

IMPACT OF BRAND FACTORS ON THE PURCHASE OF VARIOUS BRANDS OF TELEVISION

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ABSTRACT

Most of the products being sold in the market today are identified by their names. The name which helps the buyers in recalling the product instantly is known as brand name. It is for the purpose of identification of product, it becomes more crucial in the consumer durable market where buying decisions of the consumers are based on the brand perception. It has been rightly said by Al Ries and Jack Trout that “Marketing is not a battle of products, It is a battle of perceptions”, in their book “22 Immutable laws of Marketing”. In order to be perceived first by the buyer, marketers put deliberate efforts in making the product recognizable and perceivable. Branding helps in winning the battle of perception. In general, the Indian consumers were indifferent in choosing the brand, since a lot of close substitutes were available in the market. Due to technological and knowledge up-gradation, today’s customers prefer to opt for branded product. When several brands of a particular product, which are similar in quality of performance and external appearance, are available to the consumers brand knowledge, loyalty and trust can create a preference in the minds of consumers. Thus, there is a need to take a re-look at analyzing the purchase intention and buyers’ choice towards a particular brand. Under these circumstances an attempt has been made by the researcher to study the impact of brand heuristics, brand knowledge, brand trust, brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand association and brand equity on the purchase intention of various brands of television.

Keywords: Brand Heuristics, Brand Knowledge, Brand trust and Brand Loyalty.

INTRODUCTION:

Most of the products being sold in the market today are identified by their names. The name which helps the buyers in recalling the product instantly is known as brand name. It creates an image in the minds of perspective buyers. It is for the purpose of identification of product, it becomes more crucial in the consumer durable market where buying decisions of the consumers are based on the brand perception.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

A customer tends to purchase the brand which he can instantly recall at the thought of buying a product. In general, the Indian consumers were indifferent in choosing the brand, since a lot of close substitutes were available in the market. Due to technological and knowledge up-gradation, today's customers prefer to opt for branded product. The consumer's product preference is influenced by the brand services that go with it. It is difficult to imagine that in a normal situation, a consumer will make a purchase without paying enough attention to his needs and desires. But when several brands of a particular product, which are similar in quality of performance and external appearance, are available to the consumers; the various brand factors may create a preference in the minds of consumers. Thus, there is a need to take a re-look at analyzing the purchase intention and buyers' choice towards a particular brand. An attempt has been made by the researcher to study the impact of brand factors namely Brand heuristics, Brand knowledge, Brand trust, Brand loyalty, Perceived quality, Brand Association and Brand Equity on the purchase of specific brands of television.

BRAND FACTORS:

Brand Heuristics refers to blocking (or attention blocking). Essentially blocking arises from individual's reliance on first impression rather than engaging more complete learning strategies. This process of attention blocking can be present in consumer decision making. Brand knowledge can be defined in terms of two components, brand awareness and brand image. Marketers should take a broad view of marketing activity for a brand and recognize the various effects it has on brand knowledge. Brand trust was defined as the willingness of the average consumer to rely on the ability of the brand to perform its stated function (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2002). Brand loyalty can be defined as relative possibility of customer shifting to another brand in case there is a change in product's features, price or quality. As brand loyalty increases, customers will respond less to competitive moves and actions. Perceived quality refers to the customer's perception about the total quality of the brand. While evaluating quality the customer takes into account the brand's performance on factors that are significant to him and makes a relative analysis about the brand's quality by evaluating the competitor's brands. Brand association is anything which is deep seated in customer's mind about the brand. Brand should be associated with something positive so that the customers relate your brand to being positive. Brand equity has generally been defined as the incremental utility with which a brand endows a product, compared to its non-branded counterpart.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The specific objectives framed for the study includes the following:

- 1.To study the background characteristics of the households who have been using the durable product-television.
- 2.To assess the influence of brand factors such as brand heuristics, brand knowledge, brand trust, brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand association and overall brand equity on the purchase of television.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY:

In the light of the various issues and objectives discussed, the study is intended to test the following hypothesis. The brand factors such as brand heuristics, brand knowledge, brand trust, brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand association and overall brand equity has a significant influence on the purchase of specific brands of television.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY:

The present study is an empirical analysis of assessing the influence of brand factors on the purchase of different brands of television. The study is descriptive in nature. For the present study primary data were collected from the respondents with a help of a structured questionnaire. The secondary data were collected from published books, magazines, journals and research publications. 500 samples were selected from Coimbatore city by adopting Snow ball sampling method. Tools like descriptive analysis (simple percentage

method) and discriminant factor analysis were used for analysis.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

- i) The findings are based on the responses given by sample respondents which they had to recollect and furnish from their memory. Hence it may be subject to 'recall biases'.
- ii) The primary data was collected by adopting snow ball sampling technique. The normal sampling errors found in such techniques are also associated with this study.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

To identify gaps in the literature, to identify other people working in the same fields and to increase the breadth of knowledge of the subject area a brief review of relevant literatures collected from previous studies are presented here.

Park, W., Lessig, P. (1981) has conducted a research to study the impact of brand familiarity on consumer decision biases and heuristics. The study examining the choice of various models of microwave ovens based on the subjects' familiarity with them showed that high familiarity with the features of microwave ovens allowed for a faster and more confident choice. The result of the study has indicated that the familiarity heuristic increases the likelihood that customers will repeatedly buy products of the same brand.

Aggarwal (1983) has identified that the Indian consumers have been found becoming more and more brand loyal. Depending upon the nature of the product namely basic necessities or luxuries they have single or multi brand loyalty. This brand loyalty on their part has been found to be affected both by their brand choice as well as by their store loyal behaviour.

Kent and Allen (1994) have explained that brand familiarity captures consumer's brand knowledge structures, that is, the brand associates that exist within a consumer's memory. Although many advertised products are familiar to consumers, many others are unfamiliar, either because they are new to the market place or because consumers have not yet been exposed to the brand. Consumers may have tried or may use a familiar brand or they may have family or friends who have used the brand and told them something about it.

An article by Robert J. Oxoby and Hugh Finnigan entitled Developing Heuristic-Based Quality Judgments: Blocking in Consumer Choice (2007) provides an experimental demonstration of how the sequential order in which consumers receive information can influence the way information is processed and affect consumers' decisions. Specifically, when participants initially receive information regarding brand/quality or price/quality associations, these associations can block consumers' attention to more relevant quality-determining physical attributes. Moreover, this process of blocking can carry over to affect quality judgments pertaining to similarly branded or priced products beyond the product in which blocking were initiated. This implies that consumers' judgments of quality may be heavily dependent on first impressions that develop into brand and price heuristics.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS:

The data collected from the respondents was tabulated and analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques. Table no.1 contains tabulation of the background characteristics identified in objective 1, and tables 2 to 9 contains details testing the objective 2.

Objective 1: To study the background of the housewives who have been using the durable product- Television.

Table No.1: Table Showing the Background Characteristics of Housewives who have been using Television

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Place of Residence	Rural	94	18.8	18.8
	Semi Urban	190	38.2	57.0
	Urban	214	43.0	100
	Total	498	100.0	
Educational Status	Upto SSLC	123	24.7	24.7
	Secondary School	46	9.2	33.9
	Degree	94	18.9	52.8
	PG and / or above	235	47.2	100.0
	Total	498	100.0	
Husband's Educational Status	Upto SSLC	124	24.9	24.9
	Secondary School	14	2.8	27.8

	Degree	165	33.1	61.0
	PG and / or above	195	39.2	100.0
	Total	498	100	
Type of family	Joint	249	50.0	50.0
	Nuclear	249	50.0	100
		498	100.0	
Husband's Occupation	Self – employed	151	30.3	30.6
	Government Employee	79	15.9	46.6
	Private Employee	239	48.0	94.9
	Professional	29	5.8	100.0
	Total	498	100.0	
Family Income/month	Upto Rs. 10000	103	20.7	20.7
	10001-20000	126	25.3	46.0
	20001-30000	131	26.3	72.3
	30001-40000	34	6.8	79.1
	Above Rs. 40000	104	20.9	100.0
	Total	498	100.0	
Total Family Expense / Month	Upto Rs. 10000	151	30.3	30.3
	10001-15000	182	36.5	66.9
	15001-20000	125	25.1	92.0
	20001-25000	22	4.4	96.4
	Above Rs. 25000	18	3.6	100.0
	Total	498	100.0	

The above table presents the background characteristics of the housewives who have participated in this study.

- The table shows that 18.9% of the housewives are from rural areas, 38.2% of them are from semi-urban areas and 43% of them are from urban areas.
- 24.7% of the housewives have been educated up to SSLC, 9.2% of them have completed secondary school education, 18.9% of them holds a degree and 47.2% of them holds a PG degree and / or above.
- 50% of the housewives live in a joint family system and 50% of them live in nuclear families.
- 30.3% of the housewives are self-employed, 15.9% of them are government employees, 48.0% of them are employed in private firms and 5.8% of them are professionals.
- The total expense of the family in a month is up to Rs.10,000 for 30.3% of the housewives, it is between Rs.10,001 and Rs.15,000 for 36.5% of them, between 15001 and 20000 for 25.1%, 20001 and 25000 for 4.4% of them and above Rs. 25000 for 3.6% of the housewives.

Objective 2: To assess the influence of brand factors such as brand heuristics, brand knowledge, brand trust, brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand association and overall brand equity on the purchase of television.

DISCRIMINANT RESULTS PREDICTING THE PURCHASE OF THE DURABLE PRODUCT TELEVISION:

The stepwise discriminant analysis resulted in a 3 – step discriminant model.

Table No.2: Table Showing the Tests of Equality of Group Means of Television

ITEMS	Wilks' Lambda	F	df1	df2	Sig.
Brand Heuristics	.109	803.210	5	491	.000
Brand Knowledge	.770	29.294	5	491	.000
Brand Trust	.805	23.742	5	491	.000
Brand Loyalty	.829	20.262	5	491	.000
Perceived Quality	.875	14.011	5	491	.000
Brand Association	.831	19.962	5	491	.000
Overall Brand Equity	.831	20.015	5	491	.000

In the above table the significance levels of the individual variables reveal that on a univariate basis, all the variables display significant differences between the group means at 0.05 level. Visual examination of the group means provide information about the differences between the groups, however, the statistical significance of any specific comparison is not known. This is important in discriminant analysis.

Table No.3: Table Showing Pooled within-groups Matrices of Television

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
Brand Heuristics						
Brand Knowledge	.152					
Brand Trust	.094	.499				
Brand Loyalty	.058	.442	.607			
Perceived Quality	.020	.282	.436	.497		
Brand Association	.123	.415	.455	.559	.436	
Overall Brand Equity	.103	.226	.248	.294	.376	.422

The pooled within-groups matrices given in the above table shows the average of separate covariance matrices for the purchase of the television used to identify the presence of any multicollinearity between the predictors. The correlation coefficient between any pair of predictors that exceeds 0.80 is considered to be the existence of multicollinearity in that pair of variables. The above table shows that the correlation coefficient between all pairs of predictors is less than the suggested threshold of 0.80 and hence, multicollinearity does not exist.

Table No.4: Table Showing Variables in the Analysis of Television Brands

Step	Variables entered	Tolerance	F to Remove	Min D Squared	Between Groups
1	Brand Heuristics	1.000	803.210		
2	Brand Heuristics	.991	658.900	.021	Samsung and Others
	Brand trust	.991	4.393	.170	Onida and Others
3	Brand Heuristics	.976	619.293	.126	Onida and Samsung
	Brand trust	.750	4.060	.209	Onida and Others
	Brand Knowledge	.740	8.220	.428	Onida and Others

In the above table, existence of multi-collinearity is examined in terms of the tolerance values at each step. Tolerance value is the amount of variance unexplained by the other independent variables. The cutoff threshold tolerance value taken for this study is 0.10. On examination of the tolerance values in the above table, it is found that tolerance value for all the variables at each step is more than 0.10. This indicates the acceptable degree of collinearity. The above table presents the three steps of the stepwise discriminant model. In the first step, the variable brand heuristics entered the model. In the second step, brand heuristics entered the model discriminating between Samsung and Others and brand trust entered discriminating between the Onida and Others. In the third step, brand heuristics entered between Onida and Samsung, brand trust entered between Onida and Others and brand knowledge between Onida and Others. Since stepwise discriminant analysis is performed, Mahalanobis D² (Min D²) is used to evaluate the statistical significance of the discriminatory power of the discriminant function(s) and to determine the variable with the greatest power of discrimination. This is used over Rao's V because it is based on generalised squared Euclidean distance that adjusts for unequal variances. It is also preferred because the researcher is interested in the maximal use of the available information and also of its computation in the original space of the predictor variable rather than as a collapsed version as used in other measures.

Table No.5: Table Showing Summary of Variables Entered/Removed of Television Brands

Step	Entered	Min. D Squared					
		Statistic	Between Groups	Exact F			
				Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1	Brand heuristics	.170	Onida and Others	2.979	1	491.000	.000
2	Brand trust	.428	Onida and Others	3.738	2	490.000	.000
3	Brand knowledge	.691	Onida and Others	4.015	3	489.000	.000

At each step, the variable that maximizes the Mahalanobis distance between the two closest groups is entered

- Maximum number of steps is 16.*
- Minimum partial F to enter is 3.84.*
- Maximum partial F to remove is 2.71.*
- F level, tolerance, or VIN insufficient for further computation.*

** Significant at 0.05 level*

The above table gives a summary of the 3 steps involved in the 6-group discriminant analysis. The variables brand heuristics in the first step, brand trust in the second step, brand knowledge in the third step. Discrimination increased with the addition of each variable, achieving by the three steps, a substantial ability to discriminate between the groups. This is indicated by the Mahalanobis D² value which is significant. As the variables enter in each step from 1 to 3, the respective stepwise models are significant as indicated by the significance of the F – value. The overall results are also found to be statistically significant and continue to improve in discrimination as evidenced by the decrease in Wilk's Lambda value (from 0.109 to 0.096). The table below describes the variables that were significant discriminators based on their Wilk's lambda and minimum Mahalanobis D². The overall model fitness is assessed with the wilk's lambda significant for all steps given in the table below.

Table No.6: Table Showing Wilks' Lambda of Television Brands

Step	Number of Variables	Lambda	df1	df2	df3	Exact / Approximate F Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1	1	.109	1	5	491	803.210	5	491.000	.000
2	2	.104	2	5	491	205.497	10	980.000	.000
3	3	.096	3	5	491				

The multivariate aspects of the discriminant model are explained by the Canonical Discriminant Functions reported in the table below. Six groups are involved and the model produced three discriminant functions. The discriminant function displays a canonical correlation of 94.4% in the first function, 28.6% in the second function and 18.5% in the third function. The functions 1, 2 and 3 are statistically significant as measured by the Chi-Square statistic. The first function accounts for 98.5% of the variance explained by the two functions. The second function accounts for 1.1% and the third function accounts for 0.4%. It is noticed that the largest variance is explained by the first function and the third function explains the smallest amount of variance in the dependent variable.

Table No.7: Table Showing Eigen Values of Television Brands

Function	Eigen value	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Canonical Correlation	Wilk's Lambda	Chi – square	df	Sig
1	8.217	98.5	98.5	.944	.096	1150.850	15	.000
2	.089	1.1	99.6	.286	.887	59.209	8	.000
3	.036	.4	100.0	.185	.966	17.183	3	.001

The contributions of the three predictors are given in the structure matrix table below. This is indicative of each variable's discriminating power.

Table No.8: Table Showing the Structure Matrix of Television Brands

Variables	Functions		
	1	2	3
Brand Heuristics*	.998	.003	-.068
Brand Knowledge*	.161	.972	.173
Brand Trust*	.157	.322	.934
Brand loyalty	.092	.348	.515
Brand quality	.046	.215	.385
Brand Association	.146	.341	.345
Brand equity	.187	.071	.240

Pooled within-groups correlations between discriminating variables and standardized canonical discriminant functions. Largest absolute correlation between each variable and any discriminant function. (a) This variable not used in the analysis.

The 3 step discriminant analysis resulted in a classification matrix with a hit ratio of 87.7%. Hit ratio indicates the amount of correct classification of the original data. The hit ratio is presented in the table below.

Table No.9: Table Showing the Classification Matrix of Television Brands

		LG	Onida	Philips	Samsung	Sony	Others	Total
Original Count	LG	45	0	0	0	0	0	45
	Onida	0	74	0	0	0	31	105
	Philips	0	0	14	0	0	0	14
	Samsung	0	0	0	161	0	0	161
	Sony	1	1	0	0	142	7	151
	Others	0	0	4	16	1	0	21
%	LG	100.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	100.0
	Onida	.0	70.5	.0	.0	.0	29.5	100.0
	Philips	.0	.0	100.0	.0	.0	.0	100.0
	Samsung	.0	.0	.0	100.0	.0	.0	100.0
	Sony	.7	.7	.0	.0	94.0	4.6	100.0
	Others	.0	.0	19.0	76.2	4.8	.0	100.0

a 87.7% of original grouped cases correctly classified.

The predictive accuracy level of the discriminant function is determined by examining the classification matrix which is given below. The calculation below shows that the 3 discriminant functions in combination achieve a high degree of classification accuracy. The hit ratio for the analysis is 87.7%. The final measure of classification accuracy is Press's Q calculated to test the statistical significance that the classification accuracy is better than chance. Press 'Q' is calculated using the formula

$$\text{Press' Q} = \frac{[N - (nK)]^2}{N(K-1)}$$

Where N=Total sample size

n = number of observations correctly classified

k = number of groups classified

$$= \frac{[498 - 437(6)]^2}{498(6-1)} = \frac{[498 - 2622]^2}{498 * 5}$$

$$= 1811.7$$

Because the critical value of chi square at 0.05 level of significance is less than the calculated value, the discriminant analysis can confidently be described as predicting group membership better than chance as calculated by this classification accuracy measures.

To conclude, the researcher has found that factors such as brand heuristics, brand knowledge and brand trust has a significant influence on the purchase of specific brands of television. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted for factors such as brand heuristics, brand knowledge and brand trust.

DISCUSSIONS AND RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS:

Based on the analysis and interpretation results of the study, the following observations were made.

From table no.1 the following findings were observed related to the first objective of knowing the background of housewives who have participated in the study.

- Majority of the housewives (43%) are from urban areas and 38.2% are from semi-urban areas. 18.8% of the housewives are from rural areas.
- Regarding the Educational status of the housewives, 47.2% of the housewives hold a PG degree and 18.9% of them hold a degree. 24.7% of the housewives have completed SSLC and 9.2% of them have completed SSLC.
- 50% of the housewives live in a joint family and remaining 50% of them live in nuclear families.
- 48% of the housewives' husbands are employed in private firms and 30.3% of them are self employed. 15.9% of them are government employees and 5.8% of them are professionals.
- Regarding the total family income of the housewives, 20.9% of them earn more than Rs.40,000 per month and 26.3% of them earn between Rs.30,001 and Rs.40,000. 20.7% of them are earning up to Rs.10,000 per month.

- The total expenses of the family in a month is up to Rs.10,000 for 30.3% of the housewives and between Rs.10,001 and Rs.15,000 for 36.5% of them. The limit falls between Rs.20,001 and Rs.25,000 for 4.4% of them and it exceed above Rs.25,000/- for 3.6% of the housewives.

From table no.2 to 9 the following findings were observed related to the objective of assessing the influence of brand factors on the purchase of specific brands of television by the sample respondents.

- The brand factors namely brand heuristics, brand knowledge and brand trust have a significant influence on the purchase of specific brands of television by the sample respondents.
- The other factors namely brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand association and overall brand equity has not influenced the purchase of the specific brands of television by sample respondents.

It is observed that the discriminant results predicting the influence of brand factors on the purchase of television have shown that 'brand heuristic' is one factor that has a significant influence on the purchase. The results of the study are consistent with the brand heuristic literature presented by Robert J. Oxoby and Hugh Finnigan who have suggested that consumers' judgments of quality may be heavily dependent on first impressions that develop into brand and price heuristics. Indeed, a large literature demonstrates how initially encountered information plays an important role in determining the categories that individuals use to simplify decision making. (Macrae & Bodenhausen, 2000; Smith Lopez, & Osherson, 1992). In another research by Tversky & Kahneman, (1982) it is found that if initially encountered attribute-quality relationships are strong and consumers make decisions in the face of familiar stimuli, initially learned relationships may be paramount in decision making, serving as heuristics that reduce cognitive and information processing costs. As rightly said by Van Osselaer, S.M. J., and Alba J.W. (2003) these heuristics may facilitate consumers' decision making regarding both individual and family brands.

Further it is observed that, brand trust is influencing the purchase decision of television. Generally, the better the reputation of the brand, as perceived by the consumers, the higher should be the level of trust that consumers have on the brand.

The result of the study has confirmed that brand knowledge is influencing the purchase of specific brands of television by the respondents. The results are similar to those in the earlier literature which says that, according to Ha and Perks (2005) consumers' satisfaction and loyalty develops as a result of the consumers' positive experience with the brand which will positively affects brand commitment and re-purchase intentions (Fullerton 2005) and improves brand reputation (Selnes 1993).

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS:

In interpreting the results of this study, one must consider also its limitations. The scope of the study examined the influence of brand factors on the purchase of the durable product television. Future investigations can be examined for other durable products and also for non-durable products. Further, consumer choice is inherently a dynamic process. Increasing competition in consumer durable market is driving frequent shifts in the behavioural dimensions of consumers and attributes of brands which affect the brand preference. Future research may be directed towards measuring such changes and their interrelationship among other influencing factors to help managers develop strategic and sound principles and practices that respond to these changes. These results have implications for understanding consumer decision making and the marketing strategies required by firms. Specifically, marketers may exploit blocking in new markets where consumers initially know little of a product's attribute-quality relationships.

CONCLUSION:

Brand preference is understood as a measure of brand loyalty in which a consumer exercise his decision to choose a particular brand in presence of competing brands. In conclusion, the study has increased the understanding of how brand factors affect the purchase of specific brands of television based on empirical research. By recognizing that marketing activity can potentially enhance or maintain consumers' awareness of the brand or the favourability, strength and uniqueness of various types of brand associations, this study may provide the perspective that will enable marketers to take better short-term and long term marketing actions.

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