

# CONSUMER PERCEPTION AND TRUST: EXAMINING THE IMPACT ON PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR TOWARD EMERGING BEVERAGE BRANDS

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**Abstract**—The research study examines consumer perception as an independent variable which scientists define as the process through which consumers assess emerging beverage brands based on their product experience and their knowledge of product features. The study measures consumer perception through three different dimensions which researchers established as measurement criteria. The purpose of this study was to investigate how customer perception, consumer trust and purchasing behaviour relate to emerging beverage brands in emerging markets. The study's conceptual framework points out how crucial the relational and perceptual elements are in influencing consumer choice. Perception and trust are important factors in determining whether customers are prepared to buy products from emerging brands in highly competitive beverage markets where consumers are exposed to a wide range of product options. The study's conclusions imply that consumer perception and trust are closely related elements that affect consumers' purchasing decisions. Building consumer trust can be facilitated by favorable consumer views of product quality, flavor, packaging, and brand image. In essence, trust serves as a bridge because when customers have faith in a company, they perceive less danger and are far more likely to form positive buy intentions. These connections highlights how crucial it is to create trust and solid brand perceptions in order to promote customer's adoption of new beverages goods.

**Keywords:** Consumer Perception, Beverage, Brands, Purchase Behaviour, Trust.

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## 1. Introduction

The global beverages industry is currently defined by a “wellness revolution” that has fundamentally rewritten the rules of consumer purchase behaviour. Consumers today are no longer just looking for simple refreshment, they are active evaluators of nutritional value, functional benefits and unique consumption experiences. This shift has triggered a surge of innovative brands offering everything from plant-based alternatives to high-tech functional drinks. For such emerging players, success depends on their ability to align with a modern consumer who is increasingly conscious of specific ingredients and health claims (Alalwan, 2025a). According to research, consumers' decisions to accept these new beverage options are now mostly influenced by product qualities such perceived health advantages and ingredient transparency. (Kowalska et al., 2024).

While these trends are global, the competitive pressure is most intense with in emerging economy. In these regions the combination of rising disposable incomes and rapid urbanization has created an attractive but crowded marketplace the sheer volume of new entries makes it difficult for any single emerging brand to stand out in the market and establish credibility among consumers. Consequently, survival now depends on a deep understanding of the commercial determinants of a purchase. Specifically how marketing activities and product characteristics Translate into a consumer's perception of value. (Imtiyaz et al., 2022).

At the heart of this decision making process is consumer perception this is not a passive reaction but an active interpretation where individuals weigh Sensory attributes like flavor against functional claims and brand positioning because consumers often rely on these subjective evaluation to compare competing products a brand's perceived quality and performance are the primary hurdles to the final sales (**Zaura & Thaib, 2025**) In this functional beverage sector specifically the perceived authenticity of A claim is often the deciding factor in whether a consumer moves from curiosity to an actual purchase (**Alalwan, 2025**).

However positive consumer perceptions alone are often insufficient to drive purchasing decisions unless they are supported by a foundation of trust. Trust helps reduce the perceived performance risk that consumer experience when considering unfamiliar brands (**Zaura & Thaib, 2025**). For emerging beverage companies establishing this trust is particularly important as consumers may be hesitant to try products from brands, they do not recognize one strategy increasingly used by beverage brands is transparent packaging which can signal product authenticity and quality while strengthening consumer confidence. (**Yu et al., 2025**). In emerging countries, where consumers often rely on credibility cues to reduce ambiguity during the decision-making process, trust becomes even more important (**Thenmozhi, 2025**). Overtime this trust can strengthen consumer brand relationship and contribute to sustained brand performance (**Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001**).

These perceptions and trust signals coalesce into the final act of purchase behavior. Foundational psychological models suggest that these behavioral intentions are driven by a mix of personal attitude social norms and perceived control (**Ajzen, 1991**). In the real-world beverage market this manifests through a complex interaction of price sensitivity marketing communication and even the variety of flavors offered (**R et al., 2024**). While certain trends like the rise of specialized drinks show how specific niche can capture attention, they also highlight the importance of understanding the unique motivations of consumer in developing regions (**Chia et al., 2023**).

Despite the wealth of general marketing research, we still have a limited understanding of how these variables specifically interact for emerging brands trying to navigate the unique skepticism found in emerging markets. This conceptual study addresses that gap by examining consumer perception and trust as the twin determinants of purchase behavior for new emerging brands. By exploring how these factors' ability in high competition environments, this research provides a framework for emerging brands to move beyond mere visibility and towards sustainable consumer adoption.

## **2. Review of Literature**

### **2.1 Consumer perception (Independent Variable)**

(**Alalwan, 2025**) examined consumer psychology in a functional beverage sector and highlighted That nutritional awareness perceived health benefits and product transparency significantly influence consumer attitudes towards beverages. The study found that customers are increasingly evaluating beverage products according to their perceived functional value and health-related benefits, which ultimately influences their purchasing decisions.

(**Kowalska et al., 2024**) Investigated consumer attitude towards functional beverages and found that consumer perception of product quality nutritional benefits and brand credibility significantly influences purchase intentions. This research emphasised that consumers are increasingly interested in beverages that provide additional health benefits beyond basic refreshments

(**R et al., 2024**) Analysed consumers buying behaviour towards carbonated beverages in Gujarat India the study identified that taste preference product availability brand reputation and price sensitivity play an important role in shaping consumer perception and purchase decision. The finding indicates that favourable consumer perception regarding product attributes can increase their likelihood of purchase.

(**Zaura & Thaib, 2025**) Examined the influence of perceived product quality on purchase intention and found that consumers are more likely to purchase products when they perceive them as reliable and high in quality. The study also highlighted that perceived performance risk can affect purchasing behavior indicating that strong product perception is necessary to reduce uncertainty.

### **2.2 Consumer Trust (Mediating Variable)**

(**Yu et al., 2025**) Explore the role of trust influencing consumer perception of transparent packaging in tea beverages. The study found that transparency in packaging allows consumers to visually assess product quality which enhances consumer trust and positively influenced purchase intentions.

**(Thenmozhi, 2025)** Examine the relationship between trust and perceived risk in online consumer behaviour in India. The findings revealed that trust significantly reduces perceived risk and increases consumer willingness to engage with brand and complete purchase transaction.

**(Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001)** Investigated the relationship between brand trust, brand effect and brand performance. The study demonstrated that brand trust contributes significantly to brand loyalty and long-term consumer brand relationship relationships. These findings highlighted that trust strengthen emotional connection with brand and increases repeat purchasing behaviour.

### **2.3 Consumer Purchase Behaviour (Dependent Variable)**

**(Chia et al., 2023)** Examine consumer purchase intention towards Boba beverage and found that consumer attitudes received value and product experience significantly influences purchase decisions.

**(Imtiyaz et al., 2022)** Investigated Consumer purchase intention towards convenience food products in emerging economies. In this study it identified marketing communication consumer lifestyle changes and commercial determinants as key drivers influencing purchasing behavior.

### **3. Research Gap**

Although the pillars of the food and beverage industry from product quality and health consciousness to the fundamental role of brand trust are covered in great detail in the literature currently in publications these components are often examined in silos. We know that perception influences attitudes and that trust lowers perceived risk but we don't fully comprehend how these factors work together as an ecosystem to influence final purchase decisions.

Additionally established categories like carbonated soft drinks or functional health beverages have historically received more scholarly attention. In terms of emerging brands, the newcomers competing for recognition in markets dominated by multinational giants, this creates a significant blind spot. Due to changing lifestyles and increased exposure to options, consumer behavior is changing quickly in these high stake's environment.

Therefore, in addition to identifying the key factors influencing consumer decisions regarding emerging beverage plans, it is necessary to look into relationship between consumer perception, consumer trust and purchasing behaviour This gap can provide useful information for upcoming beverage companies, hoping to improve brand perception, increase consumer confidence and influence consumer behaviour in competitive markets.

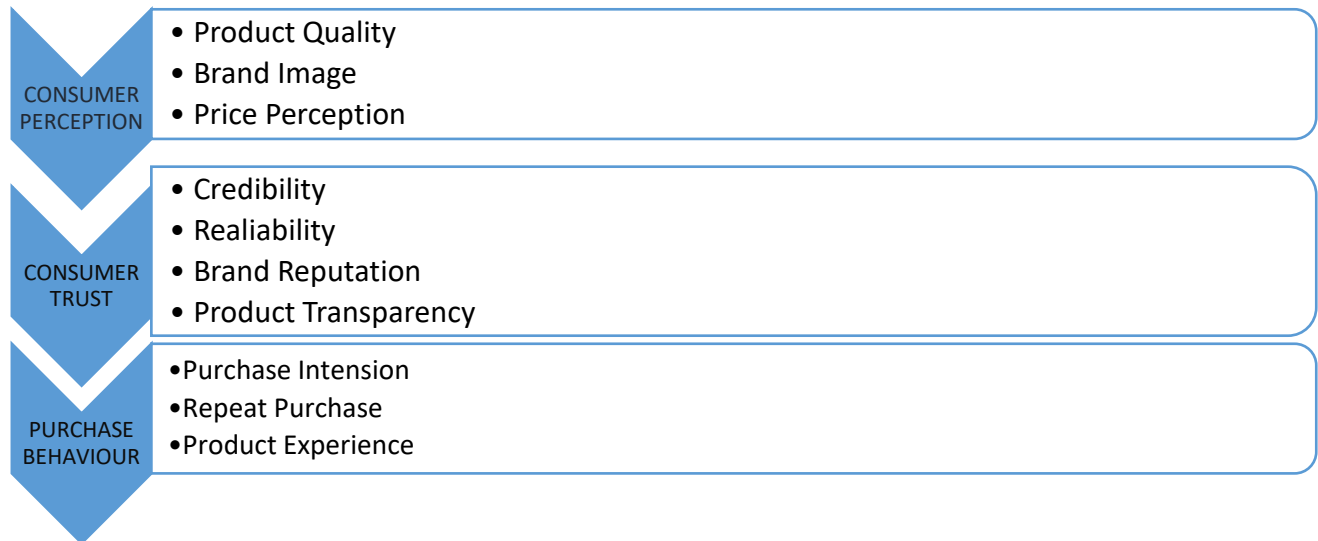
### **4. Statement of the Problem**

- 1) The rapid emergence of new beverage brands has intensified competition in urban markets, making consumer acceptance, a significant challenge for emerging beverage companies
- 2) Consumers often show hesitation towards emerging beverage brands due to limited brand similarity concerns about product, quality and the presence of established brand credibility.
- 3) Consumer perception plays a critical role in shaping purchase behaviour. However, negative or uncertain perceptions may discourage consumers from trying or repeatedly purchasing products from emerging beverage brands.
- 4) Consumer trust is an important determinant of the beverage industry as factor such as product, safety, ingredient, transparency, and brand reliability, strongly influence purchase decision.
- 5) There is a lack of integrated studies, examining the combined influence of consumer perception and consumer trust on purchase behaviour towards emerging beverage brand.

### **5. Objective of the Study**

1. To examine the role of consumer perception in shaping purchase behaviour toward emerging beverage brands.
2. Develop a conceptual understanding of the relationship between consumer perception, consumer trust, and purchase behaviour in the context of emerging beverage brands.

## 6. Variables



**6.1 Consumer Perception** The research study examines consumer perception as an independent variable which scientists define as the process through which consumers assess emerging beverage brands based on their product experience and their knowledge of product features. The study measures consumer perception through three different dimensions which researchers established as measurement criteria.

- Product Quality – Consumers’ perception of the overall quality, taste, ingredients, and packaging of the beverage product.
- Brand Image – The set of impressions and associations consumers hold regarding the reputation, uniqueness, and attractiveness of the brand.
- Price Perception – Consumers’ evaluation of whether the price of the beverage brand is reasonable, affordable, and provides value for money.

**6.2 Consumer Trust** The degree to which consumers have faith in an emerging beverage brand's capacity to provide dependable, safe, and superior products is known as consumer trust. Three separate dimensions are used in the study to gauge consumer trust:

- Credibility: The extent to which customers think a brand is trustworthy and sincere.
- Reliability: The brand's capacity to continuously produce goods that satisfy customers.
- Customers' opinion of a brand's general standing and legitimacy in the marketplace is known as its reputation.
- Product Transparency: The degree to which a brand offers unambiguous information about the source of ingredients and product quality.

**6.3 Purchase Behaviour** When consumers choose and buy new beverage brands, their actions and decision-making processes are referred to as purchase behaviour. The following dimensions are used in this study to measure purchasing behaviour:

- Purchase Intention: Customers' propensity to purchase or sample new beverage brands.
- Repeat Purchase: The probability that customers will buy the same brand of beverage after first consuming it.
- Product Experience: The general contentment and post-consumption experience of customers with the product.

## 7. Conceptual Framework

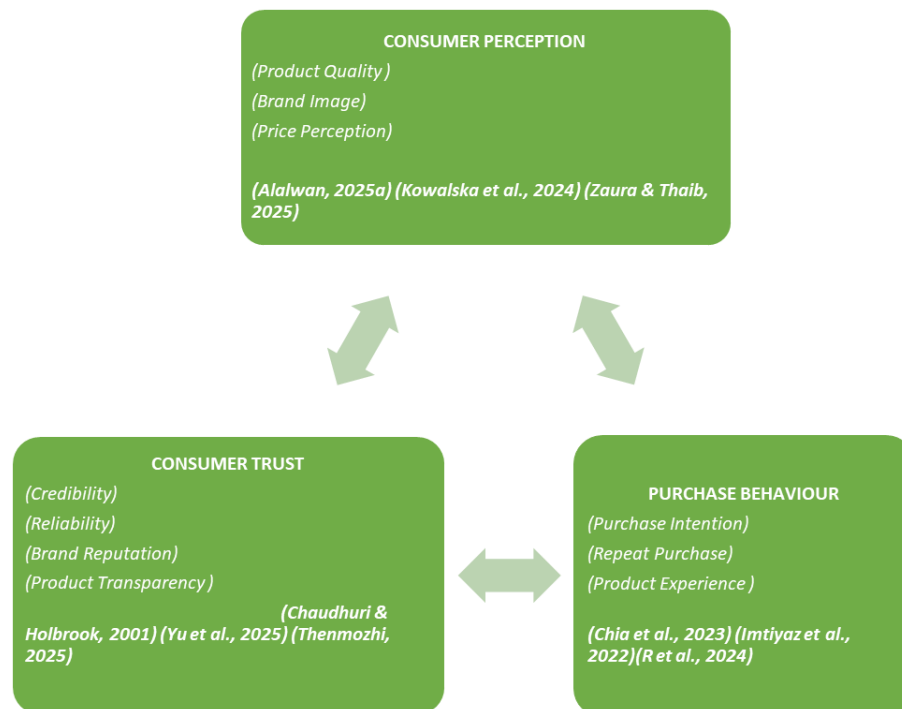
Studying and understanding consumer behaviour in competitive markets requires examining the psychological and perceptual factors that influence purchasing decisions in the beverage industry where consumers are exposed to a wide variety and ranges of product choices, factors such as consumer perception and consumer trust place a significant role in shaping purchase behaviour, emerging beverage brands, often face challenges and gaining consumer acceptance due to limited familiarity and intense competition from established brands. Therefore, it becomes important to understand how consumers form perception about these brands and how trust influences that purchasing decisions

**7.1 Consumer perception** refers to the way consumers interpret and evaluate information about a product or brand based on their experience beliefs and expectations Consumer often develop perception about beverage Brands through factors such as product quality packaging brand image taste price and perceived health benefits This perception influence how consumers evaluate the value and reliability of a product when consumers develop positive perception about a brand they are more likely to consider purchasing its products.

**7.2 Consumer trust** presents the confidence consumers place in brands ability to deliver consistent quality and fulfill consumer expectations Trust plays an important role in reducing perceived risk and uncertainty associated with purchasing new and unfamiliar products In the context of emerging beverage brands trust becomes particularly important because consumers may initially be hesitant to try products from brands that they are not familiar with Positive consumer perceptions regarding product quality transparency and brand credibility can help build trust amongst consumers.

**7.3 Purchase behavior** refers to the decision-making process through which consumers select products that satisfy their needs and preferences in the beverage industry Purchase behavior may be influenced by several factors including product quality brand reputation price and strategy marketing communication and consumer experiences when consumer Receive a beverage brand positively and trust the brand, they are more likely to develop favorable purchase intentions and ultimately purchase the product.

Based on these relationships the conceptual framework of this study proposes that consumer perception influences consumer trust and purchase behavior towards emerging beverage brands while consumer trust also influences purchase behavior in addition consumer trust may act as an important mechanism through which consumer perception are translated into purchasing decisions This framework therefore highlights the interconnected relationship between perception trust and purchase behavior in shaping consumer decisions towards emerging beverage brands.



## **8. Discussion**

Understanding consumer behaviour towards emerging beverage brands requires the examination of psychological factors which control their purchasing choices. The two factors which need to be investigated are the way consumers perceive products and their level of trust in products, which together determine their purchasing decisions. The study's proposed framework demonstrates how these variables interact with each other to shape consumer decision-making processes within the beverage industry.

### **8.1 Consumer Perception and Consumer Trust**

The level of trust that consumers place in a brand depends mostly on their understanding of the brand through its consumer perception. When consumers develop favorable perception about a product, they will consider the brand as trustworthy because of the product's quality and taste and packaging and price and brand image. Positive perception helps reduce uncertainty and strengthen in consumers' confidence in the brand. (Zaura & Thaib, 2025)

In the context of emerging beverage brands, perception becomes particularly important because consumers may not be familiar with the brand or its products. Consumers happen to rely on available cues such as product packaging, branding, product information and marketing communication to form the perception. When these cues create positive impression consumers are most likely to develop trust towards the brand. Past research also highlighted that trust plays an important role in strengthening the relationship between consumers and brands by increasing confidence in product, quality and reliability. (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001)

### **8.2 Consumer Perception and Purchase Behaviour**

Purchase behavior is also directly influenced by consumer perception. Before making a purchase, consumers typically consider the features of the goods and the brand. Customers' perceptions of a beverage brand can be greatly influenced by elements such perceived health advantages, flavor, packaging design, price perception, and product quality (Kowalska et al., 2024)

When consumers hold positive perceptions about an emerging beverage brand, they are more likely to develop favorable attitudes towards the product and consider it as a viable alternative to established brands. Positive perceptions can increase consumers' willingness to try new products and encourage purchase decisions. Studies examining beverage consumption behaviour also suggest that consumer attitude and perceived product value significantly influences purchase intentions within beverage market. (Chia et al., 2023) In competitive markets where consumers have multiple beverage options. Favorable perceptions can therefore play a decisive role in influencing purchase behaviour.

### **8.3 Consumer Trust and Purchase Behaviour**

Consumer trust is another critical factor in influencing purchase behaviour. Trust reflects the level of confidence. Consumers have in a brand's ability to deliver consistent product quality and meet their expectations. When consumer trust a brand, they perceive lower risk in purchasing the product and are more willing to engage with a brand. (Thenmozhi, 2025)

In the beverage industry, trust can be influenced by factors such as product, transparency, ingredient, quality, brand reputation and consistent product. Performance. Research also suggest that transparency and product credibility can enhance consumer trust and positively influence purchase intentions towards beverage products. (Yu et al., 2025) For emerging beverage brands building, consumer trust is essential because consumers may initially be hesitant to try unfamiliar brands. Once trust is established. Consumers are more likely to develop stronger purchase intentions and continue purchasing the brand products.

On the whole, the relationship between consumer perception, consumer trust and purchase behaviour highlights, importance of building positive perception and establishing trust among consumers. Emerging beverage brands that successfully communicate product quality, authenticity and value are more likely to influence consumer perception, strengthen trust and ultimately encourage purchase behaviour.

## **9. Conclusion and Implications**

The **purpose of this study** was to investigate how customer perception, consumer trust and purchasing behaviour relate to emerging beverage brands in emerging markets. The study's conceptual framework points out how crucial the relational and perceptual elements are in influencing consumer choice. Perception and trust are important factors in

determining whether customers are prepared to buy products from emerging brands in highly competitive beverage markets where consumers are exposed to a wide range of product options.

**The study's conclusions** imply that consumer perception and trust are closely related elements that affect consumers' purchasing decisions. Building consumer trust can be facilitated by favorable consumer views of product quality, flavor, packaging, and brand image. In essence, trust serves as a bridge because when customers have faith in a company, they perceive less danger and are far more likely to form positive buy intentions. These connections highlight how crucial it is to create trust and solid brand perceptions in order to promote customer's adoption of new beverage goods.

**From a managerial perspective** the study highlights the importance for emerging beverage brands to focus on strategies that strengthen consumers perception and trust. Companies should prioritise product quality, transparency, communication of product attributes and consistent brand messaging to enhance credibility among consumers. Marketing initiatives such as social media engagement, influencer collaborations and product sampling may also help increase brand familiarity and encourage consumer trial.

The study also contributes to the **academic literature** by integrating consumers perception, consumer trust and purchase behaviour into a single conceptual framework within the context of emerging beverage brands while previous studies have examined the variables individually. This research highlights their interconnected role in influencing consumer decision making.

**Social implication:** The research results demonstrate an extensive social effect which impacts both individual consumers and the entire beverage industry. The research shows that consumer buying habits change according to their product perception and their ability to trust products which leads to better sustainable consumption practices when consumers understand the product quality and ingredient content and health benefits. The new beverage companies that prioritize transparency and product safety and ingredient disclosure will establish better customer trust through their business practices. Such practices help boost consumer trust in beverage companies which encourages responsible consumption. The study demonstrates that beverage companies must establish ethical marketing practices while sustaining product quality and transparency standards to protect customer trust. The beverage industry requires improved consumer education programs because these initiatives will enhance public trust which results in better value for customers in the marketplace.

**Future research** may further expand this framework by incorporating additional factors such as brand loyalty, perceived value, consumers experience or marketing communication strategies. Studies that test the relationships between these variables using quantitative methods may also provide deeper insights into consumer behaviour towards emerging beverage brands across different markets and demographic groups.

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