A STUDY ON CONSUMER BRAND PREFERENCE TOWARDS KCP SOLAR INDUSTRY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SALEM

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Abstract—*Consumer brand preference is an essential step to understand consumer choice behavior, and has therefore always received great attention from marketers. Brand preferences reveal the type of attributes a brand possesses, to strengthen its position and increase its market share. Moreover, it forms a critical input in developing a company's successful brand strategy, and gives insight for product development. However, the shift to experiential marketing broadens the role of the brand from a bundle of attributes to experiences. Experiential marketing also considers both, the rational and irrational assumptions of consumer behavior. The technological advancement helped increasing the similarities between the brands attributes and product commoditization. Consequently, consumers cannot shape their preferences among brands using rational attributes only. They seek the brand that creates experience; intrigue them in a sensorial, emotional, and creative way. Companies' competitiveness in such market has, therefore become increasingly difficult. Their survival requires building their competitive advantage by delivering memorable experiences, which would influence consumers' brand preferences, and consequently stimulate consumers' purchase decisions.*

INTRODUCTION

Brand Preference is the extent to which a brand is recognized by potential customers, and is correctly associated with a particular product. Expressed usually as a percentage of target market, Brand Preference is the primary goal of advertising in the early months or years of a product's introduction.

Brand Preference is the extent to which the consumer associates the brand with the product he desires to buy. It is the brand recall and the brand recognition of the company to the consumers. Brand recall is the ability of the consumer to recollect the brand with reference to the product whereas brand recognition is the potential of the consumer to retrieve the past knowledge of the brand when enquired about the brand or shown an image of the brand logo. Brand Preference is an essential part of brand development which helps the brand to stand out from the others in this monopolistically competitive market.

A brand name that is well known to the great majority of households is also called a household name. Brand Preference is an important way of promoting commodity-related products. This is because for these products, there are very few factors that differentiate one product from its competitors. Therefore, the product that maintains the highest Brand Preference compared to its competitors will usually get the most sales.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Brand preference is an effort to recognize and forecast human action in buying decision. These actions can take part in a great role in prospect market potentials of the company. The solar industry in Salem is fast growing and expanding one. Studies on brand preference will definitely help in its future growth and development in the right direction. Brand preferences of the rural and urban consumers are vary. Some buyers are totally brand loyal, buying only one brand in a product group. Most of the buyers frequent switch over switch over to other brands. The present study has been conducted to find out the brand preference for solar in Salem.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To discuss the consumption pattern of the respondents towards KCP Solar industry products.
- To analyze the brand preferences and influencing factors of the respondents towards solar products.
- Brand preference is used in many marketing applications including in this firm
- The customers to perceive that brand offers and best value the factor influence of customers brand preference in the firm
- To go into the problems faced by respondents in solar products.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study that covers the attitude and perception of the preference for KCP Solar products in Salem district. This will be of immense use to the marketers in the solar industry. This study will help the private brands to improve and to bring some innovation in their products which will fulfill the needs and desires of the consumers. Moreover, this study will help the policymakers to frame the policies to improve the productivity of product based on the increasing demand for solar products.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The research finding was applied only in Salem
- The different views and opinions provided by the respondents were subjected to Personal bias.
- The respondents may not be true in filling up the questionnaires.
- The study was only confined to 130 respondents.
- The reliability of the data may not be dependable.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Methodology is a systematic wa11y to solve a research problem; It includes various steps that are generally adopted by a researcher in studying the problem along with the logic behind them.

RESEARCH DESIGN

A Research Design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with the economy in procedure‖. The research design adopted for the studies is descriptive design. The researcher has to describe the present situation in order to know the behavior of the consumers. Hence descriptive research study is used. Descriptive research can only report what has happened and what is happening.

PERIOD OF STUDY

The duration taken by the researcher for the data collection and analysis regarding the customer satisfaction of KCP Solar products, Salem for three months

DATA COLLECION

The following techniques were adopted for data collection.

Primary data

Primary data was collected through face to face interviews while filling up questionnaires (130 respondents).

Secondary data

Relevant information was gathered from magazines, newspapers and project reports that formed the secondary data.

Sample design

Convenience sampling techniques were used for the study.

Sample Size

The study based only on the opinion and expectation of consumer. Total number of sample taken for the study is 130 respondents.

POPULATION

The aggregate elementary units in the survey are referred to as the population. Here it covers the entire customers of KCP Solar, Salem.

SAMPLING METHOD

Sampling method utilized was convenience sampling was adopted.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

Stratified random sampling is a method of sampling that involves the division of a population into smaller groups known as strata. In stratified random sampling, or stratification, the strata are formed based on members' shared attributes or characteristics.

STATISTICAL TOOLS USED

1. Percentage analysis
2. Chi Square analysis
3. Correlation analysis
4. ANOVA

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

CHI-SQUARE TEST

NULL HYPOTHESIS

H_O: There is no significance relationship between educational qualification and opinion about brand image of the product

ALTERNATIVE HYPOTHESIS

H_1: There is a significance relationship between educational qualification and opinion about brand image of the product

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Educational Qualification * opinion about brand image of the product	130	100.0%	0	.0%	130	100.0%

Educational Qualification * opinion about brand image of the product Cross tabulation

Count		opinion about brand image of the product				
		Excellent	Good	Moderate	Poor	Total
Educational Qualification	Illiterate SSLC/HSC	31	0	0	0	31
	Diploma	17	33	3	0	53

	Graduate	0	0	27	0	27
		0	0	5	14	19
Total		48	33	35	14	130

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.513E2[a]	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	231.325	9	.000
N of Valid Cases	130		

a. 4 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.05.

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Asymp. Std. Error[a]	Approx. T[b]	Approx. Sig.
Ordinal by Ordinal	Gamma	1.000	.000	25.327	.000
Measure of Agreement	Kappa	.c			
N of Valid Cases		130			

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.

b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

c. Kappa statistics cannot be computed.They require a symmetric 2-way table in which the values of the first variable match the values of the second variable.

RESULT

Hence the value is less than 0.05, we accept null hypothesis and reject alternate hypothesis. So there is no significant difference between educational qualification and opinion about brand image of the product

CORRELATION

The table shows that the relationship between age and opinion about brand image of the product

Correlations

		Age	opinion about brand image of the product
Age	Pearson Correlation	1	.964**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	130	130
opinion about brand image of the product	Pearson Correlation	.964**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed) N	.000	
		130	130

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

NONPARAMETRIC CORRELATIONS

Correlations

		Age	opinion about brand image of the product
Kendall's tau_b Age	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.951**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	130	130
opinion about brand image of the product	Correlation Coefficient	.951**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	130	130
Spearman's rho Age	Correlation Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed)	1.000	.974**
		.	.000

	N	130	130
opinion about brand image of the product	Correlation Coefficient	.974**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	130	130

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

RESULT

This is a positive correlation. There are relationships between age and opinion about brand image of the product.

ANOVA

NULL HYPOTHESIS

H_0: There is no significance relationship between monthly income and customer consider before purchasing these products.

ALTERNATIVE HYPOTHESIS

H: There is a significance relationship between monthly income and customer consider before purchasing these products.

Descriptive

Monthly income	N	Mean	Std. Deviatio n	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minim um	Maxi mum	Between-Compon ent Variance
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound			
Brand image	49	1.33	.474	.068	1.19	1.46	1	2	
Agree Loyalty	33	2.30	.467	.081	2.14	2.47	2	3	
Price	23	3.13	.344	.072	2.98	3.28	3	4	
Others	25	4.00	.000	.000	4.00	4.00	4	4	
Total	130	2.41	1.090	.096	2.22	2.60	1	4	
Mod Fixed el Effects			.402	.035	2.34	2.48			
Random Effects				.623	.43	4.39			1.406

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

Monthly income

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
41.991	3	126	.000

ANOVA

Monthly income			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	(Combined)		133.038	3	44.346	274.523	.000
	Linear Term	Unweighted	126.785	1	126.785	784.855	.000
		Weighted	132.872	1	132.872	822.538	.000
		Deviation	.167	2	.083	.516	.598
Within Groups			20.354	126	.162		
Total			153.392	129			

POST HOC

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Monthly income

(products (products	I) customer consider before purchasing these J) customer consider before purchasing these		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
LSD	Brand image	Agree Loyalty	-.976*	.091	.000	-1.16	-.80
		Price	-1.804*	.102	.000	-2.00	-1.60
		Others	-2.673*	.099	.000	-2.87	-2.48

	(I)	(J)	Mean Diff	Std Error	Sig	Lower	Upper
	Agree Loyalty	Brand image	.976*	.091	.000	.80	1.16
		Price	-.827*	.109	.000	-1.04	-.61
		Others	-1.697*	.107	.000	-1.91	-1.49
	Price	Brand image	1.804*	.102	.000	1.60	2.00
		Agree Loyalty Others	.827*	.109	.000	.61	1.04 -.64
			-.870*	.116	.000	-1.10	
	Others	Brand image	2.673*	.099	.000	2.48	2.87
		Agree Loyalty	1.697*	.107	.000	1.49	1.91
		Price	.870*	.116	.000	.64	1.10
Tamhane	Brand image	Agree Loyalty	-.976*	.106	.000	-1.26	-.69
		Price	-1.804*	.099	.000	-2.07	-1.54
		Others	-2.673*	.068	.000	-2.86	-2.49
	Agree Loyalty	Brand image	.976*	.106	.000	.69	1.26
		Price	-.827*	.108	.000	-1.12	-.53
		Others	-1.697*	.081	.000	-1.92	-1.47
	Price	Brand image	1.804*	.099	.000	1.54	2.07
		Agree Loyalty Others	.827*	.108	.000	.53	1.12 -.66
			-.870*	.072	.000	-1.08	
	Others	Brand image	2.673*	.068	.000	2.49	2.86

		Agree Loyalty	1.697*	.081	.000	1.47	1.92
		Price	.870*	.072	.000	.66	1.08
Dunnett T3	Brand image	Agree Loyalty	-.976*	.106	.000	-1.26	-.69
		Price	-1.804*	.099	.000	-2.07	-1.54
		Others	-2.673*	.068	.000	-2.86	-2.49
	Agree Loyalty	Brand image	.976*	.106	.000	.69	1.26
		Price	-.827*	.108	.000	-1.12	-.53
		Others	-1.697*	.081	.000	-1.92	-1.47
	Price	Brand image	1.804*	.099	.000	1.54	2.07
		Agree Loyalty	.827*	.108	.000	.53	1.12
		Others	-.870*	.072	.000	-1.08	-.66
	Others	Brand image	2.673*	.068	.000	2.49	2.86
		Agree Loyalty	1.697*	.081	.000	1.47	1.92
		Price	.870*	.072	.000	.66	1.08

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

HOMOGENEOUS

Monthly income

customer consider before purchasing these products	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05			
		1	2	3	4
Student-Newman- Brand image Keuls[a] Agree	49	1.33			
Loyalty Price	33		2.30		
Others Sig.	23			3.13	
	25				4.00
		1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 29.809

RESULT

From the above analysis, we find that calculated value of the F-value is a positive 274.523 value, so H1 accept. Since the P value 0.000 is less than < 0.05 regarding there is a significant relationship between experience of the respondents and monthly income and customer consider before purchasing these products. The results are **significant** at 4% level.

FINDINGS

- Majority 54.6% of the respondents are male.
- Maximum 36.2% of the respondents are in the age group of below 25 years.
- Maximum 40.8% of the respondents are qualified in SSLC/HSC
- Maximum 30.0% of the respondents are earning Rs.15,000-Rs.20,000 5. Majority 47.7% of the respondents are having 3-5 members in their family
- Majority 56.2% of the respondents are unmarried.
- Majority 33.1% of the respondents are preference in own label.
- Maximum 39.2% of the respondents are preferred for logo.
- Majority 43.1% of the respondents are prefer lighting system.
- Majority 40.8% of the respondents are using in 1-2 years
- Majority 33.1% of the respondents are preferred for good quality
- Maximum 37.7% of the respondents are purchasing for brand image of the product.
- Majority 40.8% of the respondents are highly satisfied with the product
- Majority 40.8% of the respondents are highly satisfied with the quality of the product
- Majority 42.3% of the respondents are excellent about promotion efforts 16. Majority 45.4% of the respondents are think excellent about brand offers.
- Majority 40.0% of the respondents are using brand valuation.
- Maximum 34.6% of the respondents are attract customer.
- Maximum 26.9% of the respondents are affected by the factor of product availability
- Maximum 36.9% of the respondents are feeling excellent about brand image of the product
- Majority 38.5% of the respondents are strongly agree with increase customer engagement.

SUGGESTIONS

- The company has to reduce the price of the products based on the affordability of all the care of people.
- The company may produce supplement the quality of products further.
- The company may provide further price concession, trade markdown and currencies discount to persuade the bulk buyers of customers.
- The pricing policy of the company may be reviewed by the company to favour the customers.
- The company must provide rational credit period to the customers.
- The company improve the brand awareness and their importance to the customers

CONCLUSION

This study ―Brand Preference for the solar products in Salem‖ determines how the consumers are satisfied with the entire performance of the solar product. In order to hold the market potentiality and prospective customer, the industry shall ensure with betterment of service. A firm should always attempt to find out the satisfaction level of the consumers and must take all essential steps and measures to keep hold of the customers.

The brand of KCP Solar is one of the fast moving brands in Salem. The company is holding a good market share which is the result of efforts made by the company administration and merchants. From the market survey we can conclude that the company is having a good customers network and it is sustaining good relations with them i.e., the service rate of the company is good. With the ideal promotional approaches and increasing the satisfactory level of the customers the company can spark and become a market leader in future. Providing high satisfaction leads to high loyalty, many companies today are aiming at total brand preference in order to reach the products magnificently towards the consumers.

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