

A STUDY ON INFLUENCE OF BRANDED FOOD PRODUCTS ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR KANNIYAKUMARI DISTRICT

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Abstract

Consumers are the reason why a business exists. Without them no company or business can survive. So while making any major marketing decision the most important factor to be considered is the consumer. This implies that a company must have a clear and deep understanding of its consumers and their behaviour. Consumer behaviour is the process whereby individuals decide what, when, where how and from whom to purchase goods and services. Branding occupies a crucial position in today's competitive environment. Brand names give individuality and identity to products. It is the process of naming a product for its identification and distinction. Brands constitute the heart of modern business. It offers a lot of benefits both to companies and consumers. A company can achieve success only when its products occupy a position in consumers' minds. Branding is the best way of product positioning. A brand evolves through different stages like brand awareness, brand preference, brand loyalty, brand insistence and brand switching etc. Marketers should frame in advance suitable policies for each of these stages. This paper is covered Influence of Branded Food Products on Consumer Behaviour to Kanniyakumari District. The overall objective of this research paper is to analyze the consumer attitude and level of awareness among the sample respondents. This study would enable to take corrective actions in the study areas where the changes are necessary to attract the consumer. For that, the researcher collected 90 samples from the respondents. Percentage, Mean values and t-test used to analysis and conclude this study.

Key words: Consumer behavior, Brand Awareness, Brand loyalty, Packaged Products.

Introduction

In marketing it is believed, announced and pictured that consumer is the king. Companies are providing goods and services to the market for satisfying the needs and wants of consumers. For that it is essential for them to identify, define and understand the target market, also its components, characteristics and unique nature. A market consists of persons who have unfulfilled needs and wants. The knowledge of consumer behaviour helps the marketer to understand how consumers think, feel and select from alternatives like products and brands. As far as consumers are concerned brand plays a significant communicative and informative role. Brands are the ultimate differentiators and the basis of customer relationship. In this era of globalization, brand is a key driver of economic values of a company and it is a wealth generator. Brands bring consumers and marketers closer and bind them together. The brand choice decisions of consumers are critical to the marketers. Creating a successful brand is the ultimate aim of marketing endeavor. Branding is the marketing practice of creating a name, symbol or design that identifies and differentiates a product from other products. Branding aims to establish a significant and differentiated presence in the market that attracts and retains loyal consumers. A brand can tie a customer to the firm or product by rational and emotional hooks by creating loyalty. Brands are the major enduring assets of a company. These are the powerful assets that must be carefully developed and managed. By successfully branding its product or services, a company makes its offerings stand apart from the competition in ways that matters to the buyers. Food is an essential item consumed by all people. Food is any material which provides essential body nutrients such as carbohydrates, fats, and vitamins etc that stimulate growth and maintain life. It is essential to human survival, appears to be the first item of family budget allocation, irrespective of the classes to which it belongs. People consume food on a daily basis.

Brands of Food and beverages grow due to the regular nature of their use and consumption. Food habits of the people are different in different places. It also changes according to various factors like age, sex, religion, culture, education and income.

Statement of the Problem

In today's competitive environment, the success of a product or business is determined by its consumers. Consumer's needs are the basis of modern marketing. Consumers will be satisfied only if the product or company fulfills their needs and wants. Thus arise needs for consumer behaviour studies. Such studies help companies to understand the changing and emerging tastes and preferences of consumers. Company's growth, profitability, survival and success depends up on their ability to identify and satisfy consumers unfulfilled needs at a better and faster way than the competitors in the market. There exist a number of factors that influence the behaviour of consumers. Marketers need to identify the important factors influencing consumer behaviour and by adopting appropriate strategies they can capture major portion of the market by positioning their products in customers' minds. Consumer behaviour changes over a period of time, because of the change in income, occupation, residence, education, age and so forth. Their likes and dislikes change in no time. More over the modern consumer is so resourceful to take a crucial decision of buying a particular brand of product among so many offered to him. Consumers differ widely in their tastes, preferences and they buy different brands of food items for their consumption. To match the varying consumer tastes and preferences, marketers have adopted innovative strategies. Branding of products help in building or projecting a product image, quality, company image and also brand loyalty among the users.

Previous studies show that branding has a vital role in determining consumer behaviour. It is very important for companies to analyze what is the influence of branding factor on consumer's decisions in relation to food products. Companies are spending huge amount of time and money on brand building and brand promotion. Like other products, in the case of food products also, a number of brands are available in the market and consumer has to choose from among them. Generally consumers are influenced by a number of factors while making purchase decisions of food products. Companies need to get a clear picture about these factors. Moreover, they have to know what the importance is given by consumers to brandnames. The marketers of food products need to know whether the consumers are aware of their brands, what is the attitude of consumers towards their brands, whether the consumers are satisfied with the brand and are they loyal to their brands. Moreover it is very important to find out why consumers are changing their brands. The study is intended to find out the penetration of branded food products among consumers and the degree of brand awareness among them. Under these circumstances an attempt has been made by the researcher to study the influence of branded food products on consumer behaviour.

Objectives of the study

- ❖ To study the awareness among consumers in Kanniyakumari District about branded food products.
- ❖ To study the attitude of consumers in Kanniyakumari District towards branded food products.
- ❖ To compare the Awareness of Consumers and Gender of the respondents

Sources of Data

The study is based on both primary and secondary data.

Primary Data

The researcher has collected the primary data through the interview schedule. The interview schedule was distributed directly by the researcher himself to the sample, the researcher collected 90 samples for analyzed the data.

Secondary Data

The secondary data were collected from various sources such as journals, magazines, publications and various websites.

Use of Statistical Tools

For measuring various phenomena and analyzing the collected data effectively and efficiently to draw sound conclusions, a number of statistical tools including percentage analysis, Mean values and t-test have been used for the testing of hypotheses.

Limitations of the Study

- ❖ The study considers only individual consumer behaviour. Organizational consumers are not included in the study.
- ❖ There may be bias among the consumers which can affect the result.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1: Demographic Variables of the Respondents

VARIABLES		No of Respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	65	72
	Female	25	28
	Total	90	100
Age	Below 25	8	9
	26-35	14	16
	36-45	21	23
	46-55	29	32
	Above 55	18	20
	Total	90	100
Marital Status	Married	67	74
	Unmarried	23	26
	Total	90	100
Educational Qualification	Below HSC	8	9
	Graduation	41	46
	Post - Graduation	26	29
	Others	15	17
	Total	90	100
Monthly Income	Up to Rs.15,000	9	10
	Rs.15,001 - Rs.30,000	34	38
	Rs.30,001– Rs.45,000	36	40
	Above Rs.45,000	11	12
	Total	90	100

Sources: Primary Data

Table No.1 shows demographics wise distribution of the respondents. It reveals that male respondents are higher than female respondents. Majority of respondents age group were 46-55 and most of the respondents married. Graduations were high as compared to other Educational groups. Majority of the respondents Monthly Income were Rs.30,001– Rs.45,000.

Table 2: Source of Information

Source of Information	No of Respondents	Percentage
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Television Advertisement	29	32
Advertisement in Print Media	25	28
Outdoor Advertisement	16	18
Friends and Relatives	13	14
Shopping Places	7	8
Total	90	100

Sources: Primary Data

The above table clearly shows that 29 respondents say that they are getting information about different varieties of brands available in the market through television advertisements. According to 13 respondents friends and relatives are their major source of information. Advertisements in print media are the main source for 25 respondents. Only 7 respondents are collecting more details of brands from shopping places and 16 says that their major source is outdoor advertisement.

Table 3: Awareness of Consumers

Awareness	Great extent	Moderate extent	Some extent	Slight extent	Not at all	Total
I can recognize these brands quickly among other competing brands	17	38	24	10	1	90
I can recall the advertisement of the brands	13	35	31	8	3	90
I can name the personality who endorses these brands	15	42	20	9	4	90
I remember the packaging attributes of these products/brands	9	37	30	9	5	90
Colour and design of the package helps me to identify these brands	5	17	46	17	5	90
I remember the sales promotion offers of these brands	12	21	44	9	4	90

Sources: Primary Data

The above table shows that awareness level of the respondents. 38 respondents were Moderate extent for recognize the brands quickly among other competing brands, 35 respondents were Moderate extent for recall the advertisement of the brands, 42 respondents were Moderate extent for e personality who endorses these brands, 37 respondents were Moderate extent the packaging attributes of these products/brands, 46 respondents were Some extent for Colour and design of the package helps me to identify these brands and 44 respondents were Some extent for the sales promotion offers of these brands.

Table 4: Mean-Attitude towards branded food product

Attitude	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
I always consider brand name before purchasing food items	3.89	1.098	.049

I believe that branded products are high quality products	3.44	1.074	.048
Branding helps easy identification of products	3.96	.873	.039
I will purchase a particular brand repetitively, once satisfied with the brand	3.90	.995	.044
I will search information from various sources about the product/brand before buying	3.33	1.117	.050
I will shift from branded food products to non-branded food products	2.98	1.029	.046
If a new brand is introduced that is much talked about, I will switch over and get back to my original brand choice if the new brand is found inferior	3.90	1.040	.046
If there is an increase in my income I will purchase only branded products	2.81	1.248	.055

Sources: Computed Data

The above table depicts attitude of consumers towards branded food products. Result shows that most of the time consumers are considering brand name before purchasing food items (Mean score 3.89)and they believe that to some extent branded products are high quality products (Mean score 3.44). They agree that branding helps easy identification of products (Mean score 3.96). Consumers state that they will use a brand continuously if they satisfied with that brand (3.90). They agree that occasionally they are searching information from various sources about the products or brands before making purchases (Mean score 3.33). According to the respondents the chance for shifting from branded food products to non-branded food products is very less (2.98). They stated that if a new brand is introduced in the market that is much talked about they will switch over to that brand and will get back to their previous brand if the new one found inferior (mean score 3.90). Consumers disagree with the statement that is if there is an increase in their income they will only purchase branded food products (mean score is 2.81).

COMPARISON ON AWARENESS OF CONSUMERSAND GENDER

The t- test is applied to find the Awareness of Consumersand Gender of the respondents.

Table 5: Calculation of t-test

Factors	Variables	df	Table Value	Calculated Value	Result
I can recognize these brands quickly among other competing brands	Male	88	1.645	0.0161	Accepted
	Female				
I can recall the advertisement of the brands	Male	88	1.645	0.0340	Accepted
	Female				
I can name the personality who endorses these brands	Male	88	1.645	-0.0153	Accepted
	Female				
I remember the packaging attributes of these products/brands	Male	88	1.645	-0.0069	Accepted
	Female				

Colour and design of the package helps me to identify these brands	Male	88	1.645	0.0231	Accepted
	Female				
I remember the sales promotion offers of these brands	Male	88	1.645	0.0438	Accepted
	Female				

Sources: Computed Data

The above table represents the independent sample t-test. It is clear from the table that the Comparison of Awareness of Consumers and Gender of the respondents. When researcher compared with the values, its calculated value is less than the table value. There is no significance different between namely Awareness of Consumers and Gender of the respondents. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted.

Findings

- ❖ Male respondents are higher than female respondents.
- ❖ Majority of respondents age group were 46-55.
- ❖ Most of the respondents married.
- ❖ Graduations were high as compared to other Educational groups.
- ❖ Majority of the respondents Monthly Income were Rs.30,001– Rs.45,000.
- ❖ 46 respondents were some extent for colour and design of the package helps me to identify these brands.

Suggestions of the Study

- ❖ Companies can concentrate on purchase decision makers of food products. Marketing strategies can be formulated to attract the purchase decision makers of food products.
- ❖ Taste and health is very important in the case of food products. Hence companies need to provide tasty and healthy products to consumers.
- ❖ Consumers should check all the quality standards like BIS, AGMARK etc while purchasing food products.

Conclusion

The study reveals that main members in the family are making purchase decisions. Consumers are having a medium level of awareness about different food brands available in the market. Consumers are satisfied to some extent with the food products currently available in the market. Consumers are considering brand name before purchasing food products. Fear of harmful ingredients is the main reason for not preferring branded food products and this fear is high among rural consumers. Consumers show a medium level of loyalty and it is high among urban consumers. Switching habit is less among consumers. Decrease in the quality is the main reason for switching brands. Family members' dissatisfaction and non-availability are also inducing consumers to switch brands. Consumer behaviour studies, specially focused on branding aspects will help companies, consumers, sellers and government authorities. The suggestions given in the study shall help the companies, consumers and government authorities in different ways. It shall help companies and government in forming appropriate policies and plans and consumers also get benefited with high quality products and services according to their needs and wants. Consumer behaviour studies educate and protect consumers and help to act and buy more wisely.

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