

An investigation of the influence of country of origin on customer perception towards chocolate brands

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1. Introduction

According to the Nordquist (2016) chocolate is made from tropical cocoa tree seeds and its earliest use dates back to the civilization in Mesoamerica. There is different chocolate brand around the world and those brands also play a significant role in fast consumer goods market as well as the luxury food it-moving market. Those are Ferro Rocher, Galaxy, Cadbury, Toblerone, Toren, etc. The perception toward the country of origin also affecting to the consumer buying decision. Therefore, the modern market attitude toward the country of origin is having important to interact with the consumer goods market. According to Cateora & Graham (1999), Country of origin can be defined as any influence that the country of the manufacturer has on a consumer's positive or negative perception of a product. In detail Anwar, Yasin, Iqbal, and Sajid (2013) stated that COO is being viewed like different brands belonging to different countries. Those owning countries are called the country of origin. (Yunus & Rashid, 2015,). The study was mainly focused to examine the influence of country of origin on customer perception towards chocolate brands and the secondary objective was to study the influence of country of origin on perception for chocolate brand buying decisions in Sri Lankan consumers and to investigate how the country of origin on consumer perception influence by other important factors such as demographics factors (Age, Gender, Income).

2. Materials and Methods

The framework shows the relationship between the country of origin and the customer's perception of the mark. Other factors that may influence this process are also illustrated in frames as demographics like age, gender, and income. This study will primarily test factors and consumers' perception of the brand in the context of normal use and situation rather than in a particular context of use. According to the findings, there are two main variables as dependent variables (Perception toward brands) and independent variables (Country image, perceived quality, Brand Familiarity, and demographic factors). And the entire consumers respondent collected by using a questionnaire. And sampling size is 200 which are collected by randomly using nine provinces of Sri Lanka. And also, the choice experiment method was used for the analysis of customer respondents.

And the questionnaire was made up of both qualitative and quantitative data. For the gathering customer preferences for chocolate brands were mention nine choice cards were in the questionnaire form. There are attributes and levels in choice cards such as Attributes that represent Brand, Image, and Quality. According to each attributes they have some levels for Brand (Revello, Cadbury, and Toblerone), Image (High image, Low Image), Quality (High Quality, Moderate Quality, Low Quality).

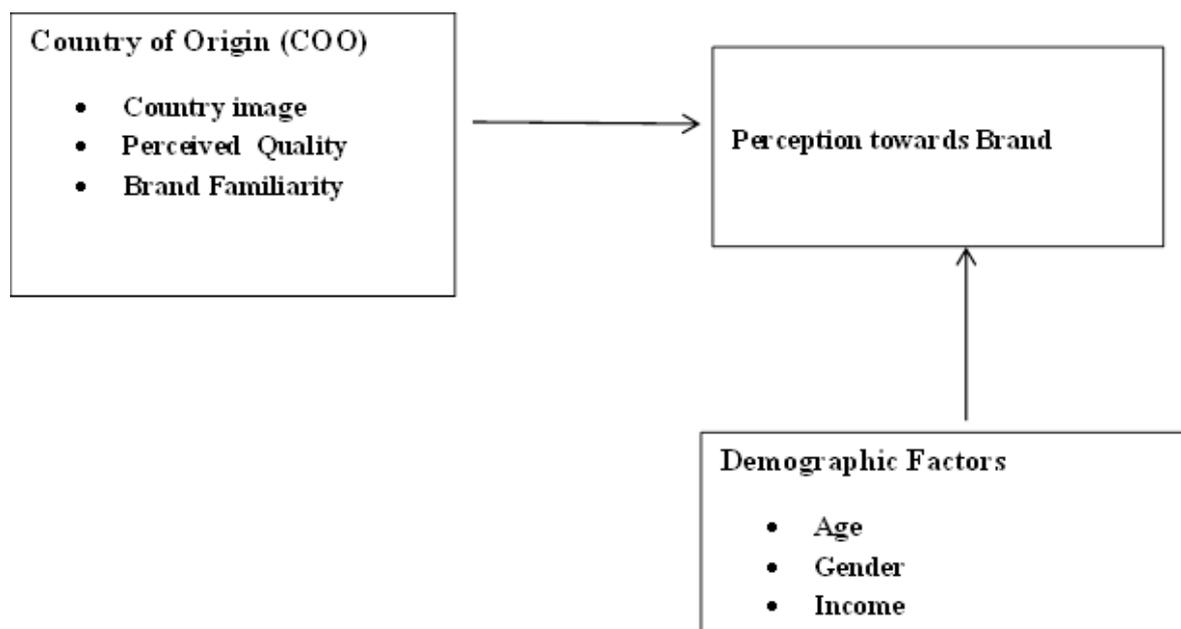


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

3. Results and Discussion

Table 01. Parameter estimation of maximum likelihood of a respondent

Parameters	Estimate	SE	X ²	Pr>x ²
<u>Brand</u>				
• Revello	-.257	.164	2.472	.116
• Cadbury	-.639	.187	11.648	.001
• Status quo	0 ^a			
<u>Quality</u>				
• High	-.067	.206	.108	.743
• Moderate	.816	.175	21.794	.000
• Status quo	0 ^a			
<u>Image</u>				
• High	-.290	.156	3.426	0.643
• Status quo	0 ^a			

a. Degree of freedom reduced because of constant or linearly dependent covariates

b. Constant or Linearly Dependent Covariates Toblerone = 1 - Revello - Cadbury; low = 1 - high - moderate ; plow = 1 - high

Estimated parameters of the model and relevant statistics are presented in table (2). The estimated parameter's value indicates that some of the relationships are not significant even at $\alpha = 0.10$ level. Descriptive labels for all variables are presented along with the zero coefficients for the reference levels. Within the attribute of "Brands" the part-worth utility (i.e., the estimated coefficient) for "Revello" is -.257, for "Cadbury" -.637, while part-worth utility for

the variable status quo is a structural zero. Hence Brand of Revello is preferred below the status quo (Toblerone) and the brand of Cadbury is preferred below both the status quo and the brand of Revello. The magnitude of the estimated coefficient indicates which objectives are more preferred by the sample respondents. The customer perception of the chocolate brand generally depends upon the Brand of chocolates. Under this first attribute, Cadbury proved very highly significant as indicated by the $Pr > \chi^2$ value even at $\alpha = 0.001$ level. Moving to the type “Quality” used in customer perceptions high Quality, moderate quality, and status quo (Low quality) situation. When compared to the status quo, high quality and moderate-quality were preferred, with the magnitude of the estimated parameter indicating high quality (-.067) was preferred below moderate quality (0.816). However, only the moderate quality proved significant at $\alpha = 0.01$ level. The third attribute tested in the model was “image”. The status quo is preferred over the high image. However, all the parameters proved insignificant even at $\alpha = 0.10$ level indicating that the attribute of the image was not a significant determinant of preference in this issue.

4. Conclusions

According to the result, some attributes and levels have significant relationships. With this result can elaborate there is a relationship between choice and attributes. The utility of each attribute, customers are more preferred to purchase foreign chocolate than local chocolates. When customers are doing their purchases, they are highly concerned about the quality of the brands. When considering factors affecting perception towards the chocolate brand, concern about Country of origin and demographic factors are highly significant in the findings. Therefore, the results suggest that there is an impact on the perception of the brand based on the country of manufacture.

5. References

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