Research Journal of

Business Management

ISSN 1819-1932

Academic Journals Inc.

www.academicjournals.com

Research Journal of Business Management 8 (4): 474-490, 2014
ISSN 1819-1932 / DOI: 10.3923/rjbm.2014.474.490

Antioxidant Bottled Beverage Purchasing Behavior of Bangkok, Thailand Consumers: A Structural Equation Model

Niphon Bundechanan and Wanno Fongsuwan
Administration and Management College, King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang, Thailand

Corresponding Author: Niphon Bundechanan, King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang, Administration and Management College, Chalongkrung Soil, Ladkrabang, Bangkok, 10520, Thailand

ABSTRACT

Tea companies like to brag about the antioxidants in their bottled tea beverages with sales of bottled teas having increased 90% since 2004 with a new study finding that green tea significantly reduces the risk of death from many causes including heart disease. Green tea has been used in China for at least 4,000 years and even though, bottled tea and the antioxidants aren't as powerful as newly brewed tea, it does, however, exhibit health benefits comparable to fruits and vegetables. Therefore, the researchers were interested in studying the factors that affect buying behavior of antioxidant bottled beverages in the Bangkok metropolitan area with the purpose of developing and validating the consistency of the linear structural relationships of brand value, brand attitude and integrated marketing communication variables that affect the purchase intention of consumers with antioxidant bottled beverages. With the increasing wave of health conscious Bangkok consumers who spend the majority of their time at study and are likely to purchase antioxidant packaged juices and drinks, consumers are more frequently interested in the quality of the product they consume. Manufacturers, therefore, are trying to market their products to consumers using communication strategies through Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) which have the potential to significantly increase this market's share.

Key words: Purchase intention, product attitude, brand value, integrated marketing communications, antioxidant

INTRODUCTION

An ancient Chinese proverb is "Better to be deprived of food for three days, than tea for one" with green tea being used as a medicine in China for at least 4,000 years (Taylor, 1998). Much attention to tea catechins and health has focused on its effects on cancer (Dreosti, 1996) while taking tea has been regarded traditionally in Asia as a generally healthful practice (Janle *et al.*, 2008). Today, scientific research in both Asia and the West is providing hard evidence for the health benefits long associated with taking green tea. For example, in 1994 the Journal of the National Cancer institute published the results of an epidemiological study indicating that taking green tea reduced the risk of esophageal cancer in Chinese men and women by nearly 60% (Leventhal *et al.*, 1999). America's university of purdue researchers concluded that a compound in green tea inhibits the growth of cancer cells (Janle *et al.*, 2008).

Human studies show that cancer onset of patients in Japan who have consumed 10 cups of green tea per day was 8.7 years later among females and 3 years later among males, as compared with patients who had consumed under three cups per day (Liao *et al.*, 1995). Thus, a possible relationship between high consumption of green tea and the low incidence of prostate and breast cancers in some Asian countries has been postulated (Chen *et al.*, 1998). There is also indicated that taking green tea lowers total cholesterol levels, as well as improving the ratio of good (HDL) cholesterol to bad (LDL) cholesterol.

Herbal drinks are becoming popular especially among health-conscious consumers since these beverages are prepared from natural ingredients. Indigenous people have been using herbs such as *Hibiscus sabdariffa* L., *Chrysanthemum indicum* L. and *Aegle marmelos* L. for a long time as panacea drinks (Kruawan and Kangsadalampai, 2006).

Depending on the type of tea used and how it is brewed, the level of anti-oxidants in bottled tea drinks may be comparable to fruits and vegetables. Furthermore, you may still be getting health benefits from other ingredients in the tea besides antioxidants. And as the nutritional drink market continues to expand, this healthcare phenomenon is happening not just in Thailand but around the globe. A plethora of purportedly healthy beverages are growing in popularity among consumers trying to shield themselves against health threats.

In 2011, the fruit juice drink market in Thailand was worth about 10 billion Baht (about $305 million USD) or about 284 million liters of different quality fruit juices. The premium market was worth 3.80 billion Baht ($116 million USD) or about 56 million liters with a growth rate of approximately 5%. The Thai companies UHT sold 3.0 billion Baht and had a growth rate of 6% while Malee Sampran Plc had a 22% growth rate (Malee Sampran Public Company, 2011). This is compared to the pasteurized milk product industry which sold THB 0.80 billion with a growth rate of about 8%.

According to the Euromonitor report concerning the fruit/vegetable juice market in Thailand, it is stated that Thailand showed positive signs with growth rates ending with 7% total volume growth in 2012 (EI, 2013b). In 2012, fruit/vegetable juice continued to make ongoing sales because of the hot weather most people taking soft drinks to cool down. However, with the continuing trend of health and wellness, more and more consumers also turned to fruit/vegetable juice to replace carbonates. In addition, fruit/vegetable juice was found to be more convenient in everyday life, sustaining demand for the product (EI, 2013b).

Minute Maid by Coca-Cola led sales of fruit/vegetable juice in 2012 with 23% retail volume share and gained the most market share at over 1% point. This was because, its price is affordable at only Bt25 so that consumers in lower and middle classes can also purchase it. In addition, Minute Maid runs effective advertisements that use the most famous brand ambassador, Nadech Kugimiya and the brand itself has a variety of flavours to attract consumers such as Minute Maid Pulpy, Minute Maid Splash and Minute Maid White Grape Aloe Vera (EI, 2013a). However, Ready-To-Drink (RTD) tea has the potential to gain market share in Thailand.

In 2006-2008, the fruit juice market in Thailand had an average growth rate of 10-20% (ACNielsen, 2006) which, according to the beverage giant Malee, was because that Thai people tended to be more health conscious which included the life style of working people. The result was the fruit juice in the medium market had higher volume while the economy market which covered 60% of total fruit juice market declined. This is due to the higer price of 30 Baht per liter which is considered high compared with other beverages. Furthermore, the market of tea is coming to compete with the fruit juice market in the health conscious market. In 2009 - 2010, the fruit juice market was under intense competition.

Another Thai beverage company is Tipco which controls nearly half of the 4 billion Baht premium juice market. In 2012, TIPCO spent 200 million Baht on marketing to increase the average fruit juice consumption in Thailand from only 2 L^{-1} person $year^{-1}$, or about only 100 Baht. The company in 2012 also launched new healthy beverages to attract new customer groups, hoping to increase their 2011 sale from about 5 billion Baht with the food business accounting for about 50% and fruit juices the rest (Bangkok Post, 2012).

Medium quality fruit juice standard or 'medium market' had 0.58 billion Baht or about 12 million liters. The fruit juice 'economy market' was worth 3 billion Baht or about 117 million liters. Fruit juice in the 'Super Economy Market' sold 1.80 billion Baht or approximately 63 million liters. The remaining sub-market was worth 1.00 billion Baht with about 28 million liters.

According to Deloitte's Food and Beverage 2012 study, consumers want choices and the food and beverage industry as a whole is prepared to respond to consumer demand with certain dynamics between manufacturers and retailers being played out to address that. Retailers reward product differentiation and innovation because new products offer the best growth opportunities for them in both, existing and emerging markets.

Manufacturers, likewise, can become more competitive by innovating and launching new products and segments that, for instance, are not easy to replicate via private label alternatives. And in the food service sector, there is an extremely valuable innovation opportunity for the manufacturer because it is a viable alternative to retail.

For consumers, convenience is by far the most important dynamic (Fig. 1) and will continue to be so over the next 5 years and beyond. Health/nutrition benefits, affordability, taste/freshness, functionality, product availability and Corporate Responsibility (CR) issues are among other key consumer drivers (Deloitte, 2012).

Consumers demand convenience and are willing to pay more for it. As their study habits and lifestyles change, it's a tradeoff, many are willing to make, especially as disposable income rises in many countries. It's all about time and the consumer would rather buy time than prepare food. Convenience also drives how distribution channels continue to evolve-less so in retail but with

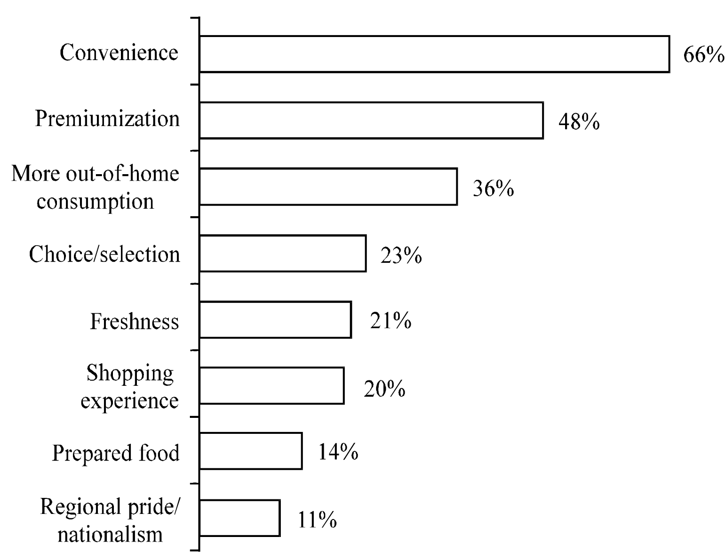

Fig. 1: Key consumer trends shaping the industry (Deloitte, 2012), Sourse: Deloitte global survey of 93 top exectives at leading food and beverage businesses

significant changes on the food service side with additional growth potential migrating to the producer (Deloitte, 2012).

As a result of these various factors, namely due to a wave of health conscious consumers specifically, the Bangkok locals who spend the majority of their time at study and tend to drink popular juice in containers, their current lifestyle demands comfort, convenience and hassle free. Therefore, consumer's demand for vegetables and fruit drinks is a business that is continuing to grow with an ever increasing market share. And the market is likely to grow further in the future as consumers become more health conscious. Additionally, the trend is to reduce taking other beverages such as soft drinks and instead use a juice replacement drink which contributes to an ever increasing consumer juice drink growth rate. Throughout the last 3 years, the average growth rate was approximately 11%.

Projections suggest that fruit/vegetable juice is expected to grow by a 5% total volume CAGR. Despite being slower than the review period, it still signifies positive growth as the trend of health and wellness will bring more consumers to this category. However, it needs some marketing stimulation, otherwise it will lose share to RTD tea which is also positioned as a health and wellness drink.

Fountain sales of soft drinks continued to record positive moderate growth of 4% through convenience stores and 3% through on-trade in 2012. The key product of fountain sales in Thailand remained carbonates with some presence of fruit juices and RTD tea, although with much lower volume sales.

In 2012, RTD tea experienced very strong competition amongst several brands. The opening of new face brand 'Ishitan' in 2011 shook overall shares in the category. The executive director of Ishitan, Tan Passakornatee was the founder of Oishi Group PCL. After he sold his shares in the company to Thai Beverage Public Company Limited, he started his own company with its own brand Ishitan. The product line and flavours are similar to Oishi's offerings. Within two years, Ishitan penetrated RTD tea to become a major brand with retail volume share of 19% in 2012, offering strong competition to Oishi (EI, 2013a).

Current mainstream health is also in the interest of consumers, so cereal beverages which have a high nutritional value start to become popular and accepted by consumers even more. The original cereal drink is widely known as soy milk drink and consumers turn to drink soy milk instead of cow milk. They believe that it is high in protein and antioxidants and currently the industry is developing various flavors for soy milk including black sesame and pandan in an effort to give consumers greater choices.

The recent trend of soy milk and mixed fresh fruit is very popular in Singapore. Also, a group of healthy drinks was launched in India in the form of a franchise which focuses on a group of loved ones and health conscious consumers. For other categories such as beverages, cereals, millet, corn, milk, water germ leaves of wheat and rice milk, etc., are likely to rise.

The important factors that led to this popularity from the results of the study showed that these grains are rich in nutritional value, social trends and consumer behavior changes resulting in the beverage business requiring adaptability including:

- **Health drinks:** For both today and in the long term, beverage products which are interesting and nutritional for consumers are selling point
- **Eliminating toxins in the body:** Consumers would have to choose a product that will help eliminate toxins from the body or stimulate the function of vital organs, helping to eliminate

toxins, so today it's a new drink recipe to market, especially drinks with herbal ingredients such as betel leaf (Piper betel Linn), Yanang (Tiliacora triandra Diels) and paraquat, etc

- **The power of flowers:** In non-food products and drinks, the smell of lavender, hibiscus flowers (Hibiscus) and jasmine are popular aromas for many years. But for the food and beverage industry, these were new smells. However, in Thailand, traditional foods and desserts used these flowers for many years. After researching the nutritional value of the many flowers, consumers indicated that they enjoy and accept these ingredients in their food and drink more often
- **The beauty of eating or drinking:** In addition to cosmetics, the way to make the body look beautiful is also by food and drink recipes which make you feel beautiful from the inside out. Drinks with ingredients can help to nourish the skin marks a beginning of a new trend in beverages and powdered drinks that help with the development and as a supplement to assist with the anti-aging and antioxidants in the skin

In an interview with Nitra Nuengchamnong, a scientist at the 8th Annual Medical Center in Phitsanulok at that time, it was revealed that the research subject, 'Antioxidant activity in herbal drinks produced and consumed in Thailand', samples were collected from herbal sales shops distributed around Thailand including the North, Northeast, Eastern seaboard and the South between November 2005-April 2006 inwhich 224 samples were found to have antioxidant activity of free radicals. Of this sample, 80% were found to have anti-aging and anti-wrinkle free material with the most common being tea followed by powered drink. Drinks made from herbs with antioxidant found that all 30 species divided into three categories:

- **Type of tea:** This includes black tea, green tea, blue crush bandits, stevia, bitter cinerea, Roselle, Safflower, quince, Asiatic and tea Hermit
- **Beverages:** These included juice and puree, water consumption anchor Thailand mango juice, water creatures, Makieng, Roselle juice, grape juice, apple juice, noni juice, strawberry juice, comosa, parviflora and chrysanthemum
- **Beverage powder:** This includes powdered drink sage leaf and Pandanus Palm

This is consistent with Prat Boonyawongvirot, former Permanent Secretary, Thailand's Ministry of Health, who said herbs are wanted by the world market. It has been suggested that the global market for herbal products is estimated at over $60 billion USD which includes medicines, health supplements, herbal beauty and toiletry products (IASC, 2006).

Another study (Kamboj, 2000; Nagpal and Karki, 2004) also estimated the market to be USD 60 billion growing at the rate of 7% per annum. A further study (Laird and Pierce, 2002) placed the world market for herbal medicines at USD 19.4 billion for the year 2005, with Asia representing $5.1 billion USD with Japan's share at $202 billion USD (IASC, 2006).

Thailand exports $30 million U.S. dollars of herbs and herbal extracts abroad yearly and nearly 50% of the older citizens in the United States use these herbal products for their health care. With the introduction of herbal medicine and nutritional supplements, more than 90 species of plants have been introduced into the wellness health care diet including Asiatic black, blue breaking, Fah-Talai-Jone/Andrographis paniculata Wall ex Ness and Green Tea with Amla, etc.

An American study found that these herbs have more than 20 times higher vitamin C than any other fruit, especially oranges. Cancer patients however may need to be careful about eating fruits rather than antioxidants because these fruits especially 'sweet' fruit juices and herbal drinks can accelerate the spread of cancer.

According to research from Dr. Anthony Heaney of UCLA's Jonsson Cancer Center, cancer cells have a particular liking for refined fructose. In tests, pancreatic cancer cells quickly fed on refined fructose and used it to divide and proliferate rapidly within the body (Heaney, 2010). The findings also reveal that not all sugars are the same, a widely held belief in mainstream medicine. Tumor cells love both glucose sugar and fructose sugar but fructose directly causes cancer cells to reproduce and spread in a way that glucose does not. So the study solidifies the fact that there is a major difference between high fructose corn syrup, a highly-refined sugar commonly used in processed American foods and beverages and refined sugar cane. Both can lead to health problems but high fructose corn syrup is worse in terms of cancer growth.

Thus, communications that help the consumer recognize the worth and value in consumer goods is important which is a key component to successful marketing. However, the communicated information to the consumer needs to be real, verifiable, trusted which creates a market with long-term stability.

Researchers are, therefore, interested in understanding the factors that affect the buying behavior of bottled beverage antioxidants. This is to help and encourage entrepreneurs and suppliers of beverage antioxidants which can lead to personal factors that influence consumption of antioxidants beverages as well as to survey the consumer behavior of beverage consumption and purchasing habits.

Researchers also wish to determine the target audience (segment target positioning) and the effectiveness of using the brand value, integrated marketing communications and brand attitude that affects the Bangkok consumer buying behavior of antioxidant beverages.

It is also hoped that this study will be helpful to the antioxidant beverage business and help with information about the purchasing behavior of antioxidant beverage products by the consumer. This could help with these businesses in their research marketing strategies and product development planning to better meet the needs of consumers and effectively implement future competitive strategies.

CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT

Purchase intention: The consumer buying decision process is a five-stage purchase decision process which includes problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase and post-purchase evaluation (Ratpongporn, 2010). These five steps to acquiring information and knowledge affect perception which leads to better information and the decision as to the next step, depending on what is perceived as very important as well as what recognition requires more knowledge before making a decision or not.

Kotler and Armstrong (2001) described that there are two types of factors that helps in determining and encouraging consumer purchase intention including both personal and stimulating factors. They stated that among the consumer decision making process, understanding consumers' sources of information for the product is crucial because it is the early phase of consumer behavior and it may influence the rest of the consumer decision making process. Personal factors include consumer personality in respect to demand, incentive, attitude, access of information and adaptability.

Gilbert (1991) explains that purchase intention has 6 common points:

- It perceives consumer behavior to be a constant decision making process
- The behavior of individual consumer is emphasized
- Behavior is treated as a functional (or utilitarian) concept that can be explained
- A buyer is viewed as an individual who searches, evaluates and stores information
- Buyers narrow down the range of information in time and choose from the alternatives, they developed during the decision process
- Feedback from the final purchase is included in the models to emphasize the effect of the decision on future purchases

This is consistent with the research of Chen (2007) which found that consumers are willing to buy when there is consumer awareness but the reverse is true when there is no product recognition hindering purchase intention. This is linked to consumer behavior, because consumer behavior is composed of acquiring, using and disposing of products, services, ideas or experiences of consumers which is both individual or as a group (Amould *et al*., 2005).

Stimulating factors, on the other hand, can be used for planning how to catch consumers' attention and encourage their purchase intentions. This includes colors and sizes, product comparisons with other products or services, product positioning (such as shelf location) and originality. Meanwhile, service characteristics, price perception and service selection behavior have direct effects on re-purchase intention (Ferrand *et al*., 2010).

According to Kotler (2000), apart from cultural factors other factors such as social, personal and psychological factors have influence on consumer's behavior:

- Cultural factors have to do with the culture, subculture or social class in which a consumer identifies his/herself
- Social factors have to do with the consumer's family, reference groups and the consumer's role and status
- Personal factors are the lifecycle status and age of consumers. Also, the economic situation, occupation, self-concept and consumers personality
- Psychological factors include perception, motivation, learning, attitude and belief of the consumers

Therefore, the purchase intention is determined by the actuality of the decision and the comparative advantages of brand, quality and the benefits of the product.

According to Mowen and Minor (1998), involvement is the "perceived personal interest and/or interest of consumers attach to the acquisition, consumption and disposition of a good, a service or an idea". Bauer *et al*. (2006) found a significantly positive relationship between consumer decision-making and the nature of product involvement.

A study by Kim and Martinez (2013) discussed the increasing popularity of private Internet sale sites and the importance of shoppers regularly visiting these sites. Factor analysis results suggested that fashion leadership consisted of two dimensions; fashion opinion leadership and fashion innovativeness. The significantly higher levels of visit frequency and purchase intention for innovative communicators indicated that the targeted group represents a valuable market segment for online private sale companies to target.

While Bourdeau (2005) noted that the measurement capabilities of the current service has improved a lot from the past, using just basic satisfaction measurement capabilities of the service, these models were not enough for determining the loyalty of existing customers. Important components of the conceptual framework on which to measure customer loyalty and behavioral intentions such as repeat purchase intentions and the intention not to change service providers includes measurable behavioral or action which has five elements, the emphasis is to tell things like showing the involvement of defending and the reflectivity, detailed as follows:

- Word-of-Mouth or Advocacy refers to a willingness to support products and services. Consumers rely on the advocacy of their acquaintances as a form of risk reduction in services contexts because consumers place greater emphasis on personal sources of information. Likewise, consumer advocacy reduces the uncertainty caused by the intangibility and heterogeneity that accompanies the vast majority of service purchases
- Strength of Preference means to feel strongly about a particular business which includes the fact that customers like the service better than others and use it regularly. The consumer must have a passion for the business and rank it higher than the others.
- Exclusive consideration relates to the size of a consumer's consideration set of potential service providers in a specific industry
- Share of Wallet is a result of service loyalty outcome behaviors
- Identification can occur with both individual service providers (e.g., doctor or mechanic), as well as at the brand level, as in the case of a college sports team. McGill and Iacobucci (1992) suggests that services, as opposed to goods, provide more incentive for customers to form a comparative identity because of their interpersonal nature

Mostafa (2007) study investigates the influence of various cultural values and psychological factors on the green purchase behavior of Egyptian consumers. Using a large sample of 1093 consumers, a conceptual model was developed. The survey results provide reasonable support for the validity of the proposed model. Specifically, the findings from the structural equation model confirm the influence of the consumers' natural environment orientation, ecological knowledge and environmental concern on their attitudes towards green purchase. Consumers' attitudes toward green purchase, in turn, are also found to affect their actual green purchase behavior via the mediator role of green purchase intention. However, one of the other important findings suggests that the link between intention and actual purchase is weak. In other words, on a declarative level, more and more consumers in Egypt express their concern over the ecological situation and declare their willingness to contribute somehow to the protection of environment by buying green products. However, in reality this concern may not be manifested consistently.

Brand attitude: Brand attitude refers to the inclination to learn to make the behavior consistent with the manner in satisfaction or dissatisfaction with any one thing. In this sense, attitudes are strongly associated with the consumption or concepts related to product marketing such as service, brand, ownership and learning attitudes. These may be a result of direct experience with the product or receiving information from another person or from mass exposure.

Brand attachment more accurately predicts intentions to perform behaviors that use significant consumer resources (time, money, reputation). It is also a stronger predictor of actual consumer behaviors than brand attitude strength (Park *et al*., 2010).

And attitudes have changed and there is no manner consistent with behavior that reflects attitudes. Moreover, in specific circumstances that may cause consumer behavior that is inconsistent with attitudes. Additionally, attitudes comprise key elements of 3 parts (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2000) including:

- Understanding (Cognitive) is the knowledge and awareness gained by combining direct experience of things and related information which allows the consumer to connect things. What are the features and cause specific behaviors to it. Lead to the results of the attitude in any way
- Feelings (Affective) are a mood or feelings of the consumer about the product or brand, such as things they like or dislike, good or bad, etc
- Behavior or tendency to action (Cognitive) is a trend in the expression or act in any way that refers to behavior of the actual consumer. This element expresses the willingness of consumers to buy

The study by Jin and Kang (2011) 'Purchase intention of Chinese consumers toward a US apparel brand: a test of a composite behavior intention model' showed that attitude will affect purchase intention.

Research by Park *et al.* (2010) further stated that managerially, they (consumers) demonstrate that brand attachment offers value over brand attitude strength in predicting consumers' intentions to perform difficult behaviors (those they regard as using consumer resources), actual purchase behaviors, brand purchase share (the share of a brand among directly competing brands) and need share (the extent to which consumers rely on a brand to address relevant needs, including those brands in substitutable product categories).

The Spanish scientists, Hartman and Apaolaza-Ibanez (2012) devised a model that they based their research on and implemented this model when conducting the experiment. The model (Fig. 2) shows how the scientists think we view and mentally process advertisements. They think that attitudes towards an ad is influenced by an emotional response, this emotional response subsequently influences the attitude towards the brand. The research was conducted on a massive scale. 750 people throughout Spanish towns and villages were shown fictitious advertisements and given questionnaires and interviews after seeing the ads.

Brand value: According to Levy *et al.* (2012), a store brand's perceived quality was found to be the most important factor in predicting store brand purchase intention and advertising was found to have an indirect effect on perceived quality, shaped through extrinsic cues and novelty lovers' tendency variables. The results show the salience of creating a strong and sustainable store brand through advertising and innovation.

However, in another study focused on the Chinese consumer, it was found that vanity has a role in luxury brand purchase intention and thereby shades both theoretical and managerial understanding of luxury brand consumption. It also suggests that symbolic value which is highly influential in western conceptualizations of luxury brand meaning, needs to be re-evaluated in the context of Chinese consumers (Hung *et al.*, 2011).

Current businesses need to compete in very high brand management with enough strength and power to help combat the flow of business changes effectively, whether a change in customer behavior, influenced by competition, technology or new marketing environments that occur over

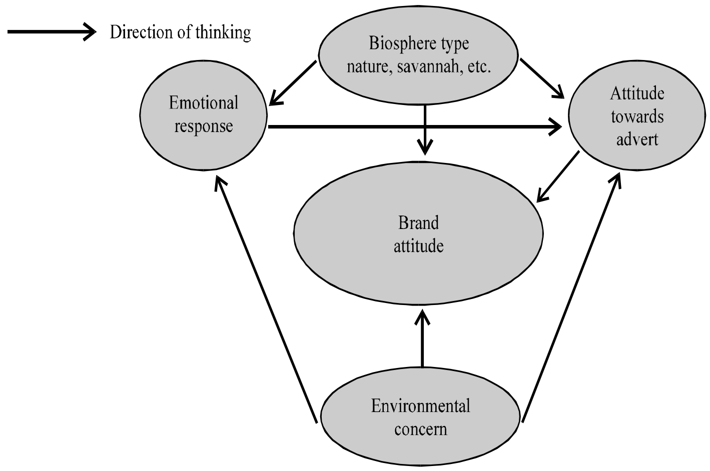

Fig. 2: Brand attitude (Hartman and Apaolaza-Ibanez, 2012)

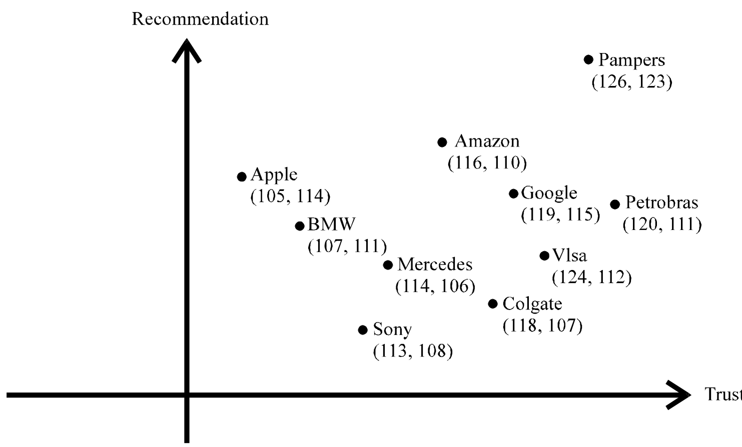

Fig. 3: TrustR BrandZ study, commissioned by WPP and conducted annually by Millward Brown

time. Any brand that can survive more than 50 years will be recognized in a group of marketers and marketing communications in general as "strong brands" which are considered ‘assets’ which brings a tremendous value to the business (Fig. 2, 3).

This is consistent with the study of Jin and Suh (2005) who studied the “integrating effect of consumer perception factors in predicting private brand purchase in a Korean discount store”. They found that the perceived value of consumers and the prospect of buying brand-named items in Korean retail stores, the strategy of private brand labeling is widely accepted.

However, there are limitations in the foreign market research and it was found that perceived consumer value has an impact depending on the product. Most of the direct and indirect impacts on purchasing decisions include product brand name retailers, such as grocery stores, have a key factor which is the price and value and when cost is low, the product becomes worth purchasing. To stimulate consumer demand in products of Korean home appliances, the quality factor and comparison of quality products with national brand, advertising and warranty affects the perception of quality and is a critical factor in the selection of national brand products.

In a study about the 100 most important global brands which was based on a collection of more than 2 million consumer interviews in 30 countries developed over 13 years, it was found that trust and value are critical in difficult economic times (BRANDZ, 2011).

In Fig. 3 and 4, strong brands perform well in TrustR and Value-D. These charts include a selected group of BrandZ leaders. The charts show how highly valued brands are trusted, recommended and strike the right balance between Desire and Price.

Integrated marketing communications: One definition of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) is the application of consistent brand messaging across both traditional and non-traditional marketing channels and using different promotional methods to reinforce each other.

Scholars, however, have variously defined the concept of IMC with the earliest definition used by the American Association of Advertising Agencies (4As) (Belch and Belch, 2004) which defined IMC as "an approach to achieving the objectives of a marketing campaign through a well-coordinated use of different promotional methods that are intended to reinforce each other."

Marketing communications is one of the four major elements of the company's marketing mix. Marketers must know how to use advertising, sales promotion, direct marketing, public relations and personal selling to communicate the product's existence and value to the target customers (Jyoti, 2010).

Research by Mihart (2012) on the 'Impact of Integrated Marketing Communication on Consumer Behaviour: Effects on Consumer Decision-Making Process', stated that IMC is one of the most controversial areas of research, with the concept marking a constant progress from the simple coordinating of promotional tools to a complex strategic process. In the context of modern

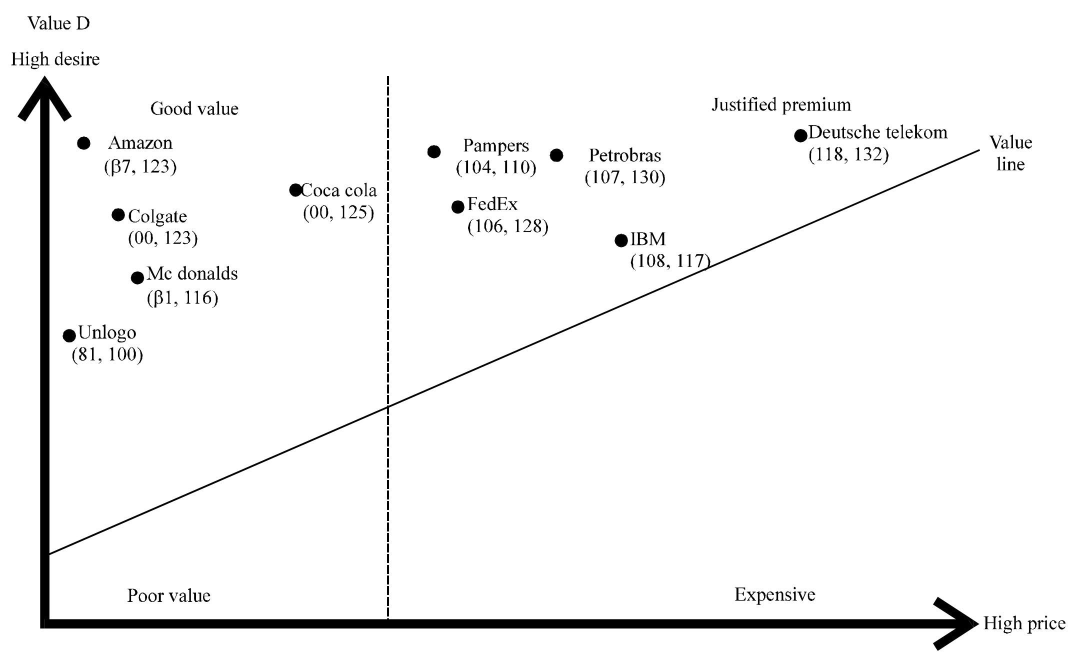

Fig. 4: Value-D BrandZ study, commissioned by WPP and conducted annually by Millward Brown, midpoint: 100, 100; price/desire

marketing, IMC has become a major tool for companies to achieve their goals. IMC works specifically through all the four classic elements of the marketing mix: product, price, placement and marketing communications.

Research by Benoit-Moreau and Parguel (2011) studied the value creation of brand communication environments from empirical studies in France. It was mentioned that social communication and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is to communicate that the organization has a responsibility to society and this is divided into three types:

- Company business must be conducted transparently and certification of goods and services will help with recognition by society and
- Companies must build brand equity with moral principles which means a commitment to shareholders and the public which takes into account the impact on society which is separate. Types of marketing communications, corporate communications and
- Ethical products or services with regard to social responsibility, so it appears that the brand is associated with different conditions

IMC has today become a key component of Fortune 500 corporations whereas companies such as Coca-Cola and Pepsi have dedicated senior executives with titles such as 'Senior Vice President, Integrated Marketing Communications and Capabilities-The Coca-Cola Company' which oversees global design, marketing communications, media, sponsorships, interactivemarketing and marketing of the Company's Live Positively sustainability platform.

The communication process itself consists of nine elements; sender, receiver, encoding, decoding, message, media, response, feedback and noise. Marketers must know how to get through to the target audience in the face of the audience's tendencies toward selective attention, distortion and recall (Rothwell, 2004).

Developing the promotion program involves eight steps. The communicator must first identify the target audience and its characteristics including the image it carries of the product. Next the communicator has to define the communication objective, whether it is to create awareness, knowledge, liking, preference, conviction or purchase. A message must be designed containing an effective content, structure, format and source. Then communication channels both personal and non-personal must be selected. Next, the total promotion budget must be established. Four common methods are the affordable methods, the percentage-of-sales method, the competitive-parity method and the objective-and-task method (Jyoti, 2010).

Conceptual framework: The study is collecting the theoretical literature and conducting research in the analysis of collected variables related to Brand Value, Brand Attitude and Integrated Marketing Communications which influences Purchase Intention by Bangkok metropolitan consumers of antioxidant beverages. The definition of the conceptual framework is shown as follows in Fig. 5.

Research hypotheses: The following 5 hypotheses are discussed (Fig. 5):

H1: Brand value affects brand attitude
H2: Integrated marketing communications affects brand attitude
H3: Brand value affects purchase intention

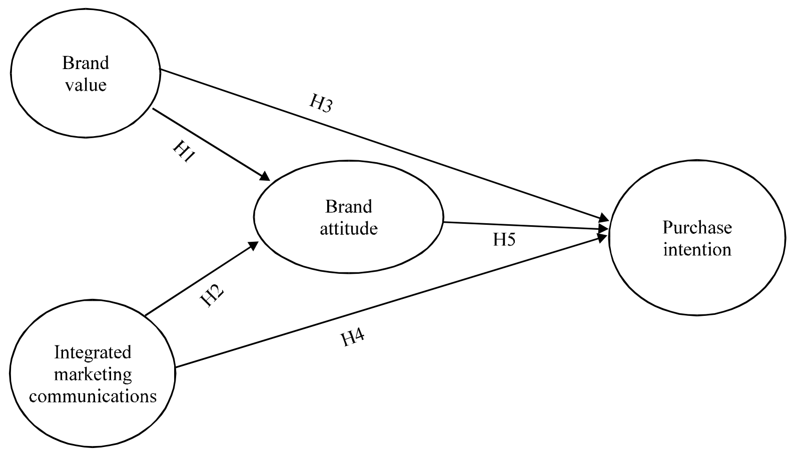

Fig. 5: Conceptual framework

H4: Integrated marketing communications affects purchase intention
H5: Brand attitude affects purchase intention

METHODOLOGY

The format of the survey population or unit of analysis will be the population in Bangkok and its vicinity who has bought antioxidants bottled beverage products. The proposed sample used in this research will be Bangkok consumers over 15 years of age who have bought a health drink for personal consumption (Hair *et al*., 2006).

Data collection: Bangkok consumers over the age of 15 are proposed as part of the statistical sample and will be queried using quantitative research methods from a proposed sample of 350 respondents (Hair *et al*., 2006). Questionnaires will be constructed as a tool to measure concept definition and practice. Questionnaires will be constructed as a tool to measure concept definition and practice using a 7-Point Likert Scale. This study first conducted Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and subsequently reliability analysis to measure Cronbach's alphas for this scale items to ensure internal consistency. Multi-item measures were developed based on Cronbach's alpha >0.68. This study will then calculate Cronbach's alphas for each construct. If the value is below 0.50, the study question will be cut off. This is considered highly reliable. The responses to the questions capturing focal constructs will use a five-point Liker scale (rating statements 1-7, 1= strongly disagree and 7= strongly agree).

Measurement

Dependent variable: Purchase intention analysis will use a measurement instrument or questionnaires utilizing a 7-Point Likert Scale (Likert, 1972) which will be developed and constructed from scales enabling the measurement of Brand Value, Brand Attitude and Integrated Marketing Communications (Ratpongporn, 2010; Kotler and Armstrong, 2001; Gilbert, 1991; Chen, 2007; Ferrand *et al*., 2010; Kotler, 2000; Mowen and Minor, 1998; Bauer *et al*., 2006; Kim and Martinez, 2013; Bourdeau, 2005).

Independent variables: Brand value analysis will use a measurement instrument or questionnaires utilizing a 7-Point Likert Scale (Likert, 1972) which will be developed and constructed from scales enabling the measurement of the Brand Awareness, Product Benefits, Brand loyalty, Quality Recognition and Brand Management Importance (Levy *et al.*, 2012; Jin and Suh, 2005; Hung *et al.*, 2011; BRANDZ, 2011).

Brand attitude: Analysis will use a measurement instrument or questionnaires utilizing a 7-Point Likert Scale (Likert, 1972) which will be developed and constructed from scales enabling the measurement of Brand Trust and Brand Evaluation (Park *et al.*, 2010; Schiffman and Kanuk, 2000; Jin and Kang, 2011; Hartman and Apaolaza-Ibanez, 2012).

Integrated marketing communications: Analysis will use a measurement instrument or questionnaires utilizing a 7-Point Likert Scale (Likert, 1972) which will be developed and constructed from scales enabling the measurement of the Advertising, Salesperson, Promotion, News and Public Relations and Direct Marketing (Belch and Belch, 2004; Mihart, 2012; Benoit-Moreau and Parguel, 2011; Rothwell, 2004; Jyoti, 2010).

CONCLUSION

It has been established that both the global and Thai beverage market are experiencing a significant growth phase. Along with this, there is a trend amongst the upwardly mobile, urban consumers to choose products that contribute to their health and wellbeing. As such, antioxidant products such as green tea are gaining inroads into a well-established Thai beverage industry.

It, however, has never been tough to build and sustain a successful food and beverage business than it is today. Food and beverage companies face an array of increasingly complex issues and questions and the manner inwhich they choose to respond will shape the future of the industry for many years to come. With the ever increasing wave of mostly urban health conscious consumers who spend ever increasing amounts of time at work, juice in containers tend to be most popular. As Deloitte (2012) study concluded, consumer convenience is number one priority by an overwhelming 66% surveyed. Current lifestyles demand comfort and hassle free conveniences, as consumers do not have time to seek out health care products.

Study, thus, far expects to show the need for the antioxidant drink market to expand and companies to make more efforts at using marketing communication channels to help send a message to the consumer that they realize the value of the goods which generates growth and market share for each beverage company.

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