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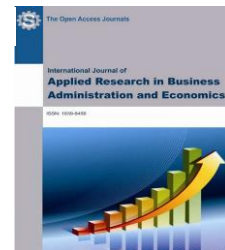
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An Analytical Approach of Brand Preference towards Hair Care Oil in Bangladesh

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ABSTRACT

Competition has been observed fierce in Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) product categories because of globalization and consumers' unbound preferences. These phenomena have given a new dimension in brand positioning which affect to the brand preference. A brand can be positioned in several ways - offering a specific benefit, targeting a specific segment, price or distribution. This situation is getting difficult as consumers needs, wants and demands are seamlessly changing. So to get a better position in consumers' mind it is important to know how their preference towards a brand is formed. Hair care coconut oil is such kind of consumer goods product where consumers needs, wants and demands are continuously changing. In this article, the focus is on how the purchasing factors are affecting brand preference in hair care oil in Bangladesh based on comparative study on Jui and Parachute. The research is conducted on 67 respondents where everyone is the student of university and college level. The questionnaire includes the questions about different features and benefits of the selected brands. Discriminant analysis is done to find out which variables are important considerations to discriminate the response towards brand preference which are valuable to the decision makers of hair care oil brands to formulate the branding strategy. Finally it is found that quality, quality consistency, advertisement, display, attractive packaging, and add bounce & body, are the important variables which affect the brand preference of consumers in hair care oil product category.

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1.0 Introduction

In the present competitive industrial scenario, a major challenge for marketers is to cut through the noise of competition and substitute products to attract the attention of the consumer. The brand identity and positioning is central to developing strong customer base and brand equity which can cut through this clutter. The target market and the perceived differentiation from competitors are core concepts of positioning. But the explosion in brand choice, and brand publicity material increase the confusion among potential consumers. The situation is also true for toiletries products. When a consumer goes in a shop or thinks to purchase anything s/he accumulates many aspects to take decision. Coconut oil is a vital part of beauty especially for women. From the beginning of history, the beauty of woman's hair has been the inspiration for poets, musicians and painters. Although times and hair fashions have changed,

there is nothing more attractive than shiny, silky layers of hair. Hair enhances overall attractiveness and thus can be incorporated into romance. So, when they select the brand of coconut oil, they consider a number of issues. In our study, we are going to focus on how the purchasing factors affecting brand preferences for coconut oil based on comparative study of Jui & Parachute.

2.0 Literature review

Marketing battles are not fought in the customer's office or in supermarkets. These are only distribution points for the merchandise whose brand selection is decided elsewhere. Marketing battles are fought in a mean and ugly place. A place that is dark and dump with much unexplored territory and deep pitfalls to trap the unwary. Marketing battles are fought inside the mind (Ries & Trout, 1986).

In order to put the subsequent discussion of exhibition brands and exhibition branding into context, it is useful to briefly examine the evolution of the branding literature. Merz, He, and Vargo (2009) examine the evolution of brands over the years and identified several distinct stages. In the earliest marketing literature it is found that, brands serve primarily as a way for customers to identify and recognize goods and their manufacturer. The focus of brand value creation is on individual goods whereby firms use brands to show ownership and take responsibility for their goods. This in turn helps customers identifying and recognizing a firm's goods on sight (Strasser, 1989). From the 1930s onwards, brands are viewed as images that firms create to enable customers to both differentiate a brand from its competitors (Reynolds & Gutman, 1984) and identify the needs a brand promises to satisfy (Roth, 1995). The focus of brand value creation is found on the creation of this brand image. Then, around the 1990s, scholars start to examine in greater detail customer firm relationships and how customers internalize brand information. Concepts such as brand equity (Aaker, 1996), customer-based brand equity (Keller, 1993), brand identity (Kapferer, 1992), and customer equity (Rust, Zeithaml, & Lemon, 2001) emphasize the active role of customers in the brand value creation process. Keller (1993) defines brand equity as the differential effect of brand knowledge is on consumer responses to the marketing of a brand. Yoo, Donthu, and Lee (2000) propose that brand equity is developed through enhanced perceived quality, brand loyalty, and brand awareness/associations. Finally, Vargo and Lusch's (2004) call for a change from a goods dominant to a service-dominant logic in marketing that reshapes scholars' thinking on brands whereby the 'logic of a brand' has shifted from the conceptualization of a brand as a firm-provided good or service to a brand as a collaborative, value co-creation activity of firms and all their stakeholders (Merz et al., 2009). This shift in brand logic brings with it a new understanding of brand value, which is defined in terms of the perceived use value, is determined collectively by all stakeholders, rendering the original concept of a "brand" as a logo which is obsolete in today's complex environment.

Brand's positioning is the relative perception of product within a significant group of customers (Rao & Steckel, 1998). It is the fundamental concept in brand's strategy that helps in finding a niche in the minds of the target segment (Kumar, 2007). A major objective of any brand positioning strategy is to reinforce positive image which already held by the target audience, correct negative images, or create a new image (Fishbein, 1967). Elements of brand positioning strategy are considered to be important for the operation of the concept. Fill (1999) states that the successful positioning can only be achieved by adopting a customer's perspective and by understanding how customers perceive products in the class, and how they attach importance to particular attributes that can be grouped under a construct (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). Positioning analysis requires more than an understanding of a product's image in the mind of the consumer. It is also required is a frame of reference with the competition, since a position is a product's perceived performance, relative to competitors, on specific attributes (Lovelock, 1991).

Consumers purchase a product for its function, performance, utility and nevertheless he/she is buying for its image & status (Terpstra & Sarathy, 1997). In fact, consumer products have implications much greater than just their function or utility (Levy, 1959; 2007 Business Monitor Survey, 2007; Ericksen, 1996; Mick, 1986; Czikszentmihalyi et al., 1981; Sriram, et al. 2006; Leigh and Gabel, 1992;). Products are now not just consumed for their material utilities but also for their symbolic meaning which is conveyed by their brand images (Elliot, 1997). Deducing that, the products are not merely "sets of attributes which yield any particular benefit" (Holt, 1995, p. 1). Therefore, a consumer is much likely to use brands to express how he/she is either similar to/different from people of their group (Markus and Kitayama, 1991). It is reported by Bhat & Reddy (1998) that, the brands have practical & emblematic importance for its

consumers. This emblematic importance that is associated with the brands is often conveyed through the choice of brands (McCracken, 1986; Gottdeiner, 1985). Meaning that, there exists relation between brand image, which is in sync along the consumer's self image and the emblematic importance of the brands (Zinkham and Hong, 1991; Chang and Chieng, 2006). Consumer will prefer those brands whose personalities match to his/her self image (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2000). Consumers do so mainly to express themselves as being alike to the personalities (Kassarjian, 1971; Aaker, 1999; Sirgy, 1982). In other words, consumer prefers certain brands to either create or maintain his/her self image to themselves or to their groups (Zinkham and Hong, 1991; Sirgy, 1982; Wallendorf and Arnould, 1988). In current scenario, purchase and consumption have emerged as silent ways of self-expression (Jamal and Goode, 2001, p. 483). Researches show us that self expression or perceived self image do affect consumer's brand preference & their purchase intentions (Domestic Beer - US -December 2007, 2007; Ericksen, 1996; Mehta, 1999).

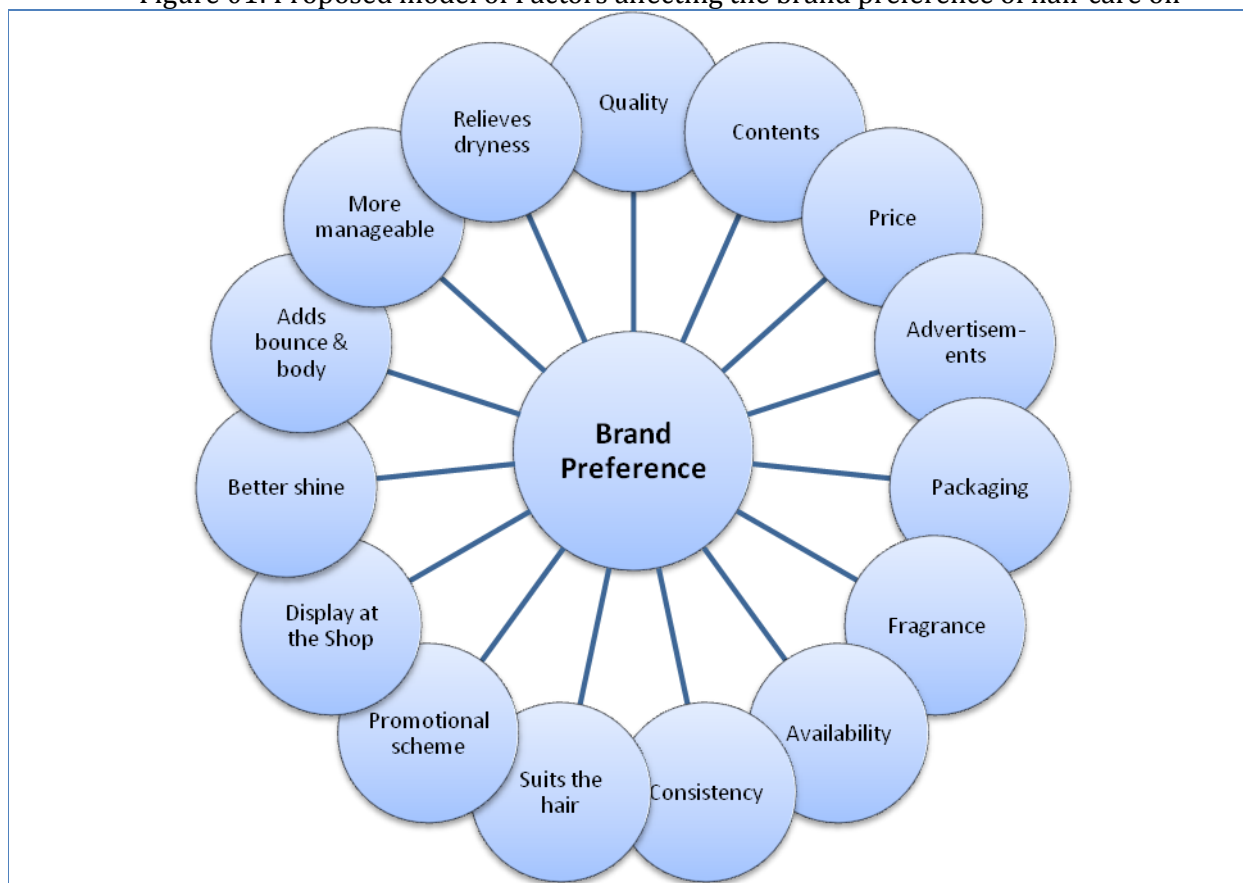
Guadagni and Little (1983) are first developed a model of brand choice as depending on the utility of a brand to a consumer that is a function of its price, display, feature, and loyalty variables. There are numerous adaptations of their brand choice model in the literature (Bucklin and Lattin 1991; Gupta 1988; Kamakura and Russell 1989; Krishnamurthi and Raj et al., 1988). Most authors develop models of the utility function of the consumer as function of displays and features and find that these promotional variables positively affect the utility and hence, the brand choice. The justification for the inclusion of promotion variables in the utility function has not been explicitly discussed. Fader and McAlister (1990) suggest that the promotions may help in defining the subset of brands that a consumer may choose to evaluate on a purchase occasion by excluding from consideration non-promoted brands that would not be excluded in the absence of promotions. Siddarth, Bucklin, and Morrison (1995) find that promotions may expand a consumer's consideration set by including a promoted brand that is not otherwise part of the consideration set. In summary, it appears that promotions reduce search costs of consumers by defining the set of brands that they need to evaluate on any given occasion.

This study involves an analysis on the factors those are affecting the Brand Preference of coconut oil. Jui and Parachute have been selected as these are the prominent brands in Bangladeshi market. No study on this case is done before in Bangladesh. But Square Toiletries Limited had done a research in June, 2010 to understand category association of hair oil in terms of awareness, usage, hair problems, causes as well as benefits. According to the survey, it is founded that up to May 2010 the market share of Parachute is 66% where the Jui has only 14% in coconut oil category. So it is clear that the foreign brand "Parachute" is in leading position.

3.0 Objectives and proposed model of the study

There is a difference on the importance of belief and attitude. While beliefs represent information held about an object and attitude is a favorable or unfavorable evaluation of the object (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). So, this research attempts to address the point given in the review of literature on the underlying factors those are mostly active in case of taking purchase decision and ultimately affect to the Brand positioning of the product.

Over the years, several different techniques have been used to assist marketers with their brand preference strategies. To effectively position (or reposition) a brand, the company must know how this brand is perceived in relationship to other brands in the product category. Understanding how well a brand's attributes perform is not sufficient to determine positioning if they are not also evaluated in terms of preference to the consumers. Brands attractiveness consists not only of the beliefs about the attributes of the brands, but also of the importance of the attributes of these brands to consumers (Ryan, 1991). In our study, the variable those are considered by Manhas P. S. (2010) is based on the cultural context of Indian people which is much similar with the Bangladeshi people. Therefore, we have tried to discover the underlying reasons for choosing the hair care oil of Bangladeshis by investigating on these variables. Our proposed model reveals the people's brand preference of hair care oil which is examined in our study. Thus our main concern is to explore the significant factors choosing hair care oil brand in Bangladesh.

Figure 01: Proposed model of Factors affecting the brand preference of hair care oil ¹

4.0 Methodology

It is an exploratory research based on primary and secondary data. From the literature review, factors have been identified that affect the brand positioning through the purchase decision. We have adopted the identified factors developed by [Manhas P. S \(2010\)](#). The factors in his survey for hair oil product category are: Quality, Contents, Price, Advertisements, Packaging, Fragrance, Availability, Consistency, Suits the hair, Promotional scheme, Display at the Shop, Better shine, Adds bounce & body, More manageable, Relieves dryness. Then descriptive research is conducted for the purpose of identification of the contribution of each factor in case of preferring the brands among Bangladeshis – Jui and Parachute.

At the first phase, a pilot survey is undertaken to identify the multinational brands and domestic brands to be studied in the hair oil product category. During the pilot survey, 30 respondents are interviewed and are asked to recall the brand names in the hair oil product category. The top two brands of hair oil which are considered for our study are Parachute (53%), belongs to Marico Industries, a multinational company and Jui (38%), belongs to Square Toiletries Limited, a domestic company. Then at the second phase, personal interview is administered to collect the primary data from the respondents using structured questionnaire. As a survey result of Square Toiletries Limited on Hair oil reveals that the people within the age range of 21-30 is the major part of hair oil consumer. Thus, we have decided to consider the respondents who are currently studying at university and college level. Each institution (University/college) is considered as a strata and is selected conveniently. Dhaka University, BRAC University, Eden College are selected for the survey because these institutions are well-known and renowned among the Bangladeshis which represent the best suited respondents for the study. Respondents from each institution are also selected conveniently.

Determining the sample size is complex and involves various considerations. Sample size can be influenced by the average size of samples of similar studies. Here we are going to consider the most two

¹ The above variables are extracted from [Parikshat Ss. Mmanhas \(2010\)](#), 'Strategic Brand Positioning Analysis through Comparison of cognitive and conative Perceptions', *Journal of Economics, Finance and Administrative Science*, Vol- 15, PP (29).

relevant researches- study conducted by the Square Toiletries Limited and the study done by Parikshat Ss. Mmanhas (Associate Professor, The Business School, University of Jammu) in India. In the first one the sample size was 500 and in the second one the size was 115. Since our study is exploratory and we have resource constraints, so we have considered 67 respondents as our sample size. Sample size is distributed according to the following manner:

University/ Institutions	Percentage of Respondents
University of Dhaka	45%
BRAC University	30%
Eden College	25%
Total	100%

To reveal the opinion about how these identified factors discriminate the brand preference of hair oil, discriminant analysis is adopted in our study. From different studies, it is uncovered that the primary techniques to find out the discriminant factors of brand preference are Factor Analysis, Discriminant Analysis, Multi-attribute Compositional Models and Multidimensional Scaling. Each has advantages and disadvantages (Green & Rao, 1972; Hauser & Kopleman, 1979). Several articles discuss and demonstrate the use of factor analysis for product positioning (Hauser & Urban, 1977; Hauser & Wisniewski, 1979; Huber & Holbrook, 1979). Hauser and Koppelman (1979) conclude that attribute-based techniques, such as factor analysis and discriminant analysis, provide better measures of consumer perceptions than similar techniques such as multidimensional scaling. Considering these similar studies, we have adopted discriminant analysis that reveals which factors are important to differentiate the opinion between discriminate the brand preference of hair care oil and does not discriminate the brand preference (dependent variables). To use this analysis tools, sampling is executed by conducting questionnaire in face-to-face approach. The questionnaire is developed and asked the respondents to rate their opinion on the basis of indentified factors which are independent variables in our study. A single statement is prepared for a single independent variable. Opinion about the independent variables is measured on a nine-point likert scale, this scale is then categorized as “does not discriminate the brand” (1, 2, 3, 4); “neutral” (5); or “discriminate the brand” (6, 7, 8, 9). To measure this opinion from the respondents, following Discriminant Function is proposed:

$$\begin{aligned}
 B(b_preference) &= b0 + b1(q_lity) + b2(c_tent) + b3(p_ce) + b4(ad_ment) + b5(p_kging) \\
 &+ b6(f_rance) + b7(a_ability) + b8(c_tency) + b9(s_hair) \\
 &+ b10(p_scheme) + b11(d_shop) + b12(d_shine) + b13(ad_body) \\
 &+ b14(m_managable) + b15(r_dryness)
 \end{aligned}$$

Where,

B(b_preference) = Brand Preference (dependent variable)

b0 = Constant

b1 (q_lity) = Quality

b2 (c_tent) = Contents

b3 (p_ce) = Price

b4 (ad_ment) =
Advertisements

b5 (p_kging) = Packaging

b6 (f_rance) = Fragrance

b7 (a_ability) = Availability

b8(c_tency) = Consistency

b9 (s_hair) = Suits the hair

b10 (p_scheme) = Promotional
scheme

b11 (d_shop) = Display at the
Shop

b12 (d_shine) = Better shine

b13 (ad_body) = Adds bounce &
body

b14(m_managable)=More
manageable

b15 (r_dryness) = Relieves
dryness

5.0 Limitations of the research

Major limitation of our study is small sample size. We have considered only 67 respondents which represent only a very small part of hair care oil user in Bangladesh. Because of resource limitation, we have conducted this research in limited scale. Large sample size could provide more valid result in this

regards. But we have tried to select the respondents who represent the hair care oil users in Bangladesh. It is only found that Quality, Quality consistency, Advertising, Packaging, mostly displayed variables and Bounce & Body have a major role in brand selection. But it is also important to know how they are affecting to create a brand preference in target market.

From the study, it is observed that Parachute is in good position than Jui because of quality, consistency of quality, advertisement, packaging, and mostly displayed. But how it is working is not clear. There are some probable ways as- better quality, new added features, more modification in elements; greater number of advertisement, more acceptable way of presentation, unique way of advertisement, greater shelf space, more availability etc. could affect to the brand preference but these are not investigated in this research. Thus our study only covers in small context of hair care oil brand preference of Bangladeshis.

6.0 Findings and analysis

Two-group discriminant analysis is used to explain the differences between consumers who agree that benefits of coconut oil influence brand preference and those who disagree with it. The independent variables are Quality, Contents, Price, Advertisements, Packaging, Fragrance, Availability, Consistency, Suits the hair, Promotional scheme, Display at the Shop, Better shine, Adds bounce & body, More manageable, Relieves dryness. The dependent variable is the dichotomy between who agree and who disagree that benefit of coconut oil influences brand preferences which are coded - "1" as "discriminate the brand" and "2" as "does not discriminate the brand".

Two groups of coconut oil users, Jui users (33) and Parachute users (34) are divided to extract the responses. The discriminant equation for the analysis purpose is estimated by taking a subsample of 40 respondents from the respondents of 67 and remaining 27 respondents are considered as a validation sample in a cross validation of the equation.

From table 01, result shows that the canonical correlation, an index of discriminant is $R=0.825$, which is significant at the 0.05 level. The eigenvalue is 1.904; Wilks' Lambda is 0.345. Therefore, it indicates that proposed discriminant function is significant and hold the hypothesis of independent variables differentiate the opinion between discriminate the brand preference of hair care oil and does not discriminate the brand preference (dependent variables).

Table 01: Eigenvalues & Wilks' Lambda				
Function	Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Canonical Correlation
1	1.904a	100.0	100.0	.825
a. First 1 canonical discriminant functions were used in the analysis.				
Test of Function(s)	Wilks' Lambda	Chi-square	df	Sig.
1	.345	38.931	15	.0001

6.01 Comparison between overall group mean and brandwise (Jui & Parachute) group mean

By the observation of the group mean from the table it is found that quality, quality consistency, advertising, packaging, mostly displayed are the important factors that differentiate between the two groups. In case of other variables the two brands are very close (table 02). The consumers agree that quality is an important attribute for brand preference. Parachute users are more conscious on this variable than that of Jui users. This situation is also true for the variables mostly displayed and advertisement. It is because of parachute may have more shelf space than Jui or Parachute broadcasts more advertisements than Jui or perception about Parachute advertisements is better than that of Jui. It is observed that advertisements of Parachute are more creative and appealing than advertisements of Jui that capture the more attention of consumers. As a result Parachute brand is viewed in greater number which holds a strong position in consumers' top of the mind. Consumers also agree that quality consistency and packaging influence the decision for brand preference. The users of Parachute are also

little bit more positive than Jui users in these two cases. Thus it can be said that the brand Parachute maintains its quality in better way than Jui.

Factors	Mean		Std. Deviation		JUI	PARACHUTE
	Yes	No	Yes	No		
Quality	6.36	1.85	.633	1.377	6.73	7.33
Contents of oil	3.93	2.54	2.645	1.476	3.03	3.10
Price	1.86	4.31	1.610	2.093	3.54	3.40
Advertisements	6.14	2.50	1.351	1.924	6.05	6.27
Attractive Packaging	6.20	4.23	2.717	1.883	6.37	6.73
Fragrance	4.43	4.54	3.275	2.642	5.35	4.60
Availability	3.07	4.77	1.900	2.438	5.27	5.07
Quality Consistency	7.15	2.12	.650	1.177	6.97	7.53
Loyalty	1.71	1.73	1.139	.962	1.78	1.93
Promotional Scheme	6.62	3.36	3.153	2.282	5.35	5.30
Mostly Displayed	7.81	3.07	1.269	1.855	6.05	6.30
Better Shine	2.43	2.96	1.742	2.289	2.84	3.00
Bounce & Body	1.86	2.69	1.099	1.761	5.41	5.50
More Manageable	1.93	2.04	2.129	1.949	1.86	2.33
Relieving Dryness	2.36	2.08	2.649	1.875	2.22	1.97

6.02 Validation of result

The cross-validation procedure using the discriminant function from the analysis sample supports to the contention that the variables aided in discriminating between agreed and disagreed consumers. As the table 03 shows, the discriminant function is 81.48 % successful in classifying between two groups. This suggests that dependent variable is correctly classified and produces valid result in the present study.

		Predicted Group Membership		
		Brand_Pref	1	2
Original	Count	1	8	2
		2	3	14
	%	1	80.0	20.0
		2	17.64	82.36

a. 81.48% of original grouped cases correctly classified.

6.03 Significance test of individual factor

From the following Table # 4, we find that the significant variables are quality, advertisement, packaging, quality consistency, mostly displayed, bounce & body in case of selecting brand which are significant at 0.05 * ($p < 0.05$) level. Theoretically, if the calculated value of significance is lower than standard value (0.05), these variables contribute to discriminate the dependent variable. Therefore, quality and quality consistency, advertisements, packaging, mostly displayed, and Bounce & body are significant to discriminate the brand preference of hair care oil in Bangladesh.

Factors	Wilks' Lambda	F	df1	df2	Sig.
---------	---------------	---	-----	-----	------

Quality	.789	14.442	1	65	.000*
Contents of oil	.978	1.454	1	65	.232
Price	.957	1.728	1	65	.238
Advertisements	.583	5.469	1	65	.018*
Packaging	.922	7.963	1	65	.022*
Fragrance	.998	.111	1	65	.740
Availability	.892	7.847	1	65	.070
Quality Consistency	.414	91.822	1	65	.000*
Loyal to the Brand	.996	.251	1	65	.618
Promotional Scheme	.977	1.585	1	65	.280
Mostly Displayed	.659	9.154	1	65	.030*
Better Shine	.982	1.188	1	65	.280
Bounce & Body	.938	4.280	1	65	.043*
More Manageable	.990	.636	1	65	.428
Relieving Dryness	1.000	.004	1	65	.948
*significant at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$)					

6.04 Function co-efficient and importance of factors according to ranking

The result from simultaneously entering all variables in discriminant analysis is presented in the following table 05. The rank order of importance, as determined by the relative magnitude of the structured correlations, is presented in the first column (Variables). Quality is the most important discriminator followed by quality consistency, advertising, packaging, mostly displayed, and body & bounce. Those who agree that benefits affect brand preference of coconut oil, are very concern about the quality of the product, consistency of quality, advertisement that can draw their attention, a good packaging, display in the shelf, and Bounce & Body. From the following Table # 5, Discriminant co-efficient is the co-efficient value of the extracted variables and with that co-efficient value, discriminant function is formed.

Table 05: Result of discriminant analysis.				
Ranking	Variables	Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	Structure Matrix
1 st	Quality	.266	.313	.569
2 nd	Quality Consistency	.668	.686	.254
3 rd	Advertisements	.076	.133	.251
4 th	Packaging	-.192	-.424	.156
5 th	Mostly Displayed	.580	.973	.151
6 th	Bounce & Body	.208	.325	-.143
	Promotional Scheme	.075	.197	.121
	Contents of oil	-.233	-.455	.112
	Price	.373	.724	.107
	Better Shine	-.079	-.167	.084
	Availability	.061	.139	.051
	More Manageable	.138	.277	-.026
	Loyal to the Brand	-.185	-.190	.011
	Fragrance	.010	.028	.008
	Relieving Dryness	-.284	-.617	.003
<i>Note: Rank order of importance is based on the magnitude of structure correlations</i>				

7.0 Suggestions for future research

There is plenty of scope to do large scale research in this context. Important suggestions are:

1. Some other national and international brands as Vartika, Hashmarka Coconut oil, Clinic oil etc can be introduced in research as these brands are getting share of the market.
2. How these significant variables are affecting in brand preference, can be researched in broader aspect.
3. Consumers' expectorations and demands are unlimited. There may have latent demands in hair care oil product category which are not examined. Thus it is matter of continuous research to find out those unfulfilled needs and examined how these variables affect to the brand preference, for example, they want coconut oil with some extra as herbal elements. So in this aspect what is the perception and how it is changing, is also important to know.

8.0 Conclusion

Our present research unveils that Quality, Quality Consistency, Advertisement, Packaging, Mostly Displays, Adds Bounce & Body play significant role in brand preference in hair care oil product category. In case of Jui and Parachute, Parachute is in better position for quality, consistency in quality, mostly displayed, advertisement, and packaging than those of Jui. Research also reveals that Parachute has more brand preference than that of Jui. Marketers from these two brands can find out how these significant variables are creating discrimination in brand preference which can provide greater insights about the brand preference of hair care oil users. Thus, our study contributes to a large extent in helping the marketers of hair care oil to formulate their branding strategy.

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