

Opinion of Consumers Towards Branded Food Products in Namakkal

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Abstract

Creating a unique identity in the minds of consumers requires effective branding. It benefits the company's reputation and the customer's perception of the company. There are many ways in which brands help their customers. The most significant aspect of any product's brand is the quality it represents. Food brands are growing in significance, and consumers are prepared to pay attention to them whenever it's useful. The focus of this research is on the opinions of Namakkal residents regarding branded food products.

Key words: Branding, Goodwill, Branded Food Products.

Introduction

Branding refers to the process of generating a name, symbol, or design for a product as part of the marketing process in order to identify and differentiate one product from another. The goal of branding is to establish a sizeable and recognizable presence in the market that both draws in new clients and keeps the ones you already have. A customer's cognitive and emotional attachment to a company or product can be strengthened through the use of a brand, which can lead to increased customer loyalty. The most important and long-lasting assets that a company possesses are its brands. These are the valuable assets that need to be developed further and managed with extreme caution. When a firm successfully brands its products or services, those products or services stand out from the competition in ways that are meaningful to consumers. This allows the company to create a significant and distinct market presence, which both attracts and keeps loyal customers. A customer's cognitive and emotional attachment to a company or product can be strengthened through the use of a brand, which can lead to increased customer loyalty. The most important and long-lasting assets that a company possesses are its brands. These are the potent assets that need careful cultivation and management in order to reach their full potential. When a business is able to successfully brand its products or services, those items or services stand out from the competition in ways that are important to customers. Since the beginning of time, marketing has placed a significant emphasis on branding. In the current climate of business, the buyer's market has emerged to take the place of the seller's market, which has completely disappeared. It is a sign that the focus of attention among firms and manufacturers has switched from products to consumers, with a particular emphasis placed on the behaviour of consumers. The actions and decisions of consumers have an impact on marketing strategies and policies. The real challenge is figuring out what aspects are most important to customers when it comes to choosing a particular brand. In the competitive landscape of modern marketing, building a strong brand is essential to bringing in new customers. Awareness, preference, loyalty, insistence, and switching are just some of the components that make up branding, along with many more.

Each of these locations calls for the exercise of utmost caution. A strong brand can enable an emotional connection to be formed between the consumer and the goods they are purchasing. Companies need to be able to comprehend how consumers feel about branded products, their level of awareness, if they are loyal to particular brands, the depth of brand insistence among consumers, how often consumers switch brands, the reasons for switching, and other similar topics. The answers to each of these questions are essential to the branding of a company. For a brand to be successful, competent brand management is required. A successful brand will always have a unique place in the thoughts of the people who buy its products. Everyone takes in food since it is an essential commodity. The term "food" refers to any substance that, when consumed, provides the body with essential nutrients such as carbohydrates, fats, and vitamins, amongst other things, in order to promote growth and maintain life. It is fundamental to human existence and, across all socioeconomic strata, appears to be the primary focus of financial resources allocated to families. Food is something that individuals consume on a daily basis. The consistent preparation and consumption of food and drink contributes to the expansion of associated brand names. Where a person lives can greatly influence their typical meals and eating patterns. It also differs depending on factors

such as age, gender, religious affiliation, cultural background, level of education, and income. The overall patterns of food consumption are influenced by a wide variety of elements, including social and demographic information, psychological and physiological processes, and the surrounding environment. Home cooking continues to account for the vast bulk of India's gastronomic consumption.

Urbanization, the dissolution of the traditional joint family system, a desire for quality, an increase in the number of working women, an increase in per capita income, shifting lifestyles, and an increase in the affluence of the middle income group are all factors that are contributing to the rise in the percentage of people who eat their meals away from home. Because of this, there have been substantial shifts in the way people consume. The majority of a person's monthly budget goes toward purchasing food. Food can be broken down into a few different categories, the most important of which are branded and unbranded products. All of the food items can be found in either of these two groups. While other individuals will never buy food that is not from a particular brand, others always do so. A few of them sell a combination of branded and generic products. When it comes to food, individual consumers have a wide range of preferences and interests. There are a great number of local, national, and international brands competing in the food market. There are many different factors that go into a customer's decision to purchase a particular brand. There are a significant number of businesses in India that are engaged in the production of numerous kinds of food. Amul, Britannia Industries, Dabur, Haldiram's, Marico, Heritage Foods, Hindustan Unilever, Mother Dairy, Parle Agro, and ITC Limited are some of the main food companies in India that produce branded food goods. Other important food companies in India include ITC Limited and Parle Agro.

Literature Review

According to Yeung and Joe (2001), the public's worry regarding the safety of food has grown to the point where it has prompted the government of the United Kingdom and the food sector to take action in order to regain consumer trust. Verdurme and Viaene (2003) constructed a model for their research that revealed there are differences in attitude and intend to purchase between premium branded and generic GM food goods. This model was presented in their paper. According to Ramasamy (2005), awareness of the product and attitude toward the product's brand have a significant impact on the consumer's propensity to make a purchase. When purchasing food, a consumer does not typically stick to a single brand, according to research conducted by Narang (2006). When it comes to making purchases, it is important for children to be able to recall multiple brand names. Repeated exposure to a brand's advertising can assist strengthen consumer recognition of that brand. In order to pique the interest of young people, the product in question ought to be associated with both fashion and fads, and the brand name ought to be conceived of as a kind of fashion manifesto. In order to increase rates, it was suggested to use promotional strategies such as discounts and freebies included with purchases. V. Sivakumar and Shankar R. (2019) opined that social media advertisements will have n effective reach of the products irrespective of its brands.

Problem Statement

Consumers in today's market are looking for ever-increasing levels of delight and variety in the products they buy. They become jaded by everything that stays in their environment for an extended amount of time. These customers of the present era want food that is both high-quality and wholesome, and it should be made keeping in mind the convenience they require as well as the changing cultural requirements. Their preferences will determine the success or failure of the food industry as a whole, and every individual food outlet or industry is strongly dependent on their preferences. Because of this, food industry marketers who purposefully engage in unethical practises have been presented with a significant challenge. This has sparked a number of lively international debates on ethical and marketing practises in the food industry, as well as the intervention of regulatory authorities to implement necessary

legislation wherever it is necessary to reduce the negative effects on society. In a world that is becoming ever more complex, individuals and organisations are presented with a rising number of options, yet they appear to have a decreasing amount of time to deliberate about those decisions. Because of this, the capacity of a strong brand to simplify the decision-making process for customers, reduce risk, and establish their own expectations is invaluable. Management needs to be capable of creating powerful brands that live up to their promises throughout time, as well as maintaining and enhancing such brands over the course of their existence.

Serving the wants and requirements of one's clientele, as a fundamental tenet of marketing, is essential to the survival and expansion of a business. This critical perspective is sometimes referred to as the "marketing concept," which stands for "marketing notion." The process of linking a company's capabilities with the desires of its customers is what marketing is all about. The setting that facilitates this matching is referred to as the marketing environment. Companies do not perform marketing activities independently of one another. They must contend with other businesses as well as shifts in the political, economic, social, and technological environments in which they operate. When a business is trying to match its skills with the requirements and preferences of the clients it is trying to attract, all of these aspects need to be taken into consideration. The needs of prospective clients are prioritized in the daily operations of a business that operates according to the marketing idea. The contentment of one's clientele is essential to the prosperity of a business.

The needs of customers serve as the cornerstone around which contemporary marketing is built. Only if the product or service is able to fulfil the criteria and wishes of the consumer will they be content with it. The attitude and actions of consumers toward a brand are the primary factors that influence the value of that brand. When a customer has a more favourable impression of a certain brand, they are more likely to be willing to pay a higher price for that brand. It is essential for a company's expansion, profitability, continued existence, and success if it is able to identify and fulfil unfulfilled consumer expectations in a superior and more expedient manner than its rivals in the market. There are many different aspects that contribute to the behaviour of customers. In order for businesses to successfully market their wares and secure a sizable share of the market, marketers need to first identify the critical factors that shape customer behaviour and then devise effective strategies for getting their products into the thoughts of consumers. Alterations in factors such as income, occupation, domicile, level of education, age, and so on all contribute to shifts in consumer behaviour over the course of history. Their preferences, both liked and disliked, are always changing. In addition, the modern consumer is so resourceful that he is able to make the important choice of choosing a particular brand of goods from among the numerous possibilities that are available to him. The likes and tastes of consumers are extremely diverse, and as a result, they buy many different kinds of food for consumption. Innovative methods of catering to the diverse interests and preferences of customers have been developed by marketers in recent years. Product branding contributes to the formation or demonstration of a product's image or quality, as well as the image of the firm and the user's loyalty to the brand. Taking all of this into consideration, the current research was carried out in an effort to find solutions to the questions raised by the following research objective:

1. To evaluate the impact of opinion of consumers towards branded food products.

Research Methodology

This is an analytical research that makes use of both primary and secondary sources of information. The primary data comes from a questionnaire that was given to one hundred people who had just purchased branded food goods utilizing snowball sampling. The websites of firms that produce branded food goods are being combed through in order to extract secondary data for the research project. Other data for the study, such as reviews and miscellaneous items, are now being gathered and aggregated from a variety of sources, including websites, publications, journals, and theses.

Analysis

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Classification	No of Respondents	Percentage
Age (Years)		
Less than 30	22	22
31 – 45	54	54
More than 45	24	24
Marital status		
Married	83	83
Unmarried	17	17
Educational qualification		
Under graduation	45	45
Post-Graduation	32	32
Diploma and others	23	23
Residence		
Rural	19	19
Urban	81	81
Family's Monthly income		
Less than Rs.30000	26	26
Rs. 30000 to Rs.50000	52	52
More than Rs.50000	22	22
Total	100	100

Source: Primary data

The above table represents the demographic profile of the respondents who are the consumers of branded foods in erode district. Out of 100 samples selected

- 54 respondents are at the age category of 31 years to 45 years.
- 83 respondents are married
- 45 respondents have doing their under graduation
- 81 respondents are from urban residence.
- 52 respondents have their family's monthly income between Rs. 30000 and Rs.50000.

Table 2: Opinion towards Branded Food Products

S. No	Statements	SA	A	N	DS	SDA
1.	Before making a purchase, I will research the product or brand using a variety of sources	63	30	6	1	0
2.	If my salary were to improve, I would only buy branded things	55	15	10	12	8
3.	If a much-discussed new brand is introduced, I will move to my original brand of choice if the new brand proves to be inferior	64	25	7	4	0
4.	Branding facilitates the recognition of products	52	21	17	8	2
5.	Once I am satisfied with a specific brand, I will purchase it repeatedly	49	28	16	6	1
6.	I believe that branded products are of superior quality	45	24	11	14	6

7.	I always examine brand name prior to making food purchases	81	11	5	3	0
8.	I will make transition from branded to unbranded food products	63	20	10	5	2

Source: Primary data

The table 2 presents the attitude of respondents towards the junk food consumption. From the table it can be conferred that 63 respondents strongly agreed the construct Before making a purchase, I will research the product or brand using a variety of sources, 55 respondents strongly agreed the construct If my salary were to improve, I would only buy branded things, 64 respondents strongly agreed the construct If a much-discussed new brand is introduced, I will move to my original brand of choice if the new brand proves to be inferior, 52 respondents strongly agreed the construct Branding facilitates the recognition of products, 49 respondents strongly agreed the construct Once I am satisfied with a specific brand, I will purchase it repeatedly, 45 respondents strongly agreed the construct I believe that branded products are of superior quality, 81 respondents strongly agreed the construct I always examine brand name prior to making food purchases and 63 respondents strongly agreed the construct I will make transition from branded to unbranded food products.

Analysis of difference between the of respondents' opinion towards branded food products and their demographic profile

H₀: The difference between the opinion of respondents towards branded food products and their demographic profile is not significant

Table 3: Analysis of Variance

Variables	<i>f</i>	P-value	S/ NS
Age	1.26	.025	S*
Marital status	.36	.056	NS
Education	6.31	.021	S*
Residence	.58	.004	S**
Family's Monthly income	16.88	.000	S**

*Significant at 5 per cent level**Significant at 1 per cent level

Source: Primary data

The table above represents the analysis of association using ANOVA between the opinion of respondents towards branded food products and their demographic profile. It is clear from the table that the all the personal profiles except marital status is found significant at 1 per cent and 5 per cent levels respectively. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and concluded that the difference between opinion of respondents towards branded food products and their demographic profile is significant via, age, education, residence and family's monthly income.

Conclusion

A name, word, sign, symbol, or design that is utilized to distinguish and separate the products of one firm from those of its rival companies is known as a brand. The emblem of a product must always prominently feature a brand name or commercial trademark. It is essential to have a brand that can immediately grab the attention of people and stand out in their minds in order to be successful. It boosts both the company's reputation and the customer's opinion of the company as a whole. In light of the significance of branded food

goods, the present study inquiries into the perspectives of consumers regarding branded food products. It has been found that consumers have favorable feelings toward branded food products, which is evidence that they respect the brand to the extent that they are willing to purchase branded food items at any price provided that the products are of a high quality. This finding was made possible by the fact that consumers have positive attitudes toward branded food goods.

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