



CONSUMER PREFERENCE AND SATISFACTION ON SOFT DRINK BRANDS - A STUDY THROUGH ANALYTICAL HIERARCHY PROCESS APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

Studying the reasons for consumer's brand preference and knowing his level of satisfaction on a particular brand is essential in today's competitive world. In this study the research is attempted to measure these concepts through analytical hierarchy process approach. For the purpose of research, the researcher has collected both Primary and Secondary data collection method was adopted. This research is in an exploratory structure within which research should be conducted. Thus the preparation of such as design facilitates research to be as efficient as possible and will yield maximal information. The researcher has used analytical hierarchy process for analyzing the collected data. The findings, recommendations and conclusion of this study were made based on research objectives.

Key words: Analytical Hierarchy Process, Consumer Preference, Satisfaction, Strategy, Soft Drink Brands.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The consumption starts with an expectation, if the product or service met out the customer's expectation, then we could say that customer is satisfied. Today we have enormous number of soft drink brands, if a brand wants to with stand the competition; it is must to satisfy the customer. Previous days Indian customers won't prefer the branded soft drinks much, but now a days it would be like of fashion (Gopinath & Kalpana, 2019). The satisfaction is the dimension of a person's felt state resulting from looking at a product saw exhibition (outcomes) in connection to the person's desire (Kotler, 200). (Gopinath, 2019 a) broke down that there is

relative significance of service quality attributes and showed that responsiveness is the most significance dimension pursued by dependability, customer saw system quality, assurance, comfort, sympathy and tangibles.

Usharani & Gopinath (2020 a) have also mentioned that, the behavior study of the target customer is must to know about the customers expectation and the customer satisfaction has been one of the best tools for a successful business. Customer satisfaction is characterized as a general assessment based on the absolute purchase and consumption involvement with the great or service after some time (Gopinath, 2019 b). With promoting, customer satisfaction also comes alongside it which means it ascertains the desire for the customer on how the goods and services are being encouraged by the companies. Significant data on the most proficient method to make customers further satisfied is in this way, a pivotal result (Oliver 1999). Initially, customer satisfaction is a significant segment of business strategy as well as customer retention and item repurchase. Customer satisfaction is an indicator that predicts the future customer conduct (Hill *et al.*, 2007). The level of satisfaction is the determinant of brand preference, of once the consumer is satisfied on a particular brand, it is rate to switch over (Unnamali & Gopinath, 2020). Customers frequently search for an incentive in the all-out service which requires inward coordinated effort among the division that is responsible for various elements of the offering, such as the center item (goods or services) conveying the item, item documentation, and so on. Additionally, from benefit and efficiency perspectives just activities that produce an incentive for customers should be done.

In recent days, a consumer concern on organic products has increased considerably, which indirectly influences the consumption of branded soft drinks (Kathick *et al.*, 2020 a). the organization should almost certainly construct trust with the customer so it is easy to get the input from the customer, and should ensure that, the ingredients are not harm to health (Karthick *et al.*, 2020 b) Customer satisfaction is affected by specific item or service features and perceptions of value. Satisfaction is also affected by customer's passionate responses, their attributions nether view of value (Zeithal and Bitner, 2003).

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Increased customer satisfaction can give organization benefits like customer loyalty, broadening the existence cycle of a customer extending the life of merchandise the customer purchase and increases customers positive informal correspondence (Gopinath, 2011). At the point when the customer is satisfied with the item or service of the organization, it can influence the customer to purchase much of the time to and to prescribe products or services to potential customers. It is impossible for a business association to experience childhood in case the organization ignores or disregards the needs of customers (Tao, 2014). Despite the fact that customer satisfaction is an urgent piece of a business, satisfaction alone can't take a business to a best dimension. Customer satisfaction produces a positive money related result, especially in standard purchases. Oliver (1999) defines loyalty as "a profoundly held duty to reconstruct and re-belittle a favored item or service later on despite situational influences and showcasing efforts having the capacity to cause switching behaviors." Customer loyalty is seen as the strength of the relationship between a person relative frame of mind and re-support. Loyalty building requires the organization to focus the estimation of its item and services and to show that it is interested to satisfy the desire or construct the relationship with customers (Griffin, 2002).

Holding the existing customer is a important task than getting a new customer (Thomas and Tobe, 2013). Persistent customers will recommend others to purchase the same. Customer loyalty is not picked up by a mishap, they are constructed through the sourcing and design decisions. Designing for customer loyalty requires customer-focused approaches that perceive

the need and interest of service beneficiary. Customer loyalty is worked after some time across different transactions. A relationship with a customer is similarly imperative in customer loyalty and this requires organization work in a more extensive setting that extends past itself, as no organization can be world class at everything. Gremler and Brown (1999) isolated customer loyalty into three distinct categories that incorporate conduct loyalty, purposeful loyalty, and enthusiastic loyalty. Conduct loyalty is continuing purchasing conduct while purposeful loyalty is the possible purchasing aim. Passionate loyalty, be that as it may, is accomplished when a customer feels that a brand corresponds with their esteem, ideas, and passion.

3. METHODS

Both Primary and Secondary data collection method was adopted. This research is in an exploratory structure within which research should be conducted. Thus the preparation of such as design facilitates research to be as efficient as possible and will yield maximal information. The researcher has done the analysis by using various analytical techniques namely analytical hierarchy process. The findings, recommendations and conclusion of this study were made based on research objectives.

4. RESULTS

The Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), introduced by Thomas Saaty (1980), is an effective tool for dealing with complex decision making, and may aid the decision maker to set priorities and make the best decision. By reducing complex decisions to a series of pairwise comparisons, and then synthesizing the results, the AHP helps to capture both subjective and objective aspects of a decision. In addition, the AHP incorporates a useful technique for checking the consistency of the decision maker's evaluations, thus reducing the bias in the decision-making process. The AHP considers a set of evaluation criteria, and a set of alternative options among which the best decision is to be made. It is important to note that, since some of the criteria could be contrasting, it is not true in general that the best option is the one which optimizes each single criterion, rather the one which achieves the most suitable trade-off among the different criteria. The AHP generates a weight for each evaluation criterion according to the decision maker's pairwise comparisons of the criteria. The higher the weight, the more important the corresponding criterion. Next, for a fixed criterion, the AHP assigns a score to each option according to the decision maker's pairwise comparisons of the options based on that criterion. The higher the score, the better the performance of the option with respect to the considered criterion. Finally, the AHP combines the criteria weights and the options scores, thus determining a global score for each option, and a consequent ranking. The global score for a given option is a weighted sum of the scores it obtained with respect to all the criteria.

The resulting weights are based on the principal eigenvector of the decision matrix

Table 1 Decision Matrix

	Customer's voice	Customer retention	Customer needs	Customer success	Customer Loyalty
Customer's voice	1	9.00	8.00	9.00	8.00
Customer retention	0.11	1	7.00	8.00	9.00
Customer needs	0.12	0.14	1	8.00	7.00
Customer success	0.11	0.12	0.12	1	8.00
Customer Loyalty	0.12	0.11	0.14	0.12	1

*Number of comparisons = 10; Consistency Ratio CR = 41.9%
Principal eigen value = 6.886; Eigenvector solution: 11 iterations*

The results of above table comparisons shows consistency ratio as 41.9% and principal eigen value is 688 which is the outcome of 11 iterations. The priority weight of criteria & attribute is calculated using the eigen vector method afore mention first, a pair wise comparison matrix is developed for each decisive factor, and then the resultant matrix is normalized to unify the result. The resulting weights for the criteria based on pair-wise comparisons are presented in the following table-2.

These are the resulting weights for the criteria based on your pairwise comparisons

Table 2 Priorities

Category		Priority	Rank
1	Customer's voice	59.6%	1
2	Customer retention	23.1%	2
3	Customer needs	10.6%	3
4	Customer success	4.6%	4
5	Customer Loyalty	2.1%	5

The above table shows the ranking of priorities based on eigen vector method. Accordingly, Customer's voice occupies the first priority (59.6%) with no. 1 rank. The second rank is Customer retention with 23.1% followed by Customer needs with priority as 10.6% as third rank. The fourth and fifth ranks are Customer success (4.6%) and Customer Loyalty (2.1%) respectively.

5. DISCUSSIONS

Each supplier wants to make and hold a dedicated customer who engages in proceeded productive business with him. Customer Loyalty is the measure of success of the supplier in holding a long haul relationship with the customer. Thus customer loyalty is the point at which a supplier receives a definitive reward of his efforts in interfacing with its customer. Customer loyalty tends the customer to intentionally choose a specific item against another for his need. The loyalty might be item specific or it might be organization specific. At the point when a steadfast customer has tedious prerequisite of the same item, such customers might be described as being 'brand faithful'. Then again he may also require distinctive products of the same maker. In other words he makes significant purchases direct from the same supplier and that counts as the organization specific loyalty. Loyalty also means that customer is sticking to the supplier on specific grounds however he might have different options also. It might be possible that the supplier might not have the best item or the customer might have some problems with the supplier in respect of his supply of the item however the customer likes to overlook different options and prefers to proceed with the same supplier as the customer thinks the supplier provides him more esteem and advantage than others. Such faithful customers will in general spend more cash purchase more, purchase longer and enlighten more individuals concerning the item or supplier. This kind of long haul customer loyalty must be made by making the customers feel that they are number one need with the supplier. Some customers are innately unsurprising and faithful, irrespective of the supplier with which they are working together. They simply favor long haul relationships with him. Faithful customers are predisposed to stay with one item or supplier, resisting focused offers and furthermore prescribe the supplier to others. In case the business is done specifically the relationship is immediate so also the loyalty. In any case, on the off chance that the selling is through at least two intermediaries, at that point the loyalty has to be measured at various levels. In that case the end customer loyalty is affected by the loyalty of the middle of the road customers. At that point the supplier has to focus his loyalty retention plan as needs be and has to pass judgment and examine the loyalties of the intermediaries. This process depends on what measure of significance he gives to every one of

the intermediaries and the amount to a definitive customer. In any case, it is sure that all around overseen customer retention programs are sure to give a definitive customer loyalty. Genuine, the customers who are focused by a retention program demonstrate higher loyalty to a business. Along these lines such customer retention programs should incorporate ordinary correspondence with customers, and give those opportunities to stay dynamic and choosing to work with the supplier customer's perspective (Bhawiya Roopa & Gopinath, 2020). Loyalty is demonstrated by the actions of the customer. However, it doesn't imply that the customer satisfaction level can measure his loyalty. Customer loyalty is not customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is the basic passage point for a decent business to start with. A customer can be extremely satisfied with the arrangement and still not be faithful. Then again a customer may not express satisfaction but rather wants to stay faithful to the supplier because of some reasons which keeps him profited by that supplier. For the same level of satisfaction, the loyalty level may also be distinctive for various suppliers. Further, similar studies discussed on Consumers Protection (Gopinath, 2020 c), Consumer Perception (Gopinath & Kalpana, 2019; Gopinath, 2019 d), Consumer brand Preferences and responsibility (Gopinath & Iris Margaret, 2019; Gopinath, 2019 e).

6. CONCLUSIONS

Customer experience and customer success are enormous buzzwords in the MSP space, and in light of current circumstances. When you wow your customers and are proactive about their needs, you manufacture an amazing sense of loyalty that boosts retention and perhaps even leads to clients subscribing to extra services. These are certain basic parts of your business that deserve your consideration. The issue, be that as it may, is that most conversations about customer experience thoroughly discard the job that your sales process plays. As a general rule – and this has been our involvement with our arrangement setting clients and the prospects they draw in – the genuine capability of customer loyalty or customer experience is established in your sales process.

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