

Abstract

Consumer satisfaction is the degree to which a consumer's prepurchase expectations are fulfilled or when the perceived performance is greater than expected outcome. Bloemer and Poiesz (1989) distinguished consumer satisfaction into two types. Manifest satisfaction, which is the result of explicit and extensive evaluation of the brand choice and is related to future buying behavior, so it will lead to brand loyalty. And, Latent satisfaction is the result of implicit evaluation of the brand choice and is not related to future buying behavior, therefore it may or may not lead to brand loyalty. Kotler (1997) defined brand loyalty as the degree to which consumer consistently purchase the same brand within a product class.

The objective of this research is to explore the relationship between the degree of satisfaction and brand loyalty. As well as to determine which type of satisfaction has stronger relationship with brand loyalty. The main question to be answered is "to what extent can and does consumer satisfaction affect brand loyalty?". The demographic variables focus in this research consist of gender, age, highest education level, occupation category and monthly income level. The data is collected from 400 consumers of Nescafe instant coffee whose age above 15 years old in Bangkok area only. The statistics use to test the hypotheses are Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficients and Fisher's Z to test the relationship between satisfaction and brand loyalty.

In the conclusion, all three null hypotheses tested were rejected. That means 1) there are relationships between the amount of satisfaction and brand loyalty, and 2) manifest satisfaction has stronger relationship with brand loyalty than latent satisfaction. Therefore, consumer satisfaction positively affected brand loyalty.

However, it appeared that it is important to differentiate between the impact of manifest satisfaction on brand loyalty and the impact of latent satisfaction on brand loyalty. The impact of manifest satisfaction on brand loyalty was larger than the impact of latent satisfaction. From the result of demographic variables shown that consumers of Nescafe instant coffee are mostly male with the range of age between 25-34 years old. Most of them are bachelor degree holders and employed with the monthly income level at Baht 10,000 or lower. To make consumers become loyal to Nescafe, management must set the strategy that attract more consumer involvement as the more involved the customer in the purchase decision, the more likely the customer to become loyalty to a brand. Management can attract consumer involvement by building the customer relationship and point out the differences among brand.

