

## A comparative analysis of consumer brand preference towards accessories

Gowrishankar V

Assistant Professor, Department of Management Studies and Research, Karpagam University, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India

### Abstract

Brand preference is closely related to brand choice that can facilitate consumer decision making and activate brand purchase. There has been a long standing interest from marketers to understand how consumers form their preferences toward a specific brand knowing the pattern of consumer preferences across the population is a critical input for designing and developing innovative marketing strategies. It also uncovers the heterogeneity of consumer choices leading to efficient market segmentation strategies.

**Keywords:** brand, heterogeneity, segmentation, strategies, facilitate

### Introduction

Brands play an important role in consumer's daily life and it represent a big asset for companies owning them. Due to the very close relationship between brands and consumers, and the specific nature of branded products as an element of consumer life style, the branded goods industry needs to extend its knowledge of the process of brand preference formation in order to enhance brand equity. People begin to develop preferences at a very early age. Within any product category, most consumers have a group of brands that comprise their preference set. These are the four or five upmarket brands the consumer will consider when making a purchase. When building preference, the goal is to first get on the consumer's preference sets, and then to move up the set's hierarchy to become the brand consumers prefer the most – their upmarket brand.

Gaining and maintaining consumer preference is a battle that is never really won.

### Definitions

- Brand Preference is a selective demand for a company's brand rather than a product; the degree to which consumers prefer one brand over another.
- The percentage of people who claim that a particular brand is their first choice. In every product category, consumers have more choices, more information and higher expectations than ever before. To move consumers from trial to preference, brands need to deliver on their value proposition, as well as dislodge someone else from the consumer's existing preference set.

Preference is a scale, and brands move up, down and even off that scale with and without a vigilant brand management strategy. Pricing, promotional deals and product availability all have tremendous impact on the position of our brand in the consumer's preference set. If all things are equal, the best defence is to make us more relevant to consumers than the competition. The brands potential can only be fulfilled by continually reinforcing its perceived quality, upmarket identity and relevance to the consumer. The same branding activities that drive awareness also drive preference. And, while awareness alone will not sustain preference, it will improve the brand's potential for building and maintaining preference. With a great story and a large enough investment, awareness

can be attained rather quickly. It takes time, however, and constant reevaluation to build brand preference. Aristotle professed, "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then is not an act, but a habit." Attaining and sustaining preference is an important step on the road to gaining brand loyalty. The ability to generate more revenue, gain greater market share and beat off the competition is the reward given by consumer toward particular brand.

Brand preference is the Selective demand for a company's brand rather than a product; the degree to which consumers prefer one brand over another. In an attempt to build brand preference advertising, the advertising must persuade a target audience to consider the advantages of a brand, often by building its reputation as a long-established and trusted name in the industry.

### Theoretical background of the study

Brand preference is closely related to brand choice that can facilitate consumer decision making and activate brand purchase. There has been a long standing interest from marketers to understand how consumers form their preferences toward a specific brand knowing the pattern of consumer preferences across the population is a critical input for designing and developing innovative marketing strategies. It also uncovers the heterogeneity of consumer choices leading to efficient market segmentation strategies. The American Marketing Association (1994) defines a brand as a "name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of them intended to encourage prospective customers to differentiate a producer's product (s) from those of competitors". The primary function of the brand is to provide convenience and clarity in decision making, providing a guarantee of performance and communicating a set of expectations, thereby offering certainty and facilitating the buying process.

### Brand Preference choice criteria

There are six criteria choose brand preference. The first three element categorized as "Brand building" in terms of how brand preference can be built up. And last three elements are known as "defensive" because it preserved in the face of different opportunity or different brands available in market.

- Memorable
- Meaningful

- Likeability
- Transferable
- Adaptable
- Protectable

**Review of Literature**

Aron O’Cass, Kenny Lim, *et al.*, (2001) 1, conducted a study on “The Influence of Brand Associations on Brand Preference and Purchase Intention: An Asian Perspective on Brand Associations” The study examines the preferences and purchase intentions of young South-east Asian consumers. Specifically, the study focuses on the non-product brand associations and to tests their effects on brand preference rating and purchase intentions toward different brands of fashion apparel.

Belean del Roao, Rodolfo Vaazquez, Voactor Iglesias *et al.*, (2001) 2, conducted a study on, “The effects of brand associations on consumer response”. The study was conducted to identify the dimensions of brand image, focusing on the functions or value of the brand as perceived by consumers. The hypotheses have been tested in the Spanish sports shoes market and were partially supported. The results obtained confirm the convenience of analyzing brand associations separately and enable the ascertaining of the brand associations that are the most relevant in order to attain certain consumer responses.

**Statement of the problem**

Consumers brand preferences represent a fundamental step in understanding consumer choice. The study is undertaken to develop the understanding about consumer preference towards different Brand of Accessories and to find out the various factors such as quality, price, variety, brand equity, easy availability, appearance, which influence the consumer to prefer the brand towards accessories and to find out the reason for choosing a particular Brand in Stores, Chennai.

**Objectives of the study**

- To study the consumer’s level of preference in purchasing Accessories of company products.
- To determine consumer’s preference towards various brand of accessories at stores in Chennai.
- To find out the reasons for consumers’ choice of brands in Accessories and their satisfaction.
- To analyze the factor that influences the customer to purchase a particular brand of accessories.

**Scope of the study**

The scope of the study is limited to customers who purchase accessories only at stores in Chennai malls. The research is conducted in order to find out the brand preference among customers before and after purchasing the Accessories and their preferences to measure the various factors such as price, quality, brand loyalty, quality, variety, availability, attractiveness that may satisfy their expectation towards the products.

**Methodology**

**Type of Research**

The type of research used in this project is descriptive in nature. Descriptive research, also known as statistical research, describes data and characteristics about the population or phenomenon being studied. Descriptive research answers the questions who, what, where, when and how. In short

descriptive research deals with everything that can be counted and studied. In this study customer who purchase Accessories at Imagine store are only considered.

**Sampling Design**

The sampling method used for the study is Purposive sampling. A purposive sample is a non-representative subset of some larger population, and is constructed to serve a very specific need or purpose. This study was conducted with a sample size of 150 with customers who purchase accessories for their Apple product at Imagine Store. Customers visiting Imagine store per day is around 100. The survey is conducted for 7 days with a population of 760. The survey was conducted with 150 customers (40% of Population) who purchase Accessories only at Stores in Chennai.

**Method of data collection**

The study depends on the Primary data collected through Questionnaire Method. It consists of set of questions related to brand are Appearance, Price, Quality, Family Liking, Variety, Easy Availability, etc.

**Limitations**

Data was collected only with the people who purchase Accessories at stores in Chennai malls. Time is one of the factors which limit the study.

**Analysis & Interpretation**

**Table 1**

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	< 30	25	16.7
	31– 40	85	56.7
	41 – 50	36	24
	51 above	4	2.7
	Total	150	100
Gender	Male	88	57.1
	Female	62	40.3
	Total	150	100
Income	< 10,000	2	1.3
	10,000 - 50,000	24	16
	50,000 - 1,00,000	40	26.7
	1,00,001 Above	38	25.3
	Not Applicable	46	30.7
	Total	150	100
<b>Brand Preference Towards Accessories</b>			
Accessories	Brand	Frequency	Percent
Head Phone	Klipsch	26	16.9
	Denon	33	21.4
	Urbanears	9	5.8
	Philips	18	11.7
	Senheiser	24	15.6
	Skulcandy	11	7.1
	Soundlogic	13	8.4
Car Charger	Smart	16	10.4
	Capdase	73	47.4
	Targus	68	44.2
External Battery	Mili	9	5.8
	Capdase	18	11.7
	Targus	100	64.9
Speaker	Mili	32	20.8
	Logictech	33	21.4
	Timber	17	11
	Yamaha	40	26
	JBL	28	18.2
	Gear	15	9.7
Harman/Cardon	Ihome	13	8.4
		4	2.6

**Age of the Customer and their Preference towards Brand of Accessories**

**Table 2**

Brand Preference	Chi square value	P value	Result
Screen Guard	22.579a	0.032	Reject
Case cover	28.855a	0.118	Accept
Headphone	28.909a	0.116	Accept
Car Charger	3.672a	0.721	Accept
External Charger	12.469a	0.052	Reject
Speaker	18.403a	0.429	Accept

It is found that the above table p value of the factor are <0.05. Thus Accept the null hypothesis and Reject the alternative hypothesis. Thus there is no significant relationship between the Age of the customer and their preference towards brand of Accessories like case cover, Headphone, car charger, speaker, adaptor. There is significant relationship between the Age of the customer and their preference towards brand of Accessories like Screen guard and External charger.

**Recommendations & Conclusion Accessories**

External charger, battery, Speaker is the least preferred accessories. Hence the salesperson while selling accessories for core products can market about External Charger, battery and other Accessories which will create awareness among the customer regarding the accessories that are available in the store, thus in turn it will increase the sales of accessories.

**Brand**

- Griffin, joy, urban ears, mili, Harman/cardon are the least preferred Brand in accessories Thus the store can create awareness about those accessories to customer through their Sales Executive and can render more variety in least preferred brand of accessories to customer, so the sales of others brands will be increased.
- Major Factor that influences the customer to choose a particular brand is the brand image of Accessories. So the company can concentrate more on top preferred factors to maintain the brand image by providing standard Quality products and other factors to improve the brand image of Accessories to customer.
- Guidance to choose right product is the least factor by the customer to purchase accessories. So the company can render more accessories training and sales training to their Executives for giving an effective guidance to the customers.

**References**

1. Kwok Keung Tam. Effect of Brand Image on Consumer Purchasing Behavior on Clothing: Comparison between China and the UK’s Consumers International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management. 2007; 32(8):386-393.
2. Anthony Dadzie, Francis Boachie *et al.* Preference for Mobile Phone Operator Services in the Cape Coast Metropolis. International Journal of Business and Management. 2011, 6(11).
3. Dharmaraj C, Clement Sudhahar J *et al.* conducted a study on “Brand Preference Factors of Passenger Cars: An Empirical Assessment”. The IUP Journal of Marketing Management. 2010; 7(3):18-34.

4. Arun Kumar S, Sumathy M *et al.* Customers Brand reference on Pasteurized Packaged Milk The International Journal. 2011, 01(07). RJSSM.
5. Govind Narayan, Priyanka Jain *et al.* Consumers Preference For Mobile Service Provider: An Empirical Study in Agra. The IUP Journal of Marketing Management. 2011; 103:42-55.
6. Vikkraman P, Dineshkumar U *et al.* A Study on the Consumers’ Brand Preference towards FMCG (Dental Care) Products with Special Reference to Organized Retail Stores in Erode European Journal of Economics, Finance and Administrative Sciences. ISSN 1450-2275 Issue 50 (2012) © Euro Journals, Inc. 2012.
7. <http://articles.economicstimes.indiatimes.com>
8. <http://www.idc.com>
9. <http://www.brunel.ac.uk>
10. <http://www.bharatbook.com>
11. <http://www.managementparadise.com>
12. <http://www.reportlinker.com>
13. <http://articles.economicstimes.indiatimes.com>