

CONSUMER PERCEPTION ANALYSIS USING PERCEPTUAL MAPPING OF POPULAR TEA ADVERTISEMENTS IN COIMBATORE DISTRICT, TAMIL NADU

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ABSTRACT

Perceptual mapping is a strategic management tool that offers a unique ability to communicate the complex relationships between marketplace competitors and the criteria used by buyers in making purchase decisions and recommendations. Perceived similarities and dissimilarities among popular tea advertisements were traced on two dimensions namely Ad-execution and Ad-creativity. The results of rural respondents indicated that the advertisements of Kannan Devan and Three Roses were similar in position in the positive quarter of both the dimensions. This indicated that the Ad-execution and Ad-creativity of the advertisements were good and liked by the rural respondents. In case of urban respondents, the results indicated that the Surya Premium was the only advertisement which was perceived positively in both dimensions. It could be concluded that the expectations of the urban and rural consumers in terms of the features of tea advertisements were similar.

KEYWORDS: *Perceptual Mapping, Advertisements, Brand*

Received: Jun 12, 2016; **Accepted:** Jul 02, 2016; **Published:** Jul 09, 2016; **Paper Id.:** IJASRAUG201612

INTRODUCTION

In India, more than 80 per cent of the branded tea products are promoted through advertising media and the remaining through print media, outdoor advertising, in-store promotion and direct marketing. Advertising can be done in two basic forms; the generic campaign which promote tea-drinking in general and not a specific product. The other form was private advertising to promote specific brand or brands of a company. These two forms performed very different tasks for the tea trade (Altman, 2004). A private company's advertising may reach non-tea drinkers and thus bring in additional customers in the industry, but often the goal was to steer a tea imbiber away from another tea product to the advertised product. The transfer of customer loyalty thus obtained was good only for the individual company.

Creating effective communication with consumers had been one of the most important facets of marketing. Till date there had been a low understanding of the role of effective marketing communication with customers in attracting and maintaining prospective and present customers (Potluri, 2008). Companies invest huge amounts of their earnings in advertising in different media such as television, radio, magazine, etc. In most countries, different organizations spend annually a big sum of money in marketing and public relations both in direct and indirect form. Yet only some organizations and industries evaluate the effectiveness of advertising (Macarthy et al, 2000). Effective advertisements are advertisements that help the advertiser to reach its goals

(Doyle and Saunders, 1990). According to most studies in different countries, TV had the biggest effect on audiences and persuaded them to start purchasing processes. TV as an advertising media had three key advantages. First, its influence on consumers' taste and perception was pervasive. Second, it could reach a large audience in a cost-efficient manner. Third, its sound and moving images created a strong impact (Ramalingam et al., 2006). One of the most difficult problems faced by companies, advertising agencies and advertisers had been the issue of measuring the effectiveness of the advertisement they created and run. The research study aims to analyze the consumer perception of Tea advertisements in Tamil Nadu.

METHODOLOGY

The Coimbatore Municipal Corporation comprising of 100 wards and Pollachi taluk comprising 131 revenue villages were purposively selected for the study to represent urban and rural areas respectively. Coimbatore Municipal Corporation was divided into five zones viz., north, south, east, west and central zone and six respondents from each zone were selected randomly for the study to represent urban population. The rural respondents were selected from the villages located 25 kms away from the urban limit to minimize the urban impact. Among 131 revenue villages of Pollachi Taluk, 68 villages were located 25 kms away from the urban limit. From the 68 villages, five villages' viz., Kumarapalayam, Servakaran palayam, Jallipatti, Poosaripatti and Arasampalayam which had minimal influence from the nearby urban areas were selected randomly for the study. From each of the selected villages six respondents were randomly selected. Hence, 60 respondents (30 urban and 30 rural respondents) were selected for the study.

Consumers' Perception of Tea Advertisements

Ashutosh and Kaushik (2011) stated that perceptual mapping was a strategic management tool and offered a unique ability to communicate the complex relationships between marketplace competitors and the criteria used by buyers in making purchase decisions and recommendations.

Multidimensional Scaling technique was employed to analyse the perception of consumers about different Tea advertisements. Multidimensional scaling of perceived similarity or dissimilarity was used for understanding how an advertisement was positioned in the minds of potential consumers in relation to competing tea advertisements. Eight advertisements of very prominent brands of tea in Tamil Nadu namely 3 Roses, Chakra Gold, Kannan Devan, Jones, Surya Premium, Top Star, Lipton and AVT Premium were compared. The respondents were exposed to the advertisements. They were not explained about the attributes of product or about the advertisements and were asked to rate the similarity or dissimilarity between pair of advertisements. A set of 28 cards containing advertisement pairs was given to them and asked to rate the similarity or dissimilarity. The scores were assigned from +3 to -3, +3 indicated that the two advertisements were similar and -3 indicated that the two advertisements were dissimilar. The sample judgment card given to the respondent was as follows.

3 Roses vs. Chakra Gold

Similar	3	2	1	0	-1	-2	-3	Dissimilar
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The respondents assigned the score based on their own judgement about the two advertisements. Likewise data were collected for 28 pairs.

Multidimensional perceived similarity or dissimilarity analysis finally led to perceptual maps where each advertisement or brand or object was represented as points and the distance between points measured the approximate

degree of similarity or dissimilarity perceived by respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The perceived similarities and dissimilarities among different tea advertisements were traced on two dimensions Ad-execution (Dimension 1) and Ad-creativity (Dimension 2). Berman (2010) reported three broad dimensions that characterized any advertisement viz., Ad-Strategy, Ad-Creativity and Ad-Execution.

The analysis of the perceived similarities and dissimilarities in the two dimensions among the tea advertisements was carried out separately for rural consumers and urban consumers. The results were discussed based on the rating given by the consumers using multidimensional scaling.

Rural Perception

The perceptual map of the tea advertisements as rated by the rural consumers is shown in Figure 1. Among the eight advertisements of tea, Kannan Devan, Three Roses and Surya Premium were placed in the positive quadrant of the map for the Ad-execution dimension. This indicated that these three brands were positively perceived in execution of advertisement.

Chakra Gold, AVT Premium and Top Star were placed in the negative quadrant of Ad-execution dimension. This showed that execution of advertisement was poor in these three brands. Moreover Jones and Lipton lied closer to each other and were very similar in advertisement execution. Kannan Devan, Three Roses and Surya Premium were positioned in the positive quadrangle of Ad-execution dimension. This implied that the advertisements were well executed.

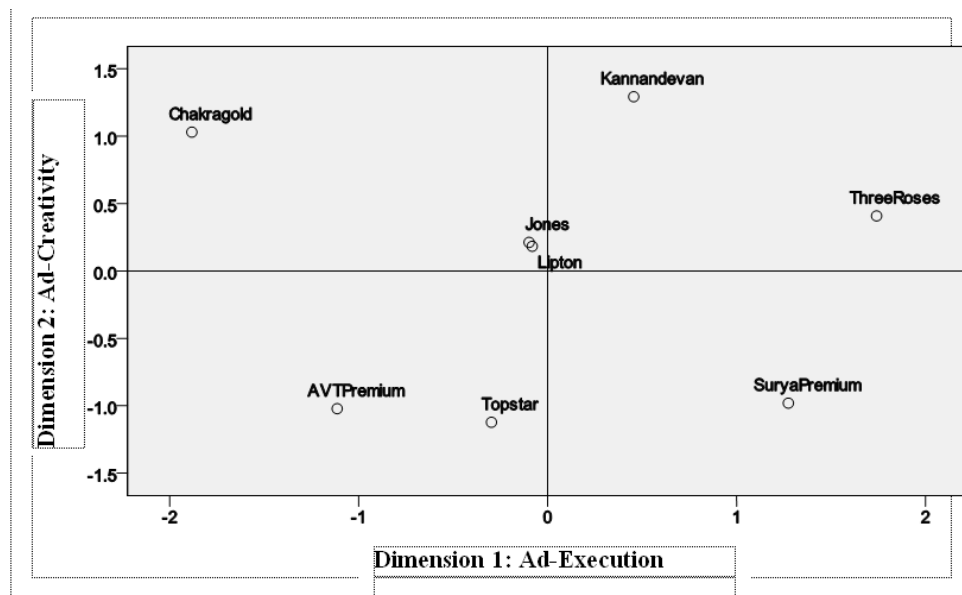


Figure 1: Perceptual Map of Tea Advertisements with Two Dimensions (Rural)

Kannan Devan, Chakra Gold, Three Roses, Jones and Lipton were in the positive quadrant of the second dimension Ad-creativity. Jones and Lipton were very close to each other and were very near to zero in terms of both execution of advertisement and creativity. This indicated that Jones and Lipton were neutral in case of those two dimensions. Moreover the map further portrayed that Kannan Devan and Three Roses were positively perceived in case of both the dimensions viz., Ad-execution and Ad-creativity. Among those two brands, Kannan Devan seemed to be the top

ranked advertisement in terms of Ad-creativity and Three Roses was found to be the top ranked advertisement in execution of advertisement as per the rural audience.

The stress value was about 0.17 and R-square value of the model was 0.78. This indicated mediocre fit of the model (Mishra, 2011; Ferguson et al., 1997). This showed that all the advertisements were distributed evenly with regard to Ad-execution and Ad-creativity dimensions.

Urban Perception

The perception of the urban consumers about the eight tea advertisements is presented in Figure 2. The result indicated that with respect to execution of advertisement, Surya Premium, Three Roses and AVT Premium were perceived positively and Kannan Devan, Top Star and Chakra Gold were found placed in the negative quadrant. Three Roses and Surya Premium were reported to be similar in execution of advertisement from the urban consumers' perception. The execution of advertisement was not clear and appreciative with respect to Chakra Gold as it was located closer to the vertical axis of that dimension.

The perception of the urban consumers about the second dimension Ad-creativity indicated that Surya Premium was the best creative advertisement. Chakra Gold was closer to zero and it was perceived to be neutral in the case of Ad-creativity. Top Star and Kannan Devan were in the negative quadrant of the second dimension and they were perceived negatively in creativity. Three Roses was very near to zero with respect to the second dimension and was found to be neutral in Ad-creativity.

Surya Premium was the only brand which was positively perceived in both the dimensions. Jones and Lipton seemed to be nearing zero in both the dimensions and found to be neutral in both the dimensions.

The stress value was about 0.18 and R-square value of the model was 0.77. This indicated mediocre fit of the model (Mishra, 2011; Ferguson et al., 1997). This reflects the same pattern as that of rural consumers.

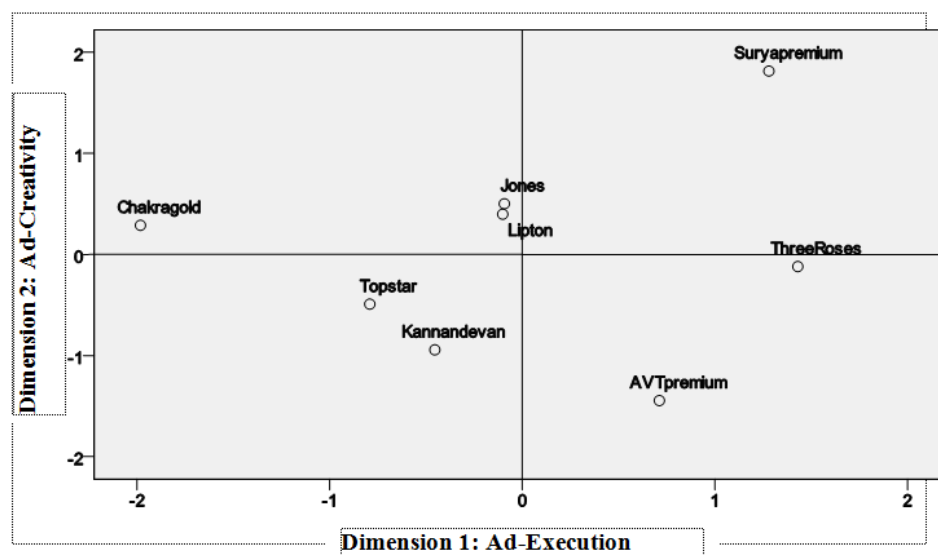


Figure 2: Perceptual Map of Tea Advertisements with Two Dimensions (Urban)

Positioning of tea advertisements in the perceptual map by the respondents are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Positioning of Tea Advertisements in the Perceptual map by the Respondents

Area	Positive Quadrangle		Near zero		Negative Quadrangle	
	Ad- Creativity	Ad- Execution	Ad- Creativity	Ad- Execution	Ad- Creativity	Ad- Execution
Rural	Chakra Gold, Kannan Devan and Three Roses	Surya Premium, Kannan Devan and Three Roses	Jones and Lipton	Jones and Lipton	AVT Premium and Top Star	AVT Premium, Top Star and Chakra Gold
Urban	Surya Premium	AVT Premium and Surya Premium	Chakra Gold, Jones and Lipton	Jones and Lipton	Top Star and Kannan Devan	Top Star and Kannan Devan

In comparison, Surya Premium which was the top ranked advertisement as perceived by the urban consumers was negatively perceived by the rural consumers in case of Ad-creativity. Since, the advertisement expressed very clear message with humour and nice music as pointed out by the urban consumers. But, Kanan Devan was the top ranked advertisement in Ad-creativity as per the rural consumers was negatively perceived in both the dimensions as per the urban consumers. Since, the Kannan Devan advertisement was attached with emotional feelings and sentiments that attracted the rural consumers.

Top Star brand was negatively perceived by both rural and urban consumers in case of the two dimensions. AVT Premium which was negatively perceived in both the dimensions by the rural consumers was positively perceived by the urban consumers in the case of execution of advertisement because of the popularity of the celebrity involved and direct explanation about the product features.

Three Roses which was positively perceived in both the dimensions by the rural consumers because of the attractions towards the celebrity endorsed with the advertisement, but the same was neutral in the case of Ad-creativity by the urban consumers, because much focus was on the celebrity not for message.

Though the message was good with Chakra Gold, the execution was poor. So, it was ranked positive in creativity dimension and negative in execution dimension by both rural and urban consumers.

The response towards Jones and Lipton was more or less same from both rural and urban consumers. This reflected that both the advertisements were similar in case of execution and creativity. The respondents inferred that these advertisements were neither good nor poor.

It is inferred from the results that, the advertisements with clear message like, product features, price, packaging details, offers, good music, good feel and with popular celebrities were very much attractive and became popular among consumers.

During the survey, discussions were made with the respondents about the strengths and weaknesses of tea advertisements they watch in TV. The respondents' opinions are consolidated and presented.

Strengths of Tea Advertisements

The tea advertisements had a factual impact on the consumers both in the rural and urban areas. Among the rural consumers the TV advertisements was the primary source for creating awareness about different brands of tea. It established the tea brands in the minds of the consumers *ie*, increasing brand awareness and has a good influence on them. Also, the offers available for a particular brand in a particular period were made known to the consumers only through

these advertisements. It really had a good reach to the people. Definitely the ads played a key role in increasing the sale during the offer period and also created a chance that the consumer may stick on to the brand in future. The brand reputation can be maintained by the advertisement through its sustainability and in its quality.

The urban consumers' preferred an attractive, persuasive and fresh nature in the advertisements as its strength. A catchy and humorous advertisement had an excellent impact and attracted the urban consumers' attention towards a particular brand. The celebrities were not the only strength but were also one among the strengths according to urban consumers. Also, the tagline, jingles and concepts were liked by the urban consumers. The packaging styles and seasonal offers can be exhibited through the advertisements. They expressed that an ad with an attractive tea cup with hot tea stimulated them to buy the product. Also the colour of the tea *i.e.*, strength pulled the people towards the brand.

Weaknesses of Tea Advertisements

The rural consumers expressed that the concentration on selection of celebrities was more than the ingredients or making of the product. They stated that instead of speaking more about the celebrities, the advertisements could speak on tea specialties. They also expressed that some advertisements were meaningless. Also the exaggeration of the health benefits was irritating to some consumers, to an extreme that some said advertisements were fake. Most of the rural and urban consumers had a view that the advertisements cannot exhibit the quality of the brand or product. The advertisement may be elegant, but when the product comes to hand it may not be of good quality. Also a common complaint was that the price details and offers were not clear and most of them viewed that it was done purposefully. It really not helped the brand to keep up its reputation. The advertisements did not create awareness about taste and quality and the features of the product were not explained.

The length, fakeness and exaggeration were expressed as the major weaknesses by the urban respondents. The non clarity in the price details was also expressed by the urban respondents. Lacking creativity in the advertisement was other important weakness. Surprisingly it was spelled out that the advertisements focused on the urban population and that too was expressed by few urban consumers. Unnecessary use and due importance to the celebrities than the product was also conveyed. It was also reported that some ads were too imaginative and unrealistic.

Expectations from a Tea Advertisement

Based on the review, the expectations that were considered important from tea advertisement were identified and the same was ranked by the consumers. The data was analysed using Garrets' ranking technique. The results are presented in Table 2 and 3.

Table 2: Expectations from a Tea Advertisement (Rural)

Sl. No.	Factors	Rural (n = 150)	
		Mean Score	Rank
1	Product features	92.13	1
2	Price details	89.56	2
3	Clear message	84.65	3
4	Attractive and Humorous ad	79.47	4
5	Brand Reputation	76.21	5
6	Good Music	72.37	6
7	Packaging details	68.29	7
8	Celebrity influence	67.44	8
9	Seasonal offers	61.76	9

The results in Table 2 and 3 indicted that, first rank was given to the expectation on “product features”, by both urban and rural respondents followed by “price details”. “Clear message” was ranked third by both the category of respondents. “Brand reputation” was ranked fourth by urban respondents whereas, “Attractive and humorous ad” was ranked fourth by their rural counter parts; and the same was ranked fifth by the urban respondents.

Table 3: Expectations from a Tea Advertisement (Urban)

Sl. No.	Factors	Urban (n= 150)	
		Mean Score	Rank
1	Product features	93.11	1
2	Price details	89.59	2
3	Clear message	83.24	3
4	Brand Reputation	81.34	4
5	Attractive and Humorous ad	77.46	5
6	Packaging details	74.76	6
7	Seasonal offers	72.84	7
8	Good Music	67.56	8
9	Celebrity influence	61.23	9

Hence, from this table it was inferred that “Product features”, “Price details”, “Clear message” and “Brand reputation” were the most expected facets in an advertisement irrespective of the rural and urban consumers.

Kruskal Wallis Test

The results of the Kruskal Wallis test are presented in the table 4. The null hypothesis framed was that there was no significant difference between urban and rural respondents in the ranking of expectations from a tea advertisement. Since, the calculated values were less than the table value for both the regions, the null hypothesis was accepted. Therefore, it could be concluded that the expectations of the urban and rural consumers in terms of the features of tea advertisements were similar.

The consumers’ perception of tea advertisements revealed that the advertisements with clear message like, product features, price, packaging details, offers and with good music, good feel and with popular celebrities were attractive. Product features, price details and clear message were the top three expectations from a tea advertisement for both rural and urban respondents.

Table 4: Expectations from a Tea Advertisement - Kruskal Wallis Test (Rural & Urban)

Sl. No.	Factors	Mean Rank		Calculated Values
		Rural	Urban	
1	Product features	140.86	160.14	3.907**
2	Price details	145.30	155.70	1.098*
3	Clear message	149.41	151.59	0.048*
4	Attractive and Humorous ad	144.70	156.30	1.367*
5	Brand Reputation	161.14	139.86	4.612**
6	Good Music	159.55	141.45	3.307*
7	Packaging details	146.22	154.78	0.746*
8	Celebrity influence	147.12	153.88	0.464*
9.	Seasonal offers	159.21	141.79	3.076*

(* p=0.05, Table value = 3.84) (** p=0.01, Table value = 6.64)

CONCLUSIONS

The perceived similarities and dissimilarities among different tea advertisements were traced on two dimensions viz., Ad-execution (Dimension 1) and Ad-creativity (Dimension 2). The results of rural respondents indicated that the advertisements of Kannan Devan and Three Roses were similar in Ad-execution and Ad-creativity. In case of urban respondents, the results indicated that the Surya Premium was the only advertisement which was perceived positively in both dimensions.

The rural and urban respondents expressed that advertisements were the primary source of information creating awareness about different tea brands, tea features and offers. On the other hand, the respondents spelt out length, fakeness, exaggeration and much concentration on celebrities than product features as the major weaknesses of the tea advertisements. Product features, Price details, Clear message and Brand reputation were the most expected facets in an advertisement irrespective of the rural and urban consumers.

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