The Advertising Channels Affecting to Consumer Purchasing Decisions: Case Study of Hair-Care Market in Thailand

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Abstract— This study aimed to find out the hair-care purchasing behavior at hypermarkets and to investigate two factors, package design and advertising channels, that influenced hair-care purchasing behavior. The subjects of the study consisted of 100 housewives aged between 20-60 who usually shopped at Big C Tiwanon. They were selected by accidental sampling, and were asked to complete a questionnaire. The main findings of the survey were that the majority of respondents regarding their brand selection of hair-care products, they gave priority to the product quality followed by a reasonable price, and fragrance, respectively. Besides, more than half of the respondents had brand loyalty while the rest were attracted by an attractive package design and advertising promotion campaigns. The respondents who were attracted by the package design said that the information on the labels influenced their purchasing decision the most, and television was a medium that best reached them as well.

Keywords— Advertising Channels, Consumer Purchasing Decisions, Hair-care market, Package Design

I. INTRODUCTION

IN earlier times, a manufacturer's success came from creating the best products and bringing them to the market more rapidly than competitors. However, these traditional strategies wouldn't make businesses survive in today's global marketplace where customers are bombarded daily by a growing blitz of new products and they can be choosier and change their demands more frequently. Therefore, beyond the manufacturer's reputation, brand loyalty and the best quality, a company has to depend on package designs in order to catch the eye of the customer and to add value to the product.[2] According in "Product Creation" he claimed that statement "When industries are competing at equal price and functionality, design is the only differential that matters" The Product Design, also stated that styling is an important way of adding value to a product without changing its technical performance. Products which have too simple a visual form will be seen as uninteresting and hence unattractive. For the hair-care market with its heavy competition, a company really needs to distinguish itself on the shelf through packaging. Odd shapes and sizes, unique closures and colors, and attractive labeling, all boost the product image and sales.

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The packaging of hair-care products needs to evoke beauty, style, femininity or masculinity, and whatever other qualities the manufacturer wishes to associate with the product to arouse emotional purchasing decisions by customers. Anyway, not only does the product design influence consumers, advertising channels are also a vital element to drive their product decisions, convince them to change their purchasing behavior, try the product, and stick with the product. This study aimed to answer the following questions: Main problem. What are the impacts of package design and advertising channels on hair-care consumer purchasing behavior? And sub problems is what is hair-care consumer purchasing behavior., What are the aspects of package design that attract hair-care consumers to buy hair care products. What mean of people is attracted by each aspect and also which advertising channel can best reach hair-care consumers.[1]

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews the literature in four main areas along with a summary: theory of consumer behaviour and factors influencing the purchasing decision

Theory of Consumer Behaviour and the Consumer decision-making Process.

The stated that when buying products, consumers normally follow the consumer decision-making process. There are five steps in this process: (1) need recognition, (2) information search, (3) evaluation of alternatives, (4) purchase, and (5) post-purchase behaviour. These five steps can move the consumers from recognition to actual purchase. However, the consumer may end the process at any time before making the actual purchase. Step 1: Need recognition. During the first stage, the consumer becomes aware of a need or a problem. A need recognition can happen when there is an imbalance between actual and desired level. The need would also be recognised in cases where the consumer was not satisfied with a particular purchase. Therefore, he or she might try to find another choice next time. Sometimes the consumer just wanted a change from the old product. Such a desire for change was another type of problem recognition. Step 2: Information search after recognizing a need or want, consumers internally and externally search for information about the various alternatives available to satisfy it. During

this step, the consumer could identify alternative brands and possible purchases. [3]

Step 3: Evaluation of Alternatives After getting information and constructing a set of alternative products, the consumer is ready to make a decision. The information obtained can become the standard for evaluating and comparing alternatives. The standard might include price, brand reputation, product characteristics and country of origin. Each consumer had a different standard depending on many factors such as age, income, social class, lifestyle, personal preference, and culture. Moreover, the number of standards and order of importance varied with a particular product. Step 4: Purchase In this stage, consumers would determine which choice they would purchase as well as which place to purchase. To select a place to purchase, the consumer might consider some features such as location, prices, personnel, services and advertising. Step 5: Post-purchase behavior.[4] When buying products, consumers expect certain outcomes from the purchase. Therefore, the buyer's satisfaction which could happen after purchase depends on how well the expectations are met. From the five steps of consumer decision-making process, it can be inferred that consumers think thoroughly before making a purchase. In contrast that most purchases were not planned in advance. Up to 66% of purchasing decisions were made in the store. These purchases were called unplanned purchases. The added that an unplanned purchase mostly occurred when consumers were not involved with the product or did not consider the product important to them. The level of involvement with any product depended on the relation between the product and the individual self-concept. In such a situation, consumers often made a purchase decision inside the store as there was an inadequate motivation to preplan a purchase. For an unplanned purchase, the influence of in-store stimuli such as displays, shelf position, packaging, and price became more important than preplanned purchase decisions. Advertising could strengthen in-store stimuli by reminding consumers of the brand once they saw it on the shelf. Displays and good shelf position were a necessity in order to advertise effectively.[5]

Factors Influencing the Purchasing Decision

Customers Buy Based on Perceptions in "Design and Marketing of New Products" presented a diagram of model and explained that customers form their preferences for products based on subjective perceptions. They use these perceptions as a "lens" to filter the complex set of cues they receive about the product based on its features and based on communications (advertising, salesforce, word of mouth, channel of distribution, etc.) they receive about the product. The Marketer's Guide to Successful Package Design" and also pointed out that the package links the consumers' mental process to an image already created by advertising or a personal experience and then triggers a buy decision.[6]

Product Features

Product Levels classified product levels that can be offered to a market to satisfy a want or need of customers into five levels as follows: 1) Core level: the fundamental benefit or service the customer is really buying, 2) Basic level: the basic functional benefit or service, 3) Expected level: a set of attributes that buyers expect, 4) Augmented level: additional services and benefits that distinguish the company's offer from the competition, and 5) Potential level: all of the augmentations and transformations the product might ultimately undergo.

Each level adds more customer value, and together the levels constituted a customer value hierarchy. If the company's offer exceeds the competitor's offer on all important attributes, the company can charge a higher price (thereby earning higher profits), or it can charge the same price and gain more market share.[7]

The Attractiveness of Products divided the attractiveness of products into four kinds. The knowledge attractiveness—recognition of a product previously used and liked. Consumers must be able to recognize what kind of product it is from its visual appearance. Semantic attractiveness—the function of the product looks like it works well. Visual appearance of product functional value is vital since very often customers will not have the opportunity to thoroughly test a product before buying it.

In his article, Baxter illustrates some of the semantic statements in hair care products in which all products perform their basic function (cleaning hair) perfectly, product styling plays a key role in product differentiation and market segmentation. Symbolic attractiveness—the product's appeal to the personal and social values of the customer. The reason for purchasing a product comes from the fact that the product reflects the customer's self-image and the statement that they wish the product to make in the eyes of others. 4. Intrinsic attractiveness—the inherent beauty of the product's form. Appearance-value reflects intangible quality, such as its elegance, its beauty, and its intrinsic aesthetic appeal.

A. Combination of Package Design Elements

On a well-stocked shelf, a great many package designs compete for the shopper's attention, so to make a product stand out, be inviting and encourage easy scanning from a group of similar goods, a manufacturer must consider design elements as follows: Firstly, the name of the product must be clear, preferably in print that contrasts with its background. A brand identity can help customers recognize the product and purchase it again. If buyers have already purchased products from a company or brand range, then visually identifying a new product as part of that range will boost customer confidence. Secondly, package design must identify product attributes and important information about the product. For example, to specify a rejuvenating formula in personal care products like shampoo or conditioners, they may be informed on package as that it contains pure herbs or other important substances that act to revitalize the scalp, possess anti-ageing properties, promote hair growth and nourish hair and scalp

cells. Thirdly, shapes/sizes and illustrations on the package should relate to the contents in some way. For instance, in the design of household products, the stress is usually on health and cleanliness. [8]

On a practical level, products that are frequently used by women and that need to be regularly handled—whether bottles of shampoo and bath oil, or larger containers for detergents or cleaning products—need to be designed in sizes and proportions that can be manipulated easily by the smaller female hand. Products designed to appeal to the masculine purchaser tend to be generous in proportion, simple and unfussy, hardedged, weighty, and substantial. Fourthly, color must influence the viewers' response particular judgmental or emotional states. The pointed out that color can affect viewers' subjective assessment of size, shape, weight, and distance. A black package will tend to appear smaller, thinner, and heavier than an otherwise identical white package. In product design, where size and weight may be associated with value for money, such subliminal responses are important, since they can influence a decision to buy or not. Pan added that color is also used to tie the line of many products together, such as hair-care packaging that comprises several types of shampoo, conditioner, hair coloring and other products, by featuring different shades so as to lead to brand-identity standpoint and can easily to be seen from a distance.[9]

III. METHODOLOGY

Population and Sampling

This study aimed to find out the hair-care purchasing behaviour and investigate the factors that influence hair-care purchasing decisions. In this study, the subjects were 100 housewife consumers aged between 20-60 who usually shopped at the haircare corner of Big C Tiwanon. The accidental sampling method was used for selecting the samples.[10]

Materials

The primary data were collected by using a questionnaire consisting of closedended questions and an open-ended question. The questionnaire (see Appendixes) in the survey was composed of four main parts as follows:

Data collection procedures

This research used a descriptive design. The accidental sampling method was used to select customers at a hypermarket. The sample size was 100 housewife customers aged between 20-60 years old. One hundred copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the samples at Big C Tiwanon and taken back on the same day by the researcher's mother and the researcher herself. In case the samples didn't understand questions in the questionnaires, the researcher's mother and the researcher would explain them at that time. The questionnaires were given out on weekdays during 4 pm – 6 pm from 11 -29 December 2006.[11]

Data Analysis

When the researcher had taken back the questionnaires from the expected respondents, the researcher conducted the analytical process as follows: Editing: The researcher examined whether each questionnaire was completely filled out. If not, that questionnaire was discarded and the researcher had to redistribute the questionnaire to the samples until gaining 100 copies exactly.

Coding: The questionnaires were coded into the computer.

Processing: The processing of the coded questionnaires was done by using statistical software package – SPSS/ FW (Statistical Package for Social Sciences for Windows) version 12.0. Frequencies and percentages were used in describing the general information of the subjects and what aspect of package design and which advertising channel influenced the largest number of hair-care consumers.[12]

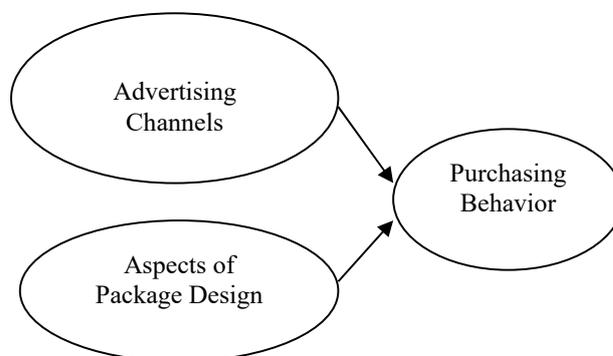The research conceptual framework is shown in Fig. 1.

Fig. 1 Research Conceptual Framework

IV. FINDINGS

Demographic Information of the Respondents

The showed that the majority of respondents (27%) were 25-29 years old, followed by 45-49 years old (17%), 35-39 years old (13%), 56-60 years old (12%), 30-34 years old (10%), 40-44 years old (10%), 50-54 years old (6%) and 20-24 years old (5%), respectively.

TABLE I
RESPONDENTS' BUYING FOR FAMILY MEMBERS

Respondent's Buying for Family Members	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	75
No	25
Total	100

Hair-Care Consumer Purchasing Behaviour

In terms of the respondents' purchasing behaviour regarding hair-care products, there were 75% of the respondents who usually bought hair-care products for family members while the rest of them (25%) didn't.

In the part concerning types of hair-care products that respondents bought each time, the results revealed that 55% of them normally purchased both shampoos and conditioners followed by spending for shampoos, conditioners and

treatments (23%),and buying only shampoos (19%). There were 2% who purchased shampoos, conditioners, and other products like hair color products. Only 1% bought shampoo, conditioner, treatment, and other products.

TABLE II
TYPE OF HAIR-CARE PRODUCTS IN ONE PURCHASE

Hair-care product types	Percentage of Respondents
Shampoo	19
Shampoo and conditioner	55
Shampoo, conditioner and treatment	23
Shampoo, conditioner treatment, and other	1
Shampoo, conditioner, and other	2
Total	100

About 50% of sample's designation was in the executive

In addition, the size of hair-care products that respondents regularly bought disclosed that 54% of the respondents bought medium size followed by large size (44%), and small size (2%), respectively.
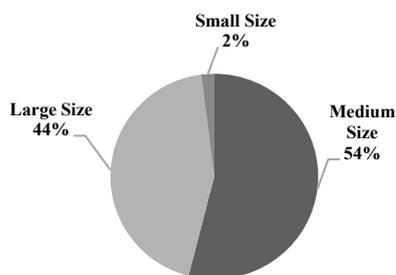

Fig. 2 Size of hair-care products that respondents usually bought

The result showed the frequency of purchasing hair-care products at hypermarkets. More than half of the respondents (51%) bought hair-care products once a month followed by once every two months (28%), twice a month (13%), and once every three months (8%), respectively.
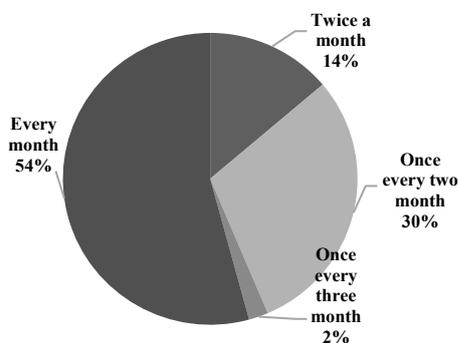

Fig. 3 frequency of buying hair-care products

Moreover, respondents gave reasons for selection of the brand by rating influential factors of hair-care products on

buying decisions as shown for 22.50% of the respondents considered performance as the most influential on the purchase decision, followed by 16.32% of them concerning reasonable price awareness. The third, fourth, and fifth buying influences were fragrance (13.61%),reputation of brand (13.57%), and ease of access (12.75%), respectively. The rest of the respondents (12.04%) rated appealing advertising campaigns as sixth while attractive packaging was weighted as the seventh influence (9.21%).

TABLE III
IMPACTS OF THE TWO FACTORS: PACKAGE DESIGN AND ADVERTISING CHANNELS ON HAIR CARE CONSUMER PURCHASING BEHAVIOR

Aspects of Package Design	Mean	Standard Deviation	Degree of Attractiveness
Information labels	4.21	1.001	Most attractive
Size	3.21	1.025	Moderately attractive
Color of product	3.29	.970	Moderately attractive
Convenience of use	3.74	.875	More attractive

When considering each facet of package design in Table 3, the information labels mostly attracted a purchase decision with the highest mean 4.21 followed by convenience of use had a mean of 3.74, which had fallen to a more attractive degree. However, color of product and size, got a mean of 3.29 and 3.21 respectively, and were considered as moderately attractive.

TABLE IV
COMPARISON OF THE DEGREE OF ACCESS TO CUSTOMER AMONG DIFFERENT ADVERTISING CHANNELS

Advertising channels	Mean	Standard Deviation	Degree of Attractiveness
On television	3.95	.764	More accessible
In newspaper	2.67	.979	Moderately accessible
In magazine	2.98	1.047	Moderately accessible
In brochure/leaflet	2.81	1.153	Moderately accessible
At point-of-sale (POS)	3.69	.897	More accessible
At hair salon	2.29	1.132	Less accessible

Regarding advertising channels comparison in Table 4, television and point-of-sale (POS) channels had a lot of access with a mean score of 3.95 and 3.69 respectively. Magazines, brochures/leaflets, and the newspaper media had different mean scores, 2.98, 2.81 and 2.67, but they fell in the same range as moderate access. Only hair salon channel had a little accessible degree with a mean of 2.29.

V. CONCLUSION

Hair-care Consumer Purchasing Behavior: Three-fourths of the respondents usually bought hair-care products for family members and more than half of the respondents purchased both shampoo and conditioner once a month of medium size. The spending was mostly between Baht 201-300 followed by

Baht 100-150. Regarding their opinions towards the price of hair-care products, half of them (51%) thought the price of hair-care products were reasonable whereas 46% felt that they were expensive. The favorite brand of hair-care products that they chose was Sunsilk followed by Clinique and Head & Shoulder. The most influential reason in selecting the brand was the quality of the product followed by a reasonable price and fragrance. Relating to the buying pattern of respondents, more than half of them (58%) had brand loyalty, so they still bought the brand in their minds followed by no brand in mind before buying hair-care products.[13]

Impact of Package Design and Advertising Channels on Hair-Care Consumer Purchasing Behavior:

Owing to the fact that only 42% of the respondents received any impact regarding package design and advertising channels, the five-point numerical scale results of these two factors were considered from amount of the samples. Four aspects of hair-care package design in this study consisted of information labels, size, color of product, and convenience of use. The information labels mostly influenced a purchase decision followed by convenience of use and fell into the more influential degree. Color of product and size were considered as a moderate influence.

For the findings regarding advertising channels of hair-care products, television and point-of-sale (POS) channels had more influence on buying action while magazines, brochures/leaflets, and the newspaper media had a moderate influence. Hair salon channel was less influential. Regarding other factors that were analysed from the 100 respondents it was revealed that reasonable price, ease of access, and fragrance were rated in as more influential in the purchase decision. Special sales promotions, reputation of brand, and word-of-mouth were ranked as moderate influences whereas celebrity endorsement had little influence on the respondents in buying hair-care products.[10]

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