

“The impact of brand awareness, brand image and customer attributes on consumer brand preference among village community towards premium food brands”

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Abstract: The research entitled “The impact of brand awareness, brand image and customer attributes on consumer brand preference among village community towards premium food brands” was done to understand the factors affecting the brand preference of village community towards Premium food brands. A premium brand means a brand that is positioned to have high quality and price. The company launched it to give an impression of exclusivity, notably to differentiate it from other mass-market brands.

Keywords: Brand awareness, Brand Preference, Brand Image and Customer Attributes.

1. INTRODUCTION:

The entry of Premium food brands in the market was visible from years back. By manufacturing high quality products, attractive offers in the product pricing and through various promotion strategies used in attracting customers like advertisements raised the customers’ satisfaction to a great extent. These were the secrets behind the increasing growth of the companies. But the entry of new threats with competitive prices and attributes resulted in the decline of the sales of Premium food brands over the years. Analysis of premium food brands’ sales reports 2015, 2016 and 2017, the data shows a decline in the brand preference. Hence the researcher conducts a study to determine the effect of brand awareness, brand image and customer attributes on brand preference towards premium food brands in the market especially among village community

2. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

SCOPE

- The research is helpful to know the brand preference level of the customers of Premium food brands at Pothanicaud.
- The study will be helpful to understand the behavioural pattern of the customer and will be useful to make necessary changes required to retain the customers.
- The study can be a significant tool for the premium food brands authorities to gain brand preference for the company.

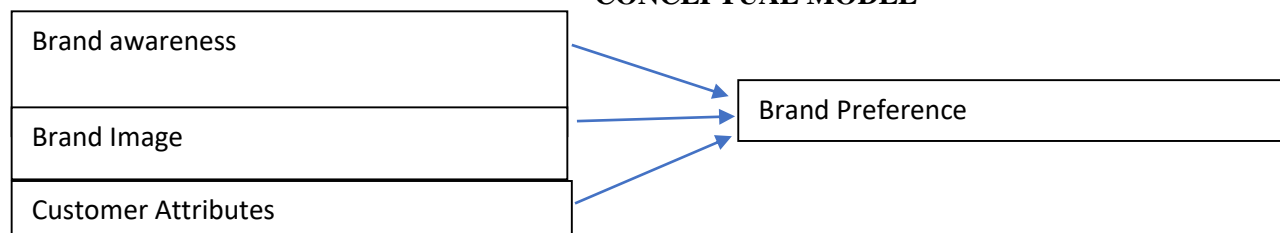
LIMITATIONS

- The study was conducted within a short period of time, time was the limiting factor.
- The whole research was confirmed only to Pothanicaud and nearby areas. So, that generalization of results, are subject to bias.
- Collecting information from the customers was difficult because of their non availability.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- Primary objectives of the study is to understand the level of brand awareness, brand image and customer attributes towards premium food brands.
- Secondary objectives of the study is to find out the factors influencing the brand preference towards Premium food brands.

CONCEPTUAL MODEL



4. VARIABLE- OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Brand preference

The consumer's predispositions toward a brand that varies depending on the salient beliefs that are activated at a given time D'Souza and Rao, (1995)

Brand Awareness

It defines the primary knowledge of the brand mind. Hoyer and Brown, (1990)

Brand Image

Brand image is a unique set of associations in the mind of customers regarding what a brand stand for and the implied promises the brand makes Neupane, (2015)

Customer attribute

Consumers' beliefs about product attributes influence on their attitudes about specific brands and finally induce behavioural tendencies and preference of a brand Samadi, (2007).

5. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Reham Shawky Ebrahim in 2013 provided an overview of consumer brand preferences. Throughout the chapter, a clear conceptualization of brand preference is given, identifying it as the holistic nature of this concept. Brand preference is concerned with consumers' bias position towards certain brands, resulting from the comparison of available alternatives. Consumers' preferences are represented through affective, cognitive, and behavioural responses. Brand preference is different from other brand constructs. The affective responses of consumer preferences are expressed by degree of liking do not yet build emotional bond with the brand. The cognitive responses denote the combined utilities of the brand among counterparts. Finally, behavioural tendencies are exhibited in preferences by consumers' acts toward favored brand. The discussion of consumer behavior models provides two perspectives to explain consumer brand preferences development. The first view is the traditional models, including expectancy-value models such as the Fishbein model, (1969), and information-processing theories (e.g. Howard and Sheth, 1969 and Bettman, 1979). Consumer beliefs about the brand attributes present the cognitive information processing that affect their preferences and behavioural intentions. These models depend on consumers' abilities to integrate information about the brand in order to arrive at an overall evaluation. This view provides understanding of brand preferences as a uni-dimensional value. Zahra Kashanizadeh, Mohammad Rahim Esfidani (2014) "A survey on antecedents of brand preference (A case of Samsung on Audio and Video products)" observed that Brand awareness involves word of mouth and publicity.

"Pathmini M.G.S (2016) conducted the study on "Brand image and customer satisfaction in mobile phone market". This study explained that Brand awareness and customer satisfaction were two variables that had strong positive relationship. This means that the two variables are precisely related and that, as value of one variable was increased. This conclusion is supported by Bilal & Malik, (2014). There is positive relationship between perceived quality and customer satisfaction in mobile phones. It was proved by Kumar, (2014).

Fianto, (2014) observed that poor perception of brand image on customers' preferences in making purchasing behavior ". Positive brand image contributes to enhance customer loyalty and it has great roles in building a strong brand image of a company.

Paulo, Duarte and Mario (2010) quoted that several factors contribute to brand preference, especially those related to brand identity, personality and self-image and 42 their congruence with brand-image. The main direct effects on brand preference are the brand -image congruence and the identity/ personality and image of the brand. In addition to those, the level of involvement, social environment, risk perception, demographic profile, and product visibility also show a positive influence on brand preference.

6. RESEARCH DESIGN AND ANALYSIS:

This study is Descriptive research because it includes survey and fact finding enquires of different kinds to fulfil the objectives

SAMPLING

In research study, 90 respondents are taken and these respondents have been considered to measure the factors of brand preference towards the premium food brands, Pothanicad. Convenience sampling method is taken for collecting the sample from the population for this research study.

POPULATION OF THE STUDY

In this research study Population is mainly concentrated on consumers of premium food brands at Pothanicad area.

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

Questionnaire

DATA ANALYSIS:

Table 1 Cronbach Alpha

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
Customer attributes	.732	4
Brand awareness	.819	5
Brand image	.820	6
Brand preference	.728	4

In this study the Cronbach's Alpha value of patronage intention, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, and Empathy are in between $0.9 > \alpha \geq 0.8$, It shows that the scale validity of these variables are good and for Tangibles the Cronbach's Alpha value is in between $0.8 > \alpha \geq 0.7$, this shows it has an acceptable alpha value

Demographic information

Table 2 Age of Customers

Opinion	No of respondent	Percentage
BELOW 30	8	8.9
30-50	50	55.6
50-70	32	35.6
Total	90	100

Interpretation - The table shows the age group of the consumers. The 55% respondents are in between 30 to 50 year of age, 36% respondents are above 50 to 70 years of age, 8% respondents are below 30 years of old

Table 3 Gender of customers

Opinion	No of respondent	Percentage
Male	40	44
Female	50	56
Total	90	100

Interpretation - 56% of the respondents were female, while 44% male.

Table 4 Income level of respondents

Opinion	No of respondent	Percentage
below 5000	17	18.9
5000-10000	47	52.2
10000-20000	22	24.4
20000-40000	3	3.3
40000-above	1	1.1
Total	90	100

Interpretation- The above table show the income difference among the sample selected, 52% of respondents are earning in the range of Rs 5000 – Rs 10,000, 25% of respondents are Opinion No of respondent Percentage below 5000 17 18.9 5000-10000 47 52.2 10000-20000 22 24.4 20000-40000 3 3.3 40000-above 1 1.1 Total 90 100 19% 52% 25% 3% 1% Income below 5000 5000-10000 10000-20000 20000-40000 40000-above 66 earning in the range of Rs 10,000 – Rs 20,000, 19% of respondents are earning in the range of Rs below 5000, 3% of respondents are earning in the range of Rs 20,000- Rs 40000, 1% of respondents are earning in the range of Rs 40000 above.

Table 5 Family size of respondents

Opinion	No of respondent	Percentage
Below 2 members	7	7.8
3-4 members	32	35.6
4-6 members	43	47.8
6-8 members	7	7.8
8- above	1	1.1
Total	90	100

Interpretation- The above table shows the size of family, 48% respondents are in between 4 to 6 members, 35% respondents are in between 3 to 4 members, 8% respondents are in between 6 to 8 members, 1% respondents are in between 8 members above.

Table 6 Occupation details

Opinion	No of respondent	Percentage
Gvt employee	5	5.6
Self –employee	11	12.2
Unemployed	8	8.9
Private employee	66	73.3
Total	90	100

Interpretation- From the above table represents the occupation of the consumers. 73 % respondents are private employees, 12 % respondents are self-employees,9% respondents are unemployed, and 6% respondents are Government employees.

Table 7 Factors affecting the brand

Opinion	No of respondent	Percentage
Tv advertisement	43	47.8
Dealers	28	31.1
Print media	16	17.8
Reference group	1	1.1
Others	2	2.2
Total	90	100

Interpretation- From the above table it could be identified that the main factor affecting brand ‘48% of TV advertisements. 31% of respondents agree with dealers, 18% of respondents agree with print media and remaining 4% agree with reference groups with others.

Table 8 Product attribute induce more to purchase of premium food brands

Opinion	No of respondent	Percentage
Colour	8	8.9
Smell	26	28.9
Purity	11	12.2
Taste	43	47.8
Others	2	2.2
Total	90	100

Interpretation- Above table represents the product attributes that induce to purchase premium food brands. Here 48 % respondents agreed on taste. 29 % respondents prefer smell of the product . Only 2 % respondents agreed other factors of product attribute.

Table 9 Quantity of the product

Opinion	No. of respondents	Percentage
Higher quantity attracts	65	65
Slight variations in quantity doesn't matters	35	35
Total	100	100

Interpretation- Above table shows the quantity of product. Here 65% respondents agreed that higher quantity matters and 35% mentioned that slight variations in quantity doesn't matters.

Table 10 Frequency of purchase of premium food brands

Opinion	No of respondent	Percentage
Fortnight	6	6.7
Twice a month	28	31.1
once in a month	37	41.1
Weekly	19	21.1
If other		
Total	90	100

Interpretation- 41% Respondents purchase once in a month. 31% respondents purchase twice in a month. 21% customers purchase weekly and 7% respondents purchase fortnightly.

Table 11 Brand related factor induce to prefer premium food brands

Opinion	No of respondent	Percentage
Quality	49	54.4
Advertisement	26	28.9
Quantity	8	8.9
Package	2	2.2
Price	5	5.6
Total	90	100

Interpretation- Here 54% respondents agree quality is one of the brand related factor. 29 % consider advertisements, 9% quantity, 2 % package and only 5% respondents agreed on price.

Table 12 Descriptive statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
customer attributes	90	1.50	5.00	3.6528	.55295
brand awareness	90	1.40	5.00	3.8711	.68585
brand image	90	1.50	4.67	3.5815	.60648
brand preference	90	1.75	4.75	2.9500	.59634
Valid N (list wise)	90				

Interpretation- From the table, descriptive analysis includes the scale range minimum to maximum the mean, standards deviation among these factors higher mean value (3.8711) of brand awareness indicating that most of the respondents have a positive opinion about the brand awareness of premium food brands. The next higher value (3.6528) customer attributes has next position with mean value (3.5815). The least mean value of brand preference (2.9500) shows the respondents not have a clarity on the brand preference of premium food brands.

Table 13 Regression model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.698 ^a	.487	.469	.43450

a. Predictors: (Constant), bi, ca, ba

Interpretation:-This table provides the R and R2 values. The R values represents the simple correlation and is .487 (the "R" column), which indicates a high degree of correlation. The R2 value (the R square column) indicate how much of the total variation in the dependent variable, brand preference can be explained by the independent variables, perceived value and brand awareness. In this case, 48.7% can be explained, which is very large.

Descriptive statistics

Table 14 Customer attribute

Variable	mean	std deviation
ca 1	3.73	0.684
ca2	3.71	0.658
ca3	3.72	0.821
ca4	3.44	0.795
valid N (listwise)		

Interpretation- Table 14 shows the mean and standard deviation of customer attributes. This shows that the question have mean value more than average but high standard deviation indicate with in the respondents they have different opinions.

Table 15 Brand awareness

variable	mean	Standard deviation
Ba1	4.02	.807
Ba2	3.84	1.080
Ba3	3.44	.984
Ba4	3.89	.827
Ba5	4.16	.763

Interpretation- Table 15 shows the mean and standard deviation of brand awareness. This shows that the question have mean value more than average but high standard deviation indicate with in the respondents they have different opinions.

Table 16 Brand image

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation
Bi1	3.38	.881
Bi2	3.76	.928
Bi3	4.08	.753
Bi4	3.56	.876
Bi5	3.67	.874
Bi6	3.06	.676

Interpretation- Above table shows the mean and standard deviation of brand image. This shows that the question have mean value more than average but high standard deviation indicate with in the respondents they have different opinions.

Table 17 Brand preference

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation
Bp1	3.26	.894
Bp2	2.47	.737
Bp3	2.26	.868
Bp4	3.62	.696

Interpretation- Shows the mean and standard deviation of brand preference. This shows that the question have mean value more than average but high standard deviation indicate with in the respondents they have different opinions.

7. FINDINGS:

The study entitled “The effect of brand awareness, brand image and customer attributes on consumer brand preference towards premium food brands, helps to find out the impact of brand preference in the organizations. The finding of the study are as follows.

According to regression analysis, brand image has a positive effect on brand preference, the other two variables customer attributes and brand awareness is not significant.

The results shows that the brand image has 37.62% influence on brand preference of customers.

- Most of the respondents (56%) were under the age category of 30-50 class interval.
- Majority of the respondents (56%) belongs to female.
- 52% of respondents are in the income level of Rs 5,000-10,000.
- Majority of the respondents (48%) comes under the family size of 4 to 6 members
- Most of the respondents (73%) were the private employees.
- The main factor affecting the premium food brands is TV advertisements.
- 48% respondents agreed taste is one of the factors of product attributes.
- Most of the respondents (65%) agreed higher quantity matters.
- 41% respondents purchase once in a month.
- 54% respondents agree quality is one of the brand related factors.
- Gender does not affect individual and organizational outcomes.
- Age does not affect individual and organizational outcomes.
- Income significantly affects individual and organizational outcomes.
- size does not affect individual and organizational outcomes
- Occupation does not affect individual and organizational outcomes
- descriptive analysis include the scale range minimum to maximum. The mean, standard deviation among these factors- higher mean value(3.8711) of brand awareness indicating that most of the respondents have a positive opinion about the brand awareness of premium food brands
- brand image variables have significant and positive relation with brand awareness (correlation co efficient $r = .837$, $p < 0.00$), brand image (correlation $r = .385$, $p < 0.00$)
- Dependent variable ie(Brand preference) has significant and positive relation with independent variable (customer attributes, brand awareness ,brand image)

- Beta value of 54.8% indicates that a change of one standard deviation in the independent variable brand image will result in a change of 54.8% standard deviations in the dependent variable brand preference.

8. SUGGESTION:

- Majority of the consumers are not satisfied with the pricing strategies of the Premium food brands. The company has to rethink about the pricing policies of the product.
- The company should focus on both brand awareness and customer attributes which will help in giving customer better choice.
- The advertisement should be more attractive and new methods should be implemented.
- The main plus point of Premium food brands is its quality of the product. So should maintain the quality.
- More incentives and good offers should be provided in festival time like Onam, Vishu, Ramzan, Christmas, etc.

9. CONCLUSION:

Premium food brands have good position in of peoples' mindset. The companies have made tremendous achievements in the domestic as well as international market. The companies have strong business connection with foreign countries. Current problem faced by the organizations is decrease in the brand preference as per the annual sales reports. As a researcher I hope the study can provide concrete details to support the organization in handling current brand preference related issues

10. QUESTIONNAIRE:

Dear respondent,

I am conducting a research study on "The effect of brand awareness, brand image and customer attributes on consumer brand preference towards premium food brands. Please respond to the questions. I will keep the data confidential and will use it only for the research purpose.

1. Age: Below 30 30- 50 50-70
2. Gender: Male: Female:
3. Monthly family income- Below 5000, 5000-10000, 10000-20000, 20000-40000, 40000-Above
4. Family size
Below 2 members 3-4 8-Above 4-6, 6-8
5. Occupation?
Govt. employee, Self-employed/ own business, Unemployed/ retired Private employee/ Others
6. Are you a consumer of Premium food brands? Yes or No
7. How did you come to know about the premium food brands?
TV advertisement Dealers & Retailers, Print Media Reference group, Others
8. Which product attribute induce you more to purchase premium food brands?
Colour Smell, Purity Taste, Others (Please specify).....
9. Slight variations in the quantity matters in your decision
Yes or No
10. What is the frequency of purchase of coconut oil?
Fortnightly, twice a month, once in a month, weekly, If others specify
11. According to you which brand related factors induce to prefer premium food brands product?
Quality Advertisement, Quantity Package, Price
12. State your level of agreement towards the following statements.
(1-Strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- Average, 4-Agree, 5- Strongly agree)
1 I am confident in my ability to recognize a brand worth considering.
2 I can tell which brands meet my expectations.
3 I trust my own judgment when deciding which brands to consider.
4 I can focus easily on a few good brands when making a decision.
5 I am aware of premium food brands.
6 I know the fragrances of products offered by premium food brands.
7 I can quickly recall the symbol/logo of premium food brands.
8 I can recognize premium food brands among other competing brands.
9 I have seen a lot of advertisement of premium food brands.
10 I can quickly think about the image of premium food brands in mind.
11 I am comfortable in using the products offered by premium food brands.
12 Premium food brands are creative in its advertisements.
13 Quality of these brands have been consistent over the years of my usage.

- 14 Premium food brands brand works very hard to give me comfort and safety.
- 15 Premium food brands quickly understands the need of the customers and delivers benefits.
- 16 When I think of food products, the first thing comes to the mind is premium food brands.
- 17 I would recommend premium food brands to others.
- 18 I would buy it even if the price increased.
- 19 I am satisfied with these brands.

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