International Institute of Management, kuttikkanam.

Abstract

Ice cream's origins are known to reach back as far as the second century B.C., although no specific date of origin or inventor has been undisputedly credited with its discovery. We know that Alexander the Great enjoyed snow and ice flavoured with honey and nectar. Biblical references also show that King Solomon was fond of iced drinks during harvesting. During the Roman Empire, Nero Claudius Caesar (A.D. 54-86) frequently sent runners into the mountains for snow, which was then flavoured with fruits and juices.

Meriiboy is a division of Cousins Group, a business venture founded in 1990, by 5 closely-knit families. Over the years, the group has developed diverse interests from plastic modeling to ice cream and more. The first ice cream factory unit was set up in 2003 at Kalady with a capacity of 600L a day. Today, the group holds four advanced units manufacturing over 5 million liters every year

Brand awareness means the ability of a consumer to recognize and recall a brand in different situations. Brand awareness consist of brand recall and brand recognition. Brand recall means when customers see a product category they recall a brand exactly and brand recognition means consumers has the ability to identify brand when there is a brand cue.

Purchase intention can be defined as an individual's intention to buy a specific brand. Doing purchase intention for a specific brand requires assessment of all brands available in market. it is shown that approaches toward a specific brand have great effect on brand purchase intention and brand attitude has positive relation with purchase intention.

Product attributes can be defined as something that can deliver the benefits offered by the product and can add value to the customers. Product attributes are the ingredients necessary for performing the product or service function sought by consumers.

Brand image is defined as any information linked to brand in the customer memory. Which means the association and beliefs that the customer has regarding the brand. Brand strength, in contrast, is most often described as a global evaluation or an intention to behave, such as an intention to buy or pay for a brand

Key Words: Brand Image, Product attributes, retailers, wholesalers, Purchase intention, Brand awareness

INTRODUCTION

Meriiboy is a division of Cousins Group, a business venture founded in 1990, by 5 closely-knit families. Over the years, the group has developed diverse interests from plastic modeling to ice cream and more. The first ice cream factory unit was set up in 2003 at Kalady with a capacity of 600L a day. Today, the group holds four advanced units manufacturing over 5 million liters every year.

In 2006, Cousins Group started the second ice cream factory in Kinfra Food Processing Park, Calicut, catering to Northern Kerala. In 2010, the third factory commissioned at Trivandrum as a part of market expansion the fourth factory inaugurated at Kannur and reaches production capacity of 8 million liter/annum. In 2013 Meriiboy becomes a major player in Kerala. Awarded ISO 22000: 2005 certifications by BUREAU VERITAS for Kalady factory. Distribution network spreads across 1200 dealers and 400 distributors in Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. Establishes own retail outlets in Lulu & Oberon malls in Ernakulum, Vega Land, Food Mall at Revenue Tower, R P Mall at Calicut, Bakker junction at Kottayam.

Meriiboy is one of the largest producers of fresh ice cream, based in South India. The brand is known across Kerala and in the emerging

Markets of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka for its original freshness and unmatched quality. The brand pays great attention to quality at every level, from the sourcing of fresh raw materials to testing, manufacturing, packaging and the finished product. Made with state-of-the-art production techniques and a comprehensive hygiene policy, every Meriiboy product is nothing less than world class. To ensure this, Tetra Pak Hoyer, Denmark has been involved as consultants and quality advisors.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Meriiboy Ice cream is one of the prominent players in the manufacturing and selling of ice creams in south India. However, not in the branded segment, Meriiboy enjoys a unique brand position in the market. This project aims at studying the importance of brand awareness and product attributes in purchase intention of Meriiboy Ice creams.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To identify the level of brand awareness of Meriiboy ice creams among the consumers.
- To identify the major reason or attributes that direct the consumers to purchase the brand.
- To identify the level in which consumer were aware regarding the health benefits of ice creams
- To identify the level of usage among the consumers.
- To identify major sources where the customers being aware about the brand.
- To collect various responses from consumers and retailers regarding the brand and frame suggestion to reach the customer expectation.
- To identify the major reasons that distract consumer from brand.
- To study the customers purchase intention deeply and frame strategies, suggestion to improve the sales.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

1/5th of the world's total milk production occurs in India, thus milk and milk products are they country's resources that can generate wealth for the country. Kerala is also a major contributor to this. With its expertise in ice cream manufacturing and sales for more than a decade now, Meriiboy has created its own position in the minds of

Customers. Even when facing a tight competition from the national brands like Amul, Meriiboy manages to emerge customers' first choice because of unmatched quality it provides. It belongs to the medium level of ice cream, below the international brands like Baskin Robbins and London Dairy. Yet, Meriiboy charges a price slight higher than its competitors do. Now that quality alone cannot impart of brand awareness and product attributes that gives the brand sustainability.

With this study, we can get an idea regarding how the factors like packaging product awareness etc. influence the customer while making a purchase decision. With this study, we can make needful changes on the part of product attributes and brand awareness programme to influence the purchase intention of consumers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Dr.HsinKuang Chi, Dr.HueryRenYeh and Ya Ting Yang, (2009)

Dr.HsinKuang Chi, Dr.HueryRenYeh and Ya Ting Yang, (2009), in their study titled

“Impact of Brand Awareness on Consumer Purchase Intention: The Mediating Effect of Perceived Quality and Brand Loyalty” explains that buyer purchase decision can be influenced if a product has higher brand awareness. This clarifies why a product with higher brand awareness will have higher market share and better quality evaluation.

Brand Awareness

Brand awareness means the ability of a consumer to recognize and recall a brand in different situations. Brand awareness consist of brand recall and brand recognition. Brand recall means when customers see a product category they recall a brand exactly and brand recognition means

consumers has the ability to identify brand when there is a brand cue. Brand awareness can be distinguished in depth and width. Depth means how to make consumers to recall or identify brand easily, and width infers when consumer purchase a product, a brand name will come to their minds at once. If a product owns brand depth and brand width at the same time, consumers will think of a specific brand when they want to buy a product. That implies the product has higher brand awareness. Moreover, brand name is the most important element in brand awareness therefore, brand awareness will affect purchase decision through brand association, and when a product owns a positive brand image, it will help in marketing activities. A brand name offers a symbol that can assist consumers to identify service providers and to predict service results. Brand awareness plays an important role on purchase intention because consumers tend to buy a familiar and well-known product. Brand awareness can help consumer to recognize a brand from a product category and make purchase decision. Brand awareness has a great influence on selections and can be a prior consideration base in a product category. Brand awareness also acts as a critical factor in the consumer purchase intention, and certain brand will accumulate in consumers mind to influence consumer purchase decision. A product with a high level of brand awareness will receive higher consumer reference because it has higher market share and quality evaluation.

Keller (2003)

Definition of Brand awareness, the likelihood that consumers recognize the existence and availability of a company's product or service. Creating brand awareness is one of the key steps in promoting a product Brand Awareness is the extent to which a brand is recognized by potential customers, and is correctly associated with a particular product. Expressed usually as a percentage of target market, brand awareness is the primary goal of advertising in the early months or years of a product's introduction. Brand awareness is the extent to which the consumer associates the brand with the product he desires to buy. It is the brand recall and the brand recognition. According to Keller (2003) stated that brand awareness can be referred to as the ability of a consumer to distinguish a brand under various conditions. Keller (2003) also noted that brand awareness is built and increased by familiarity with the brand because of repeated vulnerability, which eventually leads to consumers experience with the brand.

Aaker (1991)

Aaker (1991) defines brand or name awareness as "the ability of a potential buyer to recognise or recall that a brand is a member of a certain product category." Therefore, it is important that a link between product class and brand is implicated because the scope of brand awareness is very wide, ranging from an unsure sensation that the brand name is recognised, to a conviction that it is only one in the product class. Brand awareness refers to the strength of a brand's presence in consumer's mind.

It is a measure of the percentage of the target market that is aware of brand name. Marketers can create awareness among their target audience through repetitive advertising and publicity. Brand awareness can provide a host of competitive advantages for the marketer. These include the following. Brand awareness renders the brand with sense of familiarity. Name awareness can sign of presence, commitment and substance. The salience of a brand will decide if it is recalled at key time in the purchasing. Brand awareness is an asset that can be inordinately durable and thus sustainable. It may be extremely difficult to dislodge a brand that had achieved a dominant awareness level. Brand awareness is vitally important for all brands but high brand

awareness without an understanding of what sets one apart from the competition does one virtually no good.

Purchase Intention

Laroche and Zhou, 1996; Laroche and Sadokierski, (1994); MacKenzie and Belch, (1986)

Purchase intention can be defined as an individual's intention to buy a specific brand. Doing purchase intention for a specific brand requires assessment of all brands available in marketing, Laroche and Huihuang, (2007). It is shown that approaches toward a specific brand have great effect on brand purchase intention (Brown and Stayman, (1992); Homer, (1990); MacKenzie, (1986), and brand attitude has positive relation with purchase intention. It is also found that a consumer's intention is settled by attitude towards the same and other brands which are present in his consideration set (Laroche and Sadokierski, (1994); Laroche and Zhou, (1996) Purchase intention represent consumer's intention to buy a product or service (Shao, Baker, and Wagner, (2004). According to Yoo et al. (2000), Purchase intention represent consumer tendencies to routinely patronize a brand and refuse to buy other brands. In addition, purchase intention are affected by a variety of factors. In Luo, Kannan, and Ratchford's (2008) study, purchase intentions can be influenced not only by objective attributes (e.g., brand awareness, price and product features), but also by subjective characteristics (e.g., ease of use and perceived comfort). Customer purchase decision is a complex process. Purchase intention generally is related to the behaviour, perception and attitude of consumers. Purchase behaviour is a key point for consumers to access and evaluate the specific product. Some other publication states that purchase intention is an effective tool to predict buying process. Purchase intention may be changed under the

Cathy J. Cobb-Walgren, Cynthia A. Ruble and Naveen Donthu (1995)

Cathy J. Cobb-Walgren, Cynthia A. Ruble and Naveen Donthu (1995) in their paper titled Brand Equity, Brand Preference, and Purchase Intent, explores some of the consequences of brand equity. In particular, the authors examine the effect of brand equity on consumer preferences and purchase intentions. Because of the study, across the two categories hotels and household cleansers, the brand with the higher advertising budget yielded substantially higher levels of brand equity. In turn, the brand with the higher equity in each category generated significantly greater preferences and purchase intentions.

Product attributes

Natalia Machle, Nina Iversen, Leif Hem, Celestnes (2015)

Product attributes can be defined as something that can deliver the benefits offered by the product and can add value to the customers. Product attributes are the ingredients necessary for performing the product or service function sought by consumers. They refer to a product's physical composition and are what determine the nature and level of product performance. It can be further characterized according to important and optional features, either necessary for a product to work or for allowing customization and more versatile personalized usage. In the research, we will focus on study of instant coffee and we will regard 'taste' as most important attributes of coffee.

In their study, they stated that to identify the relative importance of four main attributes of food products for customer's choice. These are price, taste, environment, friendliness and

healthfulness, tested across hedonic and utilitarian food products (milk and ice- cream). The weighting of attributes involved in food choices is complex phenomenon, as consumers must consider contradictory requirements when making their choices. Consumer's decision-making processes might also be influenced by food category.

McCarthy and Borden, (1948)

In the classical 4Ps concept of marketing mix (McCarthy and Borden, (1948), keeps the product at the top and defines it as any tangible or intangible entity which satisfies consumer needs and wants. Various product attributes affect the buying behaviour of the consumer. There is a wide range of product attributes when it comes to processed food. Taste/flavour is considered to be the most important among them all Goyal& Singh, (2007); Karimi-shahanjarini et al., 2010; Kathuria& Gill, (2013); Maehle, Iversen, Hem, & Otnes,

Brand Image

Keller, (1993) Netemeyer et al., (2004)

Brand image is defined as any information linked to brand in the customer memory Keller, (1993). Which means the association and beliefs that the customer has regarding the brand. Brand strength, in contrast, is most often described as a global evaluation or an intention to behave, such as an intention to buy or pay for a brand Netemeyer et al., (2004).

Advertisement E Ko, YB Park - , (2002)

Advertising is a marketing communication that employs an openly sponsored, non –personal message to promote or sell a product, service or idea. Sponsors of advertising are typically businesses wishing to promote their product or services. Advertising is differentiated from public relations in that an advertiser pays for and has control over the message. It differs from personal selling in that the message is non personal, i.e., not directed to a particular individual. Advertising can be communicated through mass media, including traditional media such as newspapers, magazines, television, radio, outdoor advertising or direct mail and new media such as search results blogs, social media, websites or text messages.

Arens (1996)

Arens (1996), According to definitions of advertisement it is a social, marketing & economic process as well as communication, information or process and persuasion method. Advertiser's major concern is to attract potential consumers, encourage their buying behaviour, and enhance awareness. They spend surplus money to sustain individual's concentration in their products. Their primary goal is to collect sufficient data about customers for assembling profiles to find out same group people for communication. So these profiles are helpful for the study of consumer behaviour, physical, mental and emotional attitude towards different products used to gratify their wants and needs.

Etzel et al (1997)

Etzel et al (1997) for companies seek to attain consumer selection advertisement is the best; due to this it is important source for practitioners and researchers (lark et, al. (2009). it is a process by which products, services, practices, information and ideas are continually promoted, helping by different source to increase the afflation of consumer via text, spoken and visual information interpreted on media. Bovee, et al. (1995). Sales promotion and advertising are

mass- communication tools attainable to marketers. The basic purpose of mass communication is to minimize the cost of advertising for one person because

Information is reaching many people at the same time and give opportunity for people purchasing products. Etzel, Walker and Stanton (1997).

GunjanBaheti (2012)

GunjanBaheti (2012) Advertisement is an attempt at creativity which influences the consumer's motive to buy a particular product and change or make the perception of the product in the mind of the consumers. Advertisement appeal act as a supplier to arouse the psychological motive of the consumer for buying. Advertisement involves rational and emotional appeals. In rational appeals the product can be emphasized mainly on its benefits and the problems which it can solve while on the other hand emotional appeal meet the consumer's psychological, emotional and social requirements.

Shweta Vats (2014)

Shweta Vats (2014) a study on " impact of direct to consumer advertising through interactive internet media on working youth". This research paper analyses the effect of social media promotion of prescription medicine on behaviour of working youth. It also studies the adoption of social media by working youth for collecting information on prescription drugs. This study also aims at getting an insight into correlation between demographic factors and attitude and perception for social media based prescription drug advertisement.

RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF SCALE

Cronbach's Alpha is used as an estimate of reliability by researchers. As a rule of thumb, are reliability of 0.70 or higher is required to establish the validity of the scale, which is considered for the study. To calculate scale reliability IBM SPSS 21.0 was used.

Table 1

Reliability statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
.783	7

REGRESSION

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		standardized Coefficients	t	Sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(constant)	1.282	.202	.602	6.358	.000
Brand awareness	.567	.057		10.002	.000

a. Dependent variable: purchase intention

INFERENCES

Regression Coefficient of 0.567 explains that if there is 1 unit changes in brand awareness, purchase intention changes by 0.567 units.

There is significant relationship between brand awareness and purchase intention since the significance value $p < 0.05$

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		standardized Coefficients	t	Sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(constant)	.731	.130	.912	5.637	.000
Price	.844	.028		30.519	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

INFERENCES:

Regression Coefficient of 0.844 explains that if there is 1 unit change in price, purchase intention changes by 0.844 units.

There is significant relationship between price and purchase intention since the significance value $p < 0.05$

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		standardized Coefficients	t	Sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(constant)	1.434	.239	.697	6.000	.000
Packaging	.657	.049		13.329	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

INFERENCES:

Regression Coefficient of 0.657 explains that if there is 1 unit change in packaging, purchase intention changes by 0.657 units.

There is significant relationship between packaging and purchase intention since the significance value $p < 0.05$

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		standardized Coefficients	t	Sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(constant)	.821	.105	.938	7.827	.000
Brand Image	.827	.022		37.044	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

INFERENCES:

Regression Coefficient of 0.827 explains that if there is 1 unit change in brand image, purchase intention changes by 0.827 units.

There is significant relationship between brand image and purchase intention since the significance value $p < 0.05$

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		standardized Coefficients	t	Sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(constant)	1.591	.1793	.598	9.174	.000
Health Benefits	.515	.052		.9890	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

INFERENCES:

Regression Coefficient of 0.515 explains that if there is 1 unit change in Health benefits, purchase intention changes by 0.515 units.

There is significant relationship between Health benefits and purchase intention since the significance value $p < 0.05$

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		standardized Coefficients	t	Sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(constant)	2.028	.229	.638	8.863	.000
Advertisement	.535	.047		11.354	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

INFERENCES:

Regression Coefficient of 0.535 explains that if there is 1 unit change in Advertisement, purchase intention changes by 0.535 units.

There is significant relationship between Advertisement and purchase intention since the significance value $p < 0.05$

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

HYPOTHESIS	P Value	Results
H1: There is significant influence of brand awareness towards purchase intention of Meriiboy ice cream	.000	Accept
H2: There is significant influence of product attributes towards purchase intention of Meriiboy ice cream	.000	Accept

MODEL FITNESS TEST

ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	125.011	6	20.835	45.250	.000
Residual	107.284	233	.460		
Total	232.296	239			

- Dependent Variable: purchase intention
- Predictors:(constant),Brand image, Health benefits, Brand awareness, Packaging, Advertisement, Price

The ANOVA test analyses whether the model used is valid to explain the relationship between dependent and independent variable. The significance value is .000 less than $p=0.05$ which shows that there is a positive relationship between dependent and independent variables.

Total sum of square value we have obtained here is 232.296. This is the sum of square of the difference between all sample elements and the sample mean. Regression equation, which we have generated, will allow us to predict the regression line. Here regression sum of square is 125.11. This is the sum of square of the difference between all predicted value and the sample mean. Residual sum of square is the sum of square of the difference between all predicted value and the sample elements.

FINDINGS

- The study was conducted to know if factors like brand awareness and product attributes had any impact on purchase intention of Meriiboy ice creams.
- From the analysis, it is evident that brand awareness and product attributes significantly influence peoples purchase intention.
- Most respondents were female and belong to the age category of 21-30 years
- Advertisement were the main source through which respondents came to know about Meriiboy.
- Meriiboy is mostly associated with the taste and quality
- Effective advertisement leads to repeated purchases

LIMITATIONS

- Consumer gives very unclear picture
- The study is based on a limited sample
- The data collected from consumers is qualitative in nature, i.e. views, opinions and
- Perceptions

SUGGESTIONS

- Meriiboy ice cream enjoys a unique position in the customer perception, as it is evident in the significance value. The brand shall never compromise on this factor; it may further study what factors makeup the uniqueness of the brand.
- Furthermore, Meriiboy is marketing campaign and branding strategy to position itself as 100% natural shows very strong positive impacts on the consumers. Now any news

or a small remark against the natural label would ruin the entire brand image. Naturalness has been so deep rooted in the customer minds that the brand has to take extra measures to fulfil customer expectations.

- Quality and taste, the most significant factor from the results obtained is one of the core values of Meriiboy. Today, every single brand focusses on quality; it is no more a competitive edge but a minimum requirement. Yet, Meriiboy's quality feature is highlighted in the analysis meaning that among all the competitor brands, Meriiboy offers premium quality.
- Ensure more weightage to health benefits of ice cream in the advertisements of Meriiboy, this will help in attracting more health conscious people
- Focuses mainly on modern trade because high end & high profile people purchases mainly at city supermarkets & hypermarkets.
- Samples can be offered along with the other fast moving brands for a short period in particular location to create more awareness and purchase intention. This can also lead to unplanned purchase.

CONCLUSION

The organization study carried out in Supreme food Industries was successful in achieving the specific objectives. It helped to familiarize with the organisation structure and its functioning. It also helped to familiarize with the different departments in the organization and their functions and activities. The study helped to understand how the key business processes are carried out in an organization and how information is used in organisation for decision making at various levels. The company is always focusing on the quality of products. The brand is constantly exploring new and exciting flavours for its consumers through continuous R & D. With a fully equipped laboratory, the brand has innovated not just with fresh flavours but also with new products like ice creams in real fruit shells, fresh fruits ice creams and milk lollies. The biggest innovation of Meriiboy ice creams is there replacement of artificial colours and flavours with natural ingredients ensuring that the products is 100% natural.

REFERENCES

- Catherin prentice n, N. h. (2016). Insight into Consumer Attitude and Purchase Behaviour. Journal of Retailing and Consumer Service.
- Chenn M. (2007). Consumer attitudes and purchase intention in relation to organic foods in Taiwan. vol 18 . Food quality & preference.
- Emma K. Macdonald, B. M. (2000). Brand Awareness Effects on Consumer Decision Making for a Common ,Repeat Purchase Product. A Replication (vol. 48). Journal of Business Research.
- Hassan, A. (2016). Impact of Store and Product Attributes on Purchase Intentions. vol 22 Delhi Vision.
- Louisse m, H. (2007). The role of health consciousness. food safety concerns and ethical identity on attitudes and intention towards organic foods.
- Ritson, M. (2003), Heinz passes memory test, but to know a brand isn't to love it, Marketing, 4 September, p. 16
- Silayoui p, (2010). Packaging and purchase decision: an exploratory study on impact of involvement level and time pressure (vol 106 issue 8). Taiwan
- Souza d. (2011). An empirical study on influence of environmental labels on consumers. (vol 11). Corporate communications.