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Consumer Behavior towards Decision Making and Loyalty to Particular Brands

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ABSTRACT

Currently, consumers pay more attention to their health; there is a growing awareness of health benefits of healthy drinks such as the green tea. Green tea is a popular healthy drink that helps prevent many deadly diseases. There are increasing numbers of green tea manufacturers around the world especially in Thailand. This industry has overwhelmingly expanded due to high consumers demand and purchases. Previous studies show that the market of green tea beverage in Thailand is worth nearly 9000 million baht. The most popular green tea brand in Thailand known as "Oishi" accounts for over 50% of the total market share and as a result of the growing demand for this product, its market worth and benefits to the consumers, there is need to look at the consumers' behavior towards the product. Hence, the purpose of this study is to explore the determinants of consumer behavior and decision making towards loyalty to Oishi green tea. A survey method using well-constructed questionnaire was administered to 50 consumers. The researchers utilized the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 19.0) as data analysis tool to run the analysis such as the Chi-square and correlation analysis. The findings of this study shows that the factors influencing Thai consumer decisions toward Oishi beverage green tea are perception values (brand awareness, brand association and brand loyalty) and perceived quality. In addition, there is a positive link between decision making and consumer loyalty behaviors which are re-purchasing and word-of-mouth behavior. This study discovered that apart from the four main factors well-thought-out in the literature review, there are other numerous factors (such as convenience to buy, taste, flavors, price and packaging) that influence consumer decision to buy and consume the Oishi green tea. Based on these findings, this study provides consciousness for further marketing research development and also the strategies for planning an efficient marketing strategy in responding to consumer needs.

Keywords: Consumer Behavior, Brand Loyalty, Marketing Strategy, Repeat Purchase

JEL Classifications: C91, M3

1. INTRODUCTION

The health benefits of teas are recognized not only in Asia but worldwide. The black and green teas are the two popular types of teas that have gained recognition in contemporary times. Both types of teas originate from the same plant known as "*Camellia sinensis*" (Atilgan et al., 2005; Kamolshotiros, 2012; Wei, 2012). Notwithstanding their origin from common source, the differences between the black tea and the green tea are noticeable. First, the black tea was produced in Sri Lanka, Indonesia and South Africa but the green tea was produced in Japan and China. Second, the

green tea has less production methods than the black tea and it does not go through fermentation like the black tea. According to Kamolshotiros (2012), the green tea is more beneficial to human health than the black tea because it contains more antioxidants which can prevent some diseases such as cholesterol and cancer. This is according to a research association in biochemistry at Boston University School of Medicine, which discovered that the green tea contains high levels of antioxidant flavonoids such as epigallocatechin-3-gallate which can block inflammation and cancer. Green tea beverage market is growing intensely. Tsai et al. (2007) reports that the market worth of green tea

beverages in Thailand is over 9000 million baht. Oishi green tea produced by Oishi Group Public Limited Company, own more than half the market regardless of the fact that this brand is not the first to produce green tea. In recent years, consumers are now becoming more conscious about their health (Wei, 2012; Kamolshotiros, 2012; Ajagbe et al., 2014). Therefore, consumers' behavior towards products and services concomitant with healthy components and substances is important to be studied. For Thai consumers (particularly those living in the city), products and services connected with health benefits have a significant effect on consumption behavior.

The healthy living culture has encouraged the growth of businesses such as fitness centers, spa treatment centers, healthy food and drinks particularly in the beverage green tea market (Sanchez et al., 2006; Kotler et al., 2003; Ajagbe et al., 2011; Kamolshotiros, 2012). The success of the Oishi green tea company and the need for the company to adjust and develop its product and brand to uphold its position in the market has necessitated the need for this study. Ajagbe et al. (2015) opined that many factors in the literature have been exposed that influence consumer decision making, some of them are; stimulus-response model, buyers' decision making process, buyers' characteristics, perception value and marketing mix centering on promotional activities.

As a result, there are several advantages to study consumer behavior in order to appreciate their decision making for their consumption. Blackwell et al. (2006) expressed that it is valuable for the firms to study consumer buying behavior, buying motives and habits so as to create marketing strategies to respond to the needs of the consumers. Prior studies examining consumer behaviors and marketing mix in the marketing area exist but to explore the consumer behavior towards the Oishi green tea. Therefore, this study would explore the factors influencing consumer decision making for Oishi green tea in Thailand which has led to consumer loyalty. The particular study focused on the perception value, perceived quality and sales promotion, as well as the relationship between decision making and consumer loyalty behaviors as the determinant factors.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Consumer Behavior

In the literature, there are several existing consumer behavior models used to explain the significance for firms and marketers to appreciate and be able to create valued products or services with a view to respond to the wants of customers. Blackwell et al. (2001) revealed that consumer behavior is an activity that involves people obtaining, consuming and ordering of products or services. Schiffman and Kanuk (2000) opined that consumer behavior refers to the way people make their choice on their personal or household products by using their available resources such as money, time and effort. Gabbott and Hogg (1998) and Blackwell et al. (2006) further elucidated that consumer behavior in an all-inclusive view as the activities and the processes in which people choose to buy or dispose of the products or services based on their experiences and ideas. Frederick and Salter (1995) posited that consumers are satisfied because of the value package of their perceptions such as

the price, product quality, service quality, corporate image and so on. They further contended that if consumers receive the actual outcome of the value package as they expected, they will be happy. Some theorists like Fredericks and Salter (1995), Rowley (1988) and Blackwell et al. (2001) advocated that the uniqueness of the product is significant in order to create, maintain and comprehend the factors influencing consumer satisfaction. However, to become satisfied, consumers should understand the product and accept the standard offered by the company. In addition, consumer behavior can be evaluated from two perspectives: The decision-making process with consumer buying and the determinants affecting the buying process.

2.2. Stimulus-response Model of Buyer Behavior

It is of huge significance for marketers to respond to consumer needs in planning their marketing strategies. Oh (2003) posited that in order to adequately satisfy the needs of the consumers, it is crucial to understand the consumer behavior, their demands pattern, as well as the factors that stimulates the consumers. Kotler et al. (2005) utilized the stimulus-response model to study consumer behavior. According to them, the model indicated how consumers react to each stimulus and how each individual characteristics and decision making process has a huge influence on decision to buy. There are external factors and marketing mix impacting on consumer decision. Keegan et al. (1992) stated that consumers will respond in different ways depending on the effect of stimuli to them. The stimulus-response model is divided into four interactive components namely the stimulus input, the communication channels, the buyer characteristics associated with decision process and the purchase outputs. Kotler (1988) investigated on the significant effect of a company on the consumer buying behavior process by using communication mechanisms and relationship between the stimuli and consumer responses.

Kotler and Armstrong (2008) argued that the marketing stimuli consist of product, price, place and promotion that the business owners provide to the consumer. Bristow et al. (2002) and Clemons (2008) added that the environmental stimuli encompass social factors, based on the economical, technological, political and cultural circumstances of a society. These entire stimuli influence the organization's decision to produce certain goods in responses to consumer needs.

Buyers' black box contains buyer characteristics and decision processes. Lamb et al. (2004) emphasized that buyer characteristics could be personal, psychological, cultural and social. These characteristics have an effect on the buying decision process which is namely the need recognition, information search, evaluation of substitutions, purchase decision, and post-purchase. Cornelis (2010) described buyers search for both internal and external data through several ways such as personal, commercial, public sources and personal experiences. The author proposes that buyers' black box turns into a set of buyer responses such as product choice, brand choice, dealer choice, purchase timing, and purchase amount. DeVellis (2003) insisted that it is apparent when consumers compare and appraise products or brands which occur to their minds before their responses. DeLong (2004) mentioned that though the stimulus-response model illustrates consumers'

responses resulting on their awareness and rational decision process, yet consumers may not be aware of the attendant problems when they make a decision in actuality. A number of approaches have been used in studying decision making. For example, Sanchez et al. (2006) model enlightened the limited capacity of consumer collected for treating information. In other words, they apply a simple decision making approach.

2.3. Factors Affecting Consumer Buying Decisions

Kotler et al. (2005) posited that it is of great significance for organizations and marketers to consciously recognize and consider their consumer behaviors and the characteristics influencing buying behaviors. Lamb et al. (2004) stated that there are four main factors influencing consumer buying behavior. First, cultural factor such as the culture and value, subculture and social class of the consumers. Culture creates a basic value, perception, demands and behaviors influenced by the consumer's family, friends and the society. Different countries have diverse cultural influences which take a crucial role whenever people decide to purchase products. Hence, consumer buying decision differs conspicuously from one city to another (Aaker, 1996; Malhotra and Peterson, 2006; Qureshi et al., 2015; Atilgan et al., 2005). Within a culture, there are subcultural groups or entities that share the same customs, values, and norms. Subcultures can be divided into nationalities, religious affiliations, geographical regions, and racial groups. The second factor is the social factor which consists of peer groups, family members, opinion leaders, colleagues and friends. This factor is imperative as every society has a form of social class configuration. Bigne et al. (2001) explained that these factors have a significant impact on consumer behavior because people constantly interact with one another. Moreover, consumers are likely to ask opinions from others so as to save time and efforts for product search and evaluation. These social factors have a direct and indirect impact on customers purchasing attitudes and behaviors. The third factor is the individual factor. Individuals have different characteristics such as age, gender, family life-cycle stage, lifestyle and self-concept and so on. These individual characteristics bring about personal motivation, perception and preference (Kotler, 1988; Brassington and Pettitt, 2000; Macdonald and Sharp, 2000). Naturally, individuals consume different products and services which changes throughout their entire lifespan. Differences and changes in their tastes of clothes, foods, furniture, refreshment products or services vary among children, teenagers, adults, and old people. Esterby-Smith et al. (2002) stressed that an individual's personality is considered to be a self-concept and self-perception which influences on his choice to purchase an item. Attitudes, perceptions, beliefs, and self-evaluation define their interests, activities, and opinions. The last factor is the psychological factor which is the perception, motivation learning, attitudes and beliefs. This factor is regarded as an instrument for consumers to interact in the society. By recognizing their feelings, scrutinizing the information and articulating their thoughts and opinions, firms and marketers can take actions to satisfy the consumer's intense needs. Lamb et al. (2004) suggested that the changes in consumer behaviors come from customers' learning procedure which contributes to their experience and practices toward products or services.

Kotler et al. (2005) illuminated that many learning theorists' view customers learning through the interaction among stimuli, drives, cues, reinforcement, and responses. As a consequence, people take action with their beliefs and attitudes. Figure 1 show the consumer decision making process model.

2.4. Consumer Decision Making Process

Consumer decision making models in the literature have the following three stages in common: The pre-purchase, the purchase and the post-purchase stages (Murphy, 1998; Rayport and Jaworski, 2003). However, the most cited of these models is the consumer decision-making process model developed by Engel et al. (1968) as cited in Blackwell et al. (2006). In the model, they recommended that consumers will need to go through five main stages of decision making before making their final decisions when purchasing an item. These are need recognition, search for information both internally and externally, appraisal of alternatives, purchase decision and post-purchase. These stages of decision making are further clarified below:

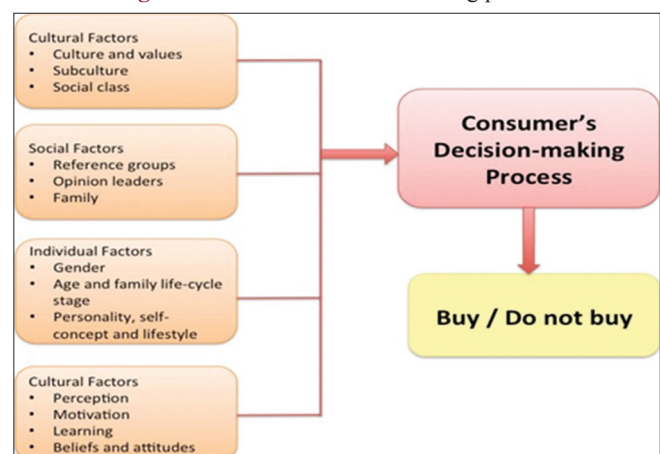
2.4.1. Need recognition

This has been established to be the first stage in the decision making process. It is the stage where a consumer is encountered with the difference between perception and the tangible satisfaction level (Solomon et al., 2006). The authors amplify that a consumer buying decision process will begin when a person's unsatisfied needs are recognized. These unsatisfied needs can be further divided into functional needs and psychological needs. Whilst the former refers to the performance of the product or service, the latter is concerned with the consumers' feelings about the product or service they purchase.

2.4.2. Internal and external information search

This second stage is about the consumer searching for information about the product or service. Moorthy et al. (1997) mentioned such factors as personality, income, social class, size of purchase, prior brand perception, past experiences, and customer satisfaction can influence consumer decision making. During this second stage, the consumer searches for information both internally and externally. When searching for information

Figure 1: Consumer decision making process



Source: Lamb et al. (2004)

internally, the consumer will remember relevant information on one hand from previous experiences of the use of the products or services. On the other hand, external information search is mainly about seeking information in the external environment from other consumers, commercial sources, and public sources. Moreover, Solomon et al. (2006) recommended a composition search of information which includes pre-purchase search and on-going search. Pre-purchase search is when customers identify a need and look for more information about that need within the market, while the on-going search is mostly based on personal interest that one has for a specific brand. At the same time, consumers are more likely to keep up with the latest updated information about the brand they are pursuing (Tsai et al., 2007).

2.4.3. Evaluation of alternatives

Stage three emphasizes on the evaluation of alternatives. Kotler et al. (2005) suggested that the pre-purchase evaluation period is when consumers make an assessment between different products and brands before they make a choice on purchase. Generally, their decision making processes are based on the qualities which are related to their needs. Kotler et al. (2005) opined that customer buying decision is therefore based on several qualities such as size, quantities, quality, and prices. Porter (2004) further stressed that a firm builds its value by offering lower prices as well as having a differentiated character to compete with its competitors.

2.4.4. Purchase decision

Stage four is based on purchase decisions. It usually starts after consumers have already evaluated the various products or services offered by all expected retailers. Oh (2003) argued that these retailer and in-store selection are the main factors customers use to make their final buying decisions. Blackwell et al. (2006) posited that after this stage, the next step will be when customers decide which retailers they want to purchase the item from. They will base their decisions on the product attributes from the previous stages. The customer assistants, visual exhibitions of merchandise and the point-of-purchase can also influence the consumer buying decision processes.

2.4.5. Post-purchase

The final stage of the consumer-decision process model can be divided into three steps. The first step, customers consume the products or service. The second step, customers will evaluate their consumption and it may be noticed here that the customer satisfaction level could be higher than their perceived performance and vice versa (Aaker, 1996; Blackwell et al., 2006). During the last step, divestment takes place. At this point, consumers are likely to dispose of or recycle the product. This is the point that most organizations now pay attention to and a result they are now concerned with being environmentally friendly due to the fact that they feel almost all customers could probably make repeat purchases if they are satisfied with a reinforcement stage (Rayport and Jaworski, 2003).

2.5. Marketing Mix

Kotler (1988) supposed that the marketing mix element is among

the main discipline of marketing theory. McCarthy and Perreault (1991) suggested that marketing mix is the controllable variable leading an organization to organize and respond to its target market. Stanton et al. (1991) and Kotler and Armstrong (2008) further elucidated that the marketing mix element is a set of controllable tools to manage the dynamic and uncontrollable marketing environment. Consequently, there are four main areas that can be deliberated upon when describing the marketing mix elements, these are also known as the 4 Ps of marketing and include product, price, place and promotion (Kotler, 1988; Malhotra and Peterson, 2006). A product can be tangible or intangible and can be both good and offer a service to satisfy consumers' needs. The capability of an excellent product however is its durability and how it can support brand offering. Price is one of the indispensable elements of the marketing mix which is viewed as the amount of money the consumer is willing to pay for product or service. Bucklin et al. (1998) noted that the price of a product has a significant influence on consumers' choices and incidences of purchase. Thus, organizations must set prices that match consumer segmentation, target market and brand positioning intention and must also put into consideration other components in the marketing mix. Lamb et al. (2004) recommended that there are internal and external factors which an organization must evaluate to create a marketing strategy that supports it to be sustainable in the market.

Ganesh et al. (2000) opined that place is the location where a firm can deliver its product to the consumer. Ajagbe et al. (2015) referred place to a channel of distribution which includes independent manufacturers, retailers and wholesalers as they provide the product or service available for consumers. The distribution channel is an exchange relationship between consumers and the organization which creates consumer value by acquiring and consuming both products and services. Pelton et al. (1997) added that promotion is the communication between the organization and the public through the use of messages and the media. It can be concluded here that all four of the above elements of the marketing mix are significant in terms of responding to consumers' demands in the market. Clemons (2008) however argued that the use of the 4 Ps or marketing mix elements as the main instruments of marketing strategy for an organization is obsolete. Gronroos (1991) pointed out that the 4 Ps highlight consumer acquisition, though essential, the significance in marketing should be consumer loyalty management and consumer retention (Aaker, 1991; Atilgan et al., 2005; Clemons, 2008). The following are some of the other important variables that can affect consumer behavior.

2.5.1. Promotional activities

Rowley (1988) stressed that promotion is considered to be a noteworthy element in a company's marketing strategies. It is used for communicating to consumer, its product offerings as well as a means of encouraging products or services to be sold and purchased. Yasin et al. (2007) postulated that the increase in number of consumer products, marketers need to pay attention to the promotional marketing activities or promotional variable of the marketing mix elements which originally included sales promotion, personal selling, advertising and publicity. These

promotional activities can be described as a set of tools for business to gain benefits of effective communication used for its product or service to consumers (Van and Van, 1992; Porter, 2004; Ajagbe et al., 2015). However, promotional marketing approaches consist of “Push” and “Pull” factors. Shimp (1997) mentioned that the push factors emphasize promotional activities towards distribution conduits to ensure stocking of a product to retailer for consumer. While the pull factors focus on marketing communication to generate consumer demands for a brand.

2.5.2. Perception value

Brand reputation is also an intangible asset which is considered as the equity of a firm and is considered to be the most valuable component for business. Aaker (1991) and Murphy (1998) noted that branding play vital role to distinguish goods and services from others. On the contrary, the perceived distinction can lead a brand to be a centerpiece of information when making a purchase decision or repurchase intention. Some researchers advised that a strong and remarkable brand image can establish brand identity in the marketplace (Bristow et al., 2002; Ajagbe et al., 2011). The increase in profit margins can also enhance greater intermediary co-operation and extend the brand. Consumers with little knowledge about brands will mostly rely on brand image. Yasin et al. (2007) postulated that brand equity is an asset and a liability which is associated with a brand, for example, names and symbols. Delong (2004) highlighted that this can lead to a beneficial or detrimental effect on the value of a product or service. Keller (1998) also supported this and emphasized that brand equity presents the effect of distinctiveness in marketing on the brand. The four main dimensions contributing to brand equity are brand awareness, brand association, brand loyalty and perceived quality (Aaker, 1996; Zeithaml, 1988; Proctor, 2000; Delgado-Ballester and Munuera-Aleman, 2005).

3. METHODOLOGY

The research design according to Blumberg et al. (2005) is a plan for collecting and analyzing evidence that will make it possible for the investigator to answer the set research questions. In order to achieve the research objectives, researchers might decide to use what is referred to in the literature as the quantitative research methods. This research method mainly relies on the use of a structured questionnaire design as the main instrument of research. The present study adopted the descriptive research methodology implemented through the use of questionnaires as the instrument to collect data from 50 respondents. Easterby-Smith et al. (2002) suggested that a suitable research approach, research strategy and received evidence can also be recognized by a good understanding of a philosophical foundation. This study was therefore conducted within the positivism approach and is based on the premise of the existing truth (Pallant, 2007). There are three main types of research: Exploratory, descriptive and explanatory. In order to test and examine the research hypotheses and the relationship between the independent and

dependent variables, the researchers used both the descriptive and explanatory research approaches (Sattari, 2007). A deductive approach was also adopted to study the relationships between the factors affecting consumer buying decisions associated with consumer loyalty behavior. The study used a 5-point Likert scale, semantic differential scale, as well as behavior intention scale to indicate whether respondents agree or disagree with a series of belief statements. The study based on the works of Ghauri and Gronhang (2002) and Blumberg et al. (2005) used the non-probability sampling technique to select the respondents. The target population for the study was Thai customers who consumed Oishi green tea. Male and female respondents with different demographic characteristics were sampled. Secondary data was gathered from academic books, journals and conference articles, online articles and unpublished works such as PhD theses and dissertations (Flick, 2006; Hinton et al., 2004). The primary data was generated from responses to self-administered questionnaires distributed to the selected sample population online. The questionnaires were designed in such a way so as to measure the factors affecting consumer behavior toward their decision making processes. The data collected from the survey were then analyzed using SPSS 19 and descriptive statistics were used to transform the raw data into an analyzable format. This enabled accuracy and interpretation of the data collected. To analyze data, the literature suggests that descriptive statistics can be adopted to explain the variable factors, while, the Chi-square analysis and Pearson correlation analysis can be used for hypotheses testing (Hair et al., 2010).

4. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

The demographic characteristics of the 50 Thai respondents in this survey are revealed as follows. There are 35 females and 15 males. Most of them were aged between 16 and 35 years respectively. Furthermore, females aged between 16 and 25 years represent the largest group of the respondents in this survey. In addition, 21 (42.0%) respondents have monthly income around 20,001-35,000 Baht, 18 (36.0%) respondents receive 5001-20,000 Baht, 6 (12.0%) respondents earn 350,001-50,000 Baht, while only 5 (10.0%) out of 50 respondents earn more than 50,000 Baht. Additionally, the majority of the respondents (66%) are students. There is an equal score of 6 (12.0%) respondents who are employed and are housewives, and only 1 (2.0%) out of 50 respondents is a business owner. Table 1 indicates the Cronbach alpha coefficients of the variables used for this study.

4.2. Descriptive Analysis

Table 1: Cronbach alpha coefficients of variables

Variables	Cronbach's alpha	Number of items
Brand awareness	0.801	2
Brand association	0.759	2
Brand loyalty	0.768	3
Perceived quality	0.732	5
Sales promotion	0.754	3

4.3. Hypothesis Testing Analysis

The hypotheses are evaluated using Chi-square analysis and Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. The former is engaged to compare and determine the difference between the expected data and the observed data regarding to the hypothesis, while the latter, as suggested by Pallant (2007), and is aimed to assess the direction and strength of the relationship between two variables.

4.3.1. Chi-square analysis

In this section, Chi-square analyses are engaged to examine the relationship with each of the factor, namely age, gender, income, and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

Hypothesis 1: There is a relationship between demographic data and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

Hypothesis 1.1: There is a relationship between age and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

H_0 : There is no relationship between age and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

H_a : There is a relationship between age and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

According to Table 2, it shows the relation between age and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea, $P = 0.196 (>0.05)$ which accepted null hypothesis and rejected alternative hypothesis. This means that there is no relationship between age and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption and Cramer's V of 0.676 indicates a significant relationship between these two variables. Therefore, hypothesis 1.1 is rejected.

Hypothesis 1.2: There is a relationship between gender and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

H_0 : There is no relationship between gender and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

H_a : There is a relationship between gender and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

From Table 3, the research illustrates the relation between gender and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea, $P = 0.170 (>0.05)$ which accepted null hypothesis and rejected alternative hypothesis. Although Cramer's V is 0.687 shows a high level of significance, there is no relationship between gender and decision making for the consumption of Oishi green tea beverage consumption. Thus, the outcome rejects hypothesis 1.2.

Hypothesis 1.3: There is a relationship between income and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

H_0 : There is no relationship between income and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

H_a : There is a relationship between income and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

As presented in Table 4, the relation between income and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption, $P = 0.522 (>0.05)$. The outcome accepts null hypothesis and rejects alternative hypothesis and Cramer's V of 0.593 shows

Table 2: Chi-square analyses between age and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption

Decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption	Age		
	Chi-square	Cramer's V	P
How important does each criteria influence you to purchase Oishi beverage green tea?	22.862	0.676	0.196*

*Significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed)

Table 3: Chi-square analyses between gender and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption

Decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption	Gender		
	Chi-square	Cramer's V	P
How important does each criteria influence you to purchase Oishi beverage green tea?	23.571	0.687	0.170*

*Significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed)

Table 4: Chi-square analyses between income and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption

Decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption	Income		
	Chi-square	Cramer's V	P
How important does each criteria influence you to purchase Oishi beverage green tea?	52.758	0.593	0.522*

*Significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed)

Table 5: Pearson correlation analyses between brand awareness and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption

Decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption	Brand awareness	
How important does each criteria influence you to purchase Oishi beverage green tea?	Pearson correlation	0.372
	Significant (two-tailed)	0.008(**)
	N	50

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed)

a moderation of significant level. This means that there is no relationship between income and decision making for Oishi green tea beverage consumption. Therefore, Hypothesis 1.3 is rejected. Overall, it can be abridged that there is no relationship between the demographic data and the decision making for Oishi green tea consumption in terms of age and gender and income. Thus, Hypothesis 1 is not supported.

4.3.2. Pearson correlation analysis

In this section, Pearson product moment correlation coefficient is used. It is employed for examining the relationship with the each factor, namely perception value, perceived quality, sales promotion, consumer royalty and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

Hypothesis 2: There is a relationship between perception value and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

Hypothesis 2.1: There is a relationship between brand awareness value and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

H_0 : There is no relationship between brand awareness value and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

H_a : There is a relationship between brand awareness value and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

According to Table 5, the relation between brand awareness value and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea is $P = 0.008 (<0.01, r = 0.372)$, which rejects null hypothesis and accepts alternative hypothesis. This means that there is a relationship between brand awareness value and decision making for Oishi green tea beverage consumption. Therefore, the result accepts Hypothesis 2.1.

Hypothesis 2.2: There is a relationship between brand association and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

H_0 : There is no relationship between brand association and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

H_a : There is a relationship between brand association and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

As presented in Table 6, the relation between brand association and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea is $P = 0.003 (<0.01, r = 0.409)$, which rejects null hypothesis and accepts alternative hypothesis. This means that there is no relationship between brand association value and decision making for Oishi green tea beverage consumption. Thus, it can be described that results reject Hypothesis 2.2.

Hypothesis 2.3: There is a relationship between brand loyalty and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

H_0 : There is no relationship between brand loyalty and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

H_a : There is a relationship between brand loyalty and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

From Table 5, the research illustrates that the relation between brand loyalty and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea is $P = 0.000 (<0.01, r = 0.514)$, which rejects null hypothesis and accepts alternative hypothesis. It can be described that there is a relationship between brand loyalty and decision making for Oishi green tea beverage consumption. Overall, it can be summarized that there is a significant relationship between perception value and decision making for Oishi green tea consumption in terms of brand awareness, brand association and brand loyalty. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 is supported.

Hypothesis 3: There is a relationship between perceived quality and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

H_0 : There is no relationship between perceived quality and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

H_a : There is a relationship between perceived quality and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

Table 7 illustrates the relation between perceived quality and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea is $P = 0.000 (<0.01, r = 0.501)$, which rejects null hypothesis and accepts alternative hypothesis. It can be explained that there is a relationship between perceived quality and decision making for Oishi green tea beverage consumption. Thus, Hypothesis 3 was supported.

Table 6: Pearson correlation analyses between brand association and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption

Decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption	Brand association	
How important does each criteria influence you to purchase Oishi beverage green tea?	Pearson correlation	0.409
	Significant (two-tailed)	0.003(**)
	N	50

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed)

Table 7: Pearson correlation analyses between perceived quality and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption

Decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption	Perceived	Quality
How important does each criteria influence you to purchase Oishi beverage green tea?	Pearson correlation	0.501
	Significant (two-tailed)	0.000(**)
	N	50

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed)

Table 8: Pearson correlation analyses between sales promotion and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption

Decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption	Sales promotion	
How important does each criteria influence you to purchase Oishi beverage green tea?	Pearson correlation	0.166
	Significant (two-tailed)	0.249*
	N	50

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed)

Table 9: Pearson correlation analyses between decision making and repurchase behavior

Decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption	Repurchase behavior	
How important does each criteria influence you to purchase Oishi beverage green tea?	Pearson correlation	0.402
	Significant (two-tailed)	0.004(*.**)
	N	50

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (two-tailed), **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed)

Hypothesis 4: There is a relationship between sales promotion and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

H_0 : There is no relationship between sales promotion and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

H_a : There is a relationship between sales promotion and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption.

From Table 8, the research illustrates that the relation between sales promotion and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea is $P = 0.249 (>0.05, r = 0.166)$, which accepts null hypothesis and rejects alternative hypothesis. It indicates that there is no relationship between sales promotion and decision making for Oishi green tea beverage consumption. Thus, the result rejects Hypothesis 4.

Hypothesis 5: There is a relationship between decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption and consumer royalty. Hypothesis 5.1: There is a relationship between decision making and repurchase behavior.

H_0 : There is no relationship between decision making and repurchase behavior.

H_a : There is a relationship between decision making and repurchase behavior.

Table 9 displays the relation between repurchase behavior and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption is $P = 0.004$ (<0.01 , $r = 0.402$) which rejects null hypothesis and accepts alternative hypothesis. It means that there is a significant relationship between decision making for Oishi green tea beverage consumption and repurchase behavior. Therefore, the outcome supports Hypothesis 5.1.

Hypothesis 5.2:

H_a : There is a relationship between decision making and word-of-mouth behavior.

H_0 : There is no relationship between decision making and word-of-mouth behavior.

H_a : There is a relationship between decision making and word-of-mouth behavior.

According to Table 10, it can be described that the relation between word-of-mouth behavior and decision making for Oishi beverage green tea is $P = 0.001$ (<0.01 , $r = 0.440$). This outcome accepts null hypothesis and rejects alternative hypothesis. It can be explained that there is no relationship between decision making for Oishi green tea beverage consumption and word-of-mouth behavior. Therefore, the results accept Hypothesis 5.2. Altogether, it can be concluded that Hypothesis 5 is supported. This means that there is a significant relationship between decision making for Oishi green tea beverage consumption and consumer loyalty.

5. DISCUSSIONS OF RESULT

This study has concentrated on two main issues in order to explain the link between three variables namely, demographic characteristics, decision making and consumer behavioral loyalty. The first is whether or not the determinants demographic variables (such as age, gender and income) as well as the study variables namely perception value (brand awareness, brand association and brand loyalty), perceived quality and sales promotion have a significant influence on consumer decision making for Oishi beverage green tea. The discussion of the results of the hypotheses' testing is presented in this section. Firstly, there is no significant relationship between the demographic variables (namely: Age, gender and income) and the consumers' decision making toward purchasing Oishi beverage green tea. Based on this result, it can be proposed that age, gender and income do not affect Thai consumers' buying decision for Oishi beverage green tea. This

finding has revealed that both males and females consider every factor equally when they purchase and consume Oishi beverage green tea in any size and flavor. This is arguable because Lamb et al. (2004) mentioned that individual factors such as age and gender will affect how each person consumes products and services. However, it is contradictory to Kotler and Armstrong's (2008) propositions that there are differences between males and females in thoughts, perception values, attitudes, behaviors, needs and purchase decisions. Besides, this current finding does not support the literature asserted by Moorthy et al. (1997) who argued that consumers will consider their income before making a purchasing decision. Since Oishi offers various flavors in different sizes to meet the needs of consumers, it can sufficiently respond to the needs of all age groups, genders and different income levels. Secondly, there is a substantial relationship between perception values (brand awareness, brand association and brand loyalty) and decision making towards Oishi beverage green tea. These results are buttressed by the literature posited by Yasin et al. (2007) that a higher level of perception values in Oishi beverage green tea will lead to an increase in potential consumer buying decision on Oishi beverage green tea.

6. CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

This study has investigated the consumer behavior towards their decision making to purchase Oishi green tea in Thailand which consequently leads to consumer loyalty. It has examined the relationship among the factors influencing consumer's decision making on Oishi green tea and consumer's loyalty behavior. There are numerous determinants factors that influence consumer buying behavior. This study however, focused essentially on only four factors that influence consumer decision making in the context of Oishi beverage green tea consumption in Thailand. The findings of this study shows that the most influencing factors that has a noteworthy effect on consumer buying decision are perception values and perceived quality, which consequently leads to consumer loyalty behaviors. The results of this study also show that demographic characteristics and sales promotion have no significant influence on consumers' purchasing decision. Furthermore, based on the findings, it could be suggested that Thai consumers have a higher level in perception values of Oishi green tea. The practical effect of these findings is that the Oishi beverage company could implement an effective marketing strategy to promote its brands and keep it consistently in the minds of customers. Based on this submission that consumers will repeat consuming Oishi beverage green tea because of their positive perception towards the product, the managers of Oishi Beverage Company should bear in mind the main determinant factors that influences individual consumer purchasing decision making as suggested by this study because different people have different buying consideration factors. This can help the company to create appropriate marketing strategy and advertisements in order to capture its targeted market and sufficiently respond to the consumer needs and satisfaction. The study also finds that quality is the second important reason that affects consumer decision to purchase Oishi beverage green tea. These findings can be exploited to develop and improve the quality of Oishi green tea by offering more new flavors in responses to consumer needs and satisfaction.

Table 10: Pearson correlation analyses between decision making and word-of-mouth behavior

Decision making for Oishi beverage green tea consumption	Word-of-mouth behavior	
How important does each criteria influence you to purchase Oishi beverage green tea?	Pearson correlation	0.440
	Significant (two-tailed)	0.001(**)
	N	50

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed)

In conclusion, this study is beneficial for Oishi and similar firms in the same industrial sector. These findings would enable companies to create and develop suitable marketing strategies in order to increase the number of loyal consumers as well as the firm's overall performance and lucrativeness. Based on these findings, we suggest that for a deeper understanding of consumer buying behavior towards Oishi beverage green tea, it is necessary for the company to consider not only the determinants which affect consumer decision making but also the results of their purchase decision making, namely consumer loyalty behaviors. This therefore suggest that there are several factors such as convenience to buy, taste, flavors, price and packaging that consumers consider when they are making a decision on Oishi green tea consumption apart from the four main factors highlighted in the literature review section. Therefore, this study provides further insights for marketing research and development and also can be used as a guideline for planning an efficient marketing strategy for firms that wish to respond swiftly to consumer needs in order to win their loyalty.

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