Purchasing Behavior: Empirical Analysis of Brand Factors Influencing Consumers of Bottled Water In Albania

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Abstract

Purchasing behavior of consumers is a complex term that studies a customer's mind and behavior pattern. Customers' buying habits are most affected by how well a brand performs and how consumers react to it. Knowing the importance of water in our everyday lives, this study aims to determine which factors influence consumers' buying decisions when choosing one bottled water brand over another. The factors considered are brand performance, brand response, consumer satisfaction, and purchasing behavior. An empirical analysis was employed to understand and explain the effect these brand factors have on purchase behavior. The survey was applied to a sample size of 303 citizens of Durrës, one of Albania's biggest cities. For testing each hypothesis raised in the study, the statistical analysis consisted of reliability tests, quantitative statistics, and regression analysis. A positive relationship was identified between each brand-related factor when deciding on purchasing a particular brand of bottled water. Consequently, brand-related factors such as brand performance, brand response, and consumer satisfaction are crucial in determining customers' purchasing behavior. This study will fill a gap in the literature on this subject in Albania and provide bottled water companies with the knowledge they need to consider while making various critical business decisions.

Keywords: Bottled water, brand performance, brand response, consumer satisfaction, and purchase behavior.

Introduction

Water is an essential part of how the human body works and what it needs to stay healthy. Life depends on water, as humans can only survive a few days without it, completing the trilogy together with air and food. The foremost importance of water involves it making up most of our bodies, particularly 75% of an infant's body and 55% of an adult's body (Popkin et al., 2010). Therefore, buying high-quality drinking water is a must. There are still a lot of unanswered questions regarding how customers' purchasing behavior changes when they drink water from a particular

brand. This article will assess this concern by offering some perspectives on the various ways that brand-related factors, such as brand performance, brand response, and customer satisfaction, directly affect purchase behavior.

Both bottled and tap water are popular choices for drinking. Tap water usage has risen due to government policies in developed nations, like the EU and Singapore, however, these nations apply filter methods to ensure the tap water is clean and safe to drink (Qian, 2018). This has resulted in an increase in tap water usage across Europe, which may also impact Albania's future water usage as it strives to integrate EU laws and regulations in its quest for EU membership.

The 2022 European Commission's Water Statistics Report indicates an increasing trend in tap water usage, with Greece consuming more than 100 cubic meters annually, and Cyprus, Malta, and Bulgaria using between 25 to 100 cubic meters. Albania's tap water consumption is between 75 to 100 cubic meters, and this spread has widened as more households are using water filters (Eurostat, 2022).

Tap water is widely used in households, as per the Water Statistics Report (Eurostat, 2022). Greece ranks third in bottled water consumption, and Albania has a similar trend. Both countries have abundant natural water resources. Despite this, bottled water remains a popular choice in Europe due to its cost-efficiency, perceived safety, and taste. In southern Italy, 90.4% of people prefer bottled water over tap water (Gambino et al., 2020). The region shares geological similarities with Albania, and aquifers serve as a significant source of water for bottled water brands. The same is true for native Greek bottled water brands.

Aslani et al. (2021) found that despite improvements in the quality of tap water, the use of bottled water is steadily increasing in Europe and worldwide, with an annual average increase of 7%. In 2021, around 232 billion liters of bottled water were consumed globally, and this is expected to rise to 513 billion liters by 2025. Europe accounts for 29% of all bottled water consumption worldwide, with countries like Bulgaria, Greece, and Italy having high consumption rates per capita. Even though there are home filtration options, bottled water is still a popular choice for many.

This article addresses the buying behavior of bottled water in Durrës, Albania, and examines the factors that influence it. Previous research on the topic, such as Scalamonti (2021), Shan et al. (2015), and Kajtazi & Reshidi (2018), have focused on factors that affect water purchasing behavior and consumption in Europe, specifically in Kosovo, except Sulaj and Pfoertsch (2023), who have looked more especially into the impact of brand-related factors on bottled water consumer satisfaction, using empirical data to analyze brand performance, brand response, and customer satisfaction. While Albania and Kosovo share similar cultural and household structures, this article provides a unique perspective on bottled water buying behavior in Durrës, Albania. Statista's Non-Alcoholic Drinks Report (2022) highlights that Albania's bottled water industry accounts for 0.08% of the total revenue in 2022, indicating an increasing trend in bottled water consumption in the country.

To summarize, this article aims to explore how brand-related factors influence the purchasing behavior of bottled water consumers in Durrës, Albania. Brand

performance, brand response, and customer satisfaction are the independent variables considered while purchasing behavior is the dependent variable. The article will develop three hypotheses to analyze the relationships between these variables and provide insights for bottled water companies to design and implement effective marketing strategies. The article also fills a research gap in the field of bottled water research and can help companies improve customer satisfaction, leading to increased sales, brand awareness, and customer response.

This study will mostly answer the following research question: *What effect do brand-related factors like brand performance, brand response, and customer satisfaction have on the purchasing behavior of consumers in Durrës, Albania?* It is important to note that a prior study (Sulaj & Pfoertsch, 2023) concentrated on the correlations between brand performance, brand response, and customer satisfaction. This article will provide the conceptual framework of brand-related factors, customer satisfaction, and purchasing behavior by analyzing the relationships between them and consumers' purchasing behavior. Three assumptions are developed to analyze the relationships between the mentioned aspects better. Understanding the connection between brand performance and purchase behavior composes the first hypothesis. The second identifies and assesses the connection between brand response and purchasing behavior. The third and final hypothesis examines the connection between consumer satisfaction and purchasing behavior. The developed hypotheses focus mainly on the primary research topic of the study, which is how brand performance, brand response, and consumer satisfaction influence the buying behavior of bottled water consumers. Their accuracy and relationships will provide valuable insights for bottled water companies when designing and implementing branded marketing ideas and strategies for their target customers.

Indeed, the findings of this study can have significant implications for businesses operating in the bottled water industry in Durrës, Albania. By understanding how brand-related factors such as brand performance, brand response, and customer satisfaction influence purchasing behavior, companies can tailor their marketing strategies to better meet the needs and preferences of their target customers. For instance, they may focus on improving the quality of their product, enhancing their brand image, and providing better customer service to increase customer satisfaction and loyalty. Such efforts could ultimately lead to increased sales and profitability for bottled water companies operating in the region. Overall, this study highlights the importance of understanding consumer behavior and preferences in shaping marketing strategies and business decisions.

Conceptual Framework of Research

The conceptual framework of this article is based on a combination of two already tested models of brand perception and buying intention in the sector of airlines (Moslehpour et al., 2017) and overall marketing regarding the B2C concept implemented in real estate (Dash et al., 2021). The conceptual frameworks of the

mentioned articles are constructed upon the pyramid of customer-based brand equity (Keller, 2013). The assumptions developed in this article are based on the mentioned research works, which contributed to the research of Sulaj and Pfoertsch (2023) as well.

The key features of a particular product exposed to a buying decision comprise the brand performance and response. Brand performance will be one of the two starting variables in this article's model as it serves that function for any later buying pattern evaluation. Conversely, as also expressed in the research by Sulaj and Pfoertsch (2023), the performance qualities are used as a foundation for a purchase assessment, customers' positive sentiments, and judgment, which could comprise their reactions to a particular brand (Kotler et al., 2021). Therefore, the second starting variable will be the brand response, followed by consumer satisfaction, which originates from a good combination of brand performance and brand response. The last variable to be considered, the dependent one, is purchasing behavior, derived only from the interaction of the already mentioned brand-related variables (brand performance, brand response, and customer satisfaction). A graphical illustration of the conceptual framework applied in this article is provided in Figure 1.

Figure 1: The conceptual framework of the three hypotheses illustrates how brand performance, brand response, and consumer satisfaction are positively related to purchase behavior.
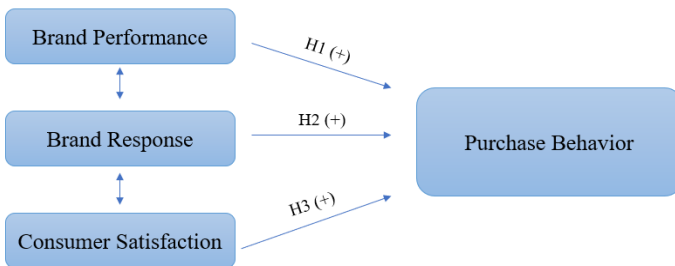
Methodology of the Study

In the bottled water sector, several essential aspects influence customer purchasing behavior. A study that considers these factors across different industries is reflected in Teng et al. (2007). Customer purchase behavior has been explained using the concepts of brand performance, brand feeling, brand judgment, and customer satisfaction (Kotler & Keller, 2011). These concepts have been used to develop three research assumptions which will be further presented in this study. The authors employed a correlation research design to test if the relationships between the independent and dependent variables are positive. Consequently, each assumption tests the relationship between brand performance, brand response, customer satisfaction (independent variable), and purchasing behavior (dependent variable).

The study's geographic scope is Durrës City, the second most crowded, ancient, and largest port city in Albania. All residents of Durrës City who drink water from different bottled water brands are included in this study's population. This population was composed of residents who occasionally and frequently drink branded bottled water, have at least a high school diploma, and are at least eighteen years old. The conclusions of this study were restricted to this industry sector only since it focused primarily on the manufacturing and selling of bottled water.

A quantitative approach was followed, and a cross-sectional, empirical study was conducted to achieve the research goal of this study. Notably, it aimed to analyze the effect that brand-related factors such as brand performance, brand response, and consumer satisfaction have on the bottled water purchasing behavior of the customers living in the second most populated city of Albania (Durrës). In this way, the authors could collect data from many individuals in a limited time frame through probability sample techniques such as random sampling, as also stated by Mielke & Seifert (1987). This allowed them to apply quantitative techniques to assess the circumstance studied (Fink, 2003) and make sweeping statements.

The primary instrument used for data collection regarding bottled water customer behavior patterns was a questionnaire. For the survey drafting and preparation, the authors were based on what Shashidhar (2015) designed due to similarities in research methods and other case studies (Keller, 2013). The survey was carried out by gathering online information through Microsoft Forms. The distribution of the questionnaire occurred from April 2022-June 2022. All responders were guaranteed the voluntariness of their participation and the privacy of their data, as their emails were not saved after completing the survey.

In all, 303 questionnaires were distributed, but only 277 were collected. Furthermore, 32 of them (11.55%) were deleted due to severe flaws in the answer set. Finally, 245 replies were obtained, which, according to Parashakti & Ekhsan (2020), is acceptable for this type of study. The remaining 26 respondents (8.58%) did not respond to all survey questions. Additionally, before the final delivery of the questionnaires, a pre-test was administered to a small sample of 30 drawn randomly from the authors' connections. Following the pre-test, we made necessary adjustments to numerous items (the questionnaire's assertions), resulting in the residents filling in the final version.

The questionnaire's content was divided into three sections: i) Socio-demographic information, ii) Consumption habits regarding bottled water, and iii) Branding components of bottled water. In other words, the survey included questions regarding the participants' water preferences and their perception of the consumption and quality of several brands. As Birt et. al. (2017) suggest, all questions related to factors influencing the brands were measured by a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

The questions in the survey included socio-demographic information on age, gender, residence, income, and so on. Table 1 provides the sample makeup in terms of demographics regarding participants in the survey. By gender, 64.24% of participants

were females, and 33.76% were males. The age range with the highest number of participants was 18–24 years old with 38.78% participation by this age group. We could speculate that the reason for this is that youngsters are more inclined to dedicate time to filling in electronic surveys, especially since they are closer to the last technological developments and use their smartphones more often than other age groups. We could also speculate that this age group is more concerned about the environment and the characteristics and quality of the products they consume daily than any generation before them.

Table 1: *Sample Composition*

Category	Feature	People	Percentage
Age	18 – 24	95	38,78 %
	25 – 34	54	22,04 %
	35 – 44	38	15,51 %
	45 +	58	23,67 %
Gender	Male	84	33,76 %
	Female	156	64,24 %
	Other	5	1,99 %
Education	High School	69	28,16 %
	Three-year degree	81	33,06 %
	Master's degree	92	37,55 %
	Ph.D.	3	1,22 %
Area	Rural	40	16.33 %
	Urban	205	83,67 %
Family Income	0-30,000 ALL	4	1,63 %
	30,001-50,000 ALL	29	11.84 %
	50,001-80,000 ALL	58	23.67 %
	80,001-100,000 ALL	54	22.04 %
	100,001+ ALL	95	38,78 %

Most of the participants live in urban areas (83.67%). The majority of the participants have a high level of education as they had finished at least one master's degree (37.55%), followed by those participants who have only finished a bachelor's degree (33.06%), which makes sense after concluding on the predominant age of the respondents. The majority of the respondents come from above-average families (60.82%), and only a small portion comes from low-income families (13.47%). Table 1 shows detailed information about the sample composition.

Procedure and Instruments

The formulated linear regression model was tested with Stata (STAY-ta, alternatively, occasionally stylized as STATA, version 16) to interpret the survey data. As a program, it is generally known to be used by researchers in many fields, including biomedicine, epidemiology, sociology, and science. The Cronbach's Alpha (Coefficient Alpha) model was used to investigate the questionnaire's internal consistency based on the average inter-item correlation. Cronbach's Alpha is used to evaluate the reliability, or internal consistency, of a group of scale or test items. In other words, the dependability of any particular measurement relates to how consistently it measures a notion, and Cronbach's Alpha is one way of quantifying the degree of that consistency. The reliability test results demonstrate that the questionnaire design is exceptionally dependable, and the data gathered about the frequency of occurrence is highly accurate and consistent (Alpha = 0.87) (Hair et. al., 2005).

The factor analysis in this article is mainly used in an exploratory view due to the need for a predefined idea of the structure or how many dimensions of relationships are supposed to be in a set of variables in statistical analyses. The validity and reliability of the scales were checked iteratively, and all values more than the minimum acceptance level were eventually delivered. The validity test, in particular, was carried out using the KMO test (>0.5) (Tuan, 2020). In this study, the authors decided to run the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy as factor analysis, the result of which was a meritorious value (KMO = 0.8359) screened against the labels provided in the book (Hair et al., 2005). This means that the other variables can explain the correlations between a pair of variables, i.e., potential factors.

The determinant of the matrix of the sums of products and cross-products, from which the inter-correlations matrix is formed, is calculated using Bartlett's test for sphericity. The matrix S's determinant is translated to a chi-square statistic and checked for significance. The null hypothesis states that the inter-correlation matrix is from a population with non-collinear variables (i.e., an identity matrix) and that the non-zero correlations in the sample matrix are attributable to sampling error. Table 2 illustrates the results given by the Stata software.

Table 2: Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy for the Survey

Number of items in the scale	Average Inter-item covariance	Cronbach's Alpha	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test	Bartlett's test for sphericity		
				Chi-square	df	p
33	0.2129	86,99 %	83,59 %	2936.158	496	0.000

Hypotheses of the Study

Brand Performance, namely its quality, is one of the most significant concerns in the service marketing literature (Parasuraman & Grewal, 2000), while customer

satisfaction is a major focus in marketing, business, and academia (Bolton & Drew, 1991). Another research (Mohtasham et. al., 2017) has already proven the association between the two mentioned brand-related variables such as brand performance and customer satisfaction and the impact of the first variable on the latter. Since good brand performance has utmost importance on the bottled water brand itself, the authors question whether positive purchasing behavior toward a specific brand is challenging to develop, especially since failing to discover any weaknesses in essential performance criteria is likely to influence the consumers' purchase intentions negatively (Thanushan & Kennedy, 2020). In light of the arguments provided above, this research aims to test the following hypothesis:

1.   Brand Performance is positively related to Purchase Behavior

Based on Keller's Customer- Based Brand Equity Model (2013), which was verified in many studies (Thanushan & Kennedy, 2020), the Brand Response is described as the combination of brand feelings and brand judgment. Brand Response is one of the most critical factors in predicting purchase behavior. When a firm can deliver an additional value service, Brand Response tends to rise. In fact, many studies agree that customer satisfaction is generated by assessing their pre-purchase feelings and judgment, i.e., expectations, of what they would obtain from a good or service compared with what they experienced (Oliver, 2010). This results in pushing customers to express their purchase behavior. Considering the arguments provided above, this work aims to test the second hypothesis:

2.   Brand Response is positively related to Purchase Behavior.

Consumer satisfaction is widely recognized as one of the most critical concerns for a company's performance in today's competitive corporate climate since it influences client retention (Ooi et al., 2011). Considering the relationship between consumers' response and satisfaction, they are expected to be satisfied if the product performs better than assumed (favorable disconfirmation), neutrally content if the product performs as predicted (confirmation or zero disconfirmation), and unsatisfied if the product performs worse than anticipated. Woodside et al. (1989) also feel that customer satisfaction is essential to purchasing behavior. As a consequence, consumer satisfaction has a considerable effect on their purchasing behavior. The last developed hypothesis is the one that studies the relationship between consumer satisfaction and purchase behavior. Precisely, the hypothesis mentioned below is raised:

3.   Consumer Satisfaction is positively related to Purchase Behavior

Research Analysis

Evaluation of the Quality Reliability of the Construct Model

Following data collection, replies received from respondents were reviewed and checked for normalcy, reliability, and validity to ensure their applicability before data processing and outcomes. The authors used factor analysis and Cronbach's Alphas to examine construct validity and dependability. Bottled water brands had four dimensions (12 items), including four items for Consumer Satisfaction and two items for Purchase Behavior. Factor analysis and reliability measurements were considerably above the threshold values for all variables in the conceptual framework.

Before hypothesis testing, we assessed the quality of our measurement model by computing Cronbach's Alpha (CA) and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure. CA cutoff values were 0.70, following accepted academic practices (Kaiser et al., 2013). Values are required to be more than 0.50 for the KMO test, and the result was a meritorious value (KMO = 0.665) (Tuan, 2020)**.** The values of AVE are required to be greater than 0.50. The composite dependability of scales had to be greater than 0.70. Table 3 provides detailed information on how reliable the variables used in the constructed model were for further implementing the model and testing the hypotheses. As demonstrated in Table 3, these quality standards were met at all levels.

Table 3: *Quality Reliability of the Construct Model*

Quality Measure			Std. Dev.	CA test	KMO test
Threshold Value **Variable**	**Obs**	**Obs Sign**		**0.70** **Hair et al. (2006)**	**0.50** **Tuan (2020)**
Brand Performance	245	+	0.8895	0.65	0.84
Brand Response	245	+	0.8264	0.74	0.86
Customer satisfaction	245	+	0.8309	0.78	0.83
Purchasing Behaviour	245	+	0.8387	0.54	0.86

Hypotheses Testing

One of the research tools that help in data analysis is comprised of summative scales. These scales measure the variability among the construction items that build and test an econometric model constructed for a study. Summative scales are created by gathering responses to a series of survey questions that focus on the same topic and calculating a score for each observation that can be used to reflect the respondents' opinions (negative to positive, high to low) on the topic in consideration. Their

objective is to quantify notions that we believe vary across individuals (or other sample units) and about which we lack a precise assessment. Based on the assumptions raised in this article, purchase behavior is the dependent variable in the first equation, and brand performance is the independent variable. In the second equation, purchase behavior is the dependent variable, and brand response is the independent variable. In the third and final equation, purchase behavior is the dependent variable and consumer satisfaction is the independent variable.

To summarize, a single path analysis was created to show the findings of various investigations in a straightforward manner. We created multi-item measures by integrating responses from numerous questions with associated replies to build a single variable that would be the total of the scores on each question scaled from 1 to 5. Consistent with established conventions, path coefficients β between variables greater than 0.2, t-values greater than 1.96, and p-values of 0.05 or smaller (Chin, 1998) were set as thresholds for the acceptance of hypotheses. Based on the thresholds set, the actual values and more detailed information about the hypothesis' acceptance are given in Table 4, where we can see that the actual amount of β in each hypothesis comes closer to or slightly overpasses the standard (β >0.2), all the T-values cross the limit (t-value> 1.96), and p-values are all smaller than the standard (p values < 0.05).

Table 4: *Hypotheses Testing*

Hypothesis					Result	
	β	*T-test*	*p-value*	Std. Error		
H$_1$	0.1968	3.05	0.003	0.0120	✓	Verified
H$_2$	0.2721	6.85	0.000	0.0397	✓	Verified
H$_3$	0.2833	4.69	0.000	0.0604	✓	Verified

Research Results and Discussion

This study aims to determine the effect of integrating the three aspects of bottled water brands (brand response, brand performance, and customer satisfaction), each with its items, on purchase behavior. This work is especially significant since, apart from the research conducted by Sulaj and Pfoertsch (2023), there is no research being done on this specific topic. Previous research has yet to examine the integration of this paradigm experimentally. As a result, this article serves as the foundation for future scholarly studies in this field. Furthermore, the participants of this study (Durrës residents) and the setting (bottled water industry) are distinctive and fascinating for testing hypotheses. The study's data gave the same predicted outcomes that we had.

This section will be composed of general information received from the survey results and the statistical analysis results received from Cronbach's Alpha and KMO

reliability tests. From the reliability and consistency tables, the Cronbach's Alpha and KMO for the survey in general and the contrast items specifically are quite high, implying validity in the analyses performed for this article.

Positive Relationship between Brand Performance, Brand Response, and Purchasing Behavior

Purchase behavior has been proven to have a highly sensitive positive relationship with certain aspects of brand performance, which the brand's company should not overlook since they comprise the core of marketing and make a brand recognized and ultimately purchased. Thanks to the regression analysis done regarding H1, this study concludes that even for bottled water brands, there is a positive relationship between brand performance and purchase behavior (β =0.2). This means that the better the advantages a specific bottled brand has in the market through its products, the better the chances that the customers will consume, recommend it to another individual, stay loyal to the brand and buy it continuously. Moreover, it could also imply that the fewer obstacles to purchasing a certain brand, the higher the consumer's habit of continuing to purchase that brand (Kotler et al., 2021; Ogunnaike et al., 2017).

The brand response has the most robust, most significant, positive relationship with customer satisfaction while also having a highly significant, positive relationship with purchasing behavior (β = 0.27). If there are affectionate feelings toward the brand for their given product, there is also a greater satisfaction from the provided product. However, such a relationship is slightly challenging to manifest in terms of bottled water, as the product itself is not known to cause many feelings to the customer. Therefore, even in the construct items, the focus is more on the customer`s judgment of the perceived value they will receive from the chosen brand. A customer's perception of a brand irrevocably increases the brand's quality and its product(s) (Kotler et al., 2021; Ogunnaike et al., 2017).

In addition, H2 states that brand response is positively related to purchasing behavior and this hypothesis is also strongly supported. In relation, the judgment and attachment manifested toward a brand subsequently leads to the product of that brand being purchased frequently by the same customer and also that the market share would then inherently increase due to good reviews and recommendations the brand subsequently receives (Kotler et al., 2021; Ogunnaike et al., 2017).

Positive Relationship between Consumer Satisfaction and Purchase Behavior

Customer satisfaction (β = 0.28) also has the most significant positive relationship with purchasing behavior. Similarly, as mentioned above, H3 also suggests that consumer satisfaction relates positively to purchasing behavior, and this hypothesis is supported. It seems not doubtful and quite logical that the higher the satisfaction from a brand is, the higher the likeliness of (re)purchase. However, as seen in this study, that might not always be the case (Thanushan & Kennedy, 2020). For instance, despite the high satisfaction, the customer might still choose to purchase from

competitors as their availability in the market might be higher, and there are not as many barriers to cause the purchase. Therefore, H3 is a fundamental and relevant hypothesis to this research as it supports the hypotheses that were tested before and the idea that the efforts put into a brand not only touch the inner world of the customer but they are also lucrative for the business leading to a stable or expanding customer base (Kotler et al., 2021; Ogunnaike et al., 2017).

Implications of the Study

This study provides valuable insights for bottled water companies seeking to develop effective marketing strategies and make critical business decisions. Key contributions of this article to the bottled water industry include the need for marketing managers to be attentive to advertising methods and set clear marketing goals (Ghasemi et al. 2015; Morgan et al. 2018). A successful marketing strategy integrates a company's product offerings, marketing resources, and actions that create value for customers. To achieve success, companies must prioritize delivering high-quality products and differentiating themselves from their competitors through ongoing research, financial success, and high-quality offerings. Bottled water manufacturers must also conduct marketing research to investigate product offerings, pricing structures, and innovative technologies. Additionally, companies must address environmental concerns related to plastic waste while remaining competitive in the market (Carlucci et al. 2016; De Marchi et al. 2020).

Conclusions

This study conducted in Durrës, Albania aimed to investigate the relationship between brand performance, brand response, customer satisfaction, and purchasing behavior in the bottled water industry. The survey revealed a strong positive correlation between these factors and purchase behavior. This study opens up opportunities for further research, such as exploring the counterintuitive findings and analyzing new and developing contexts in different regions and industries, as well as the impact of technological advancements on consumers and sellers.

Limitations of the Study

Despite being meticulously planned, the research design for this study has certain limitations of its own. The duration of this study was relatively brief (three months), which might have had a negative impact on the results of this study. Therefore, a more prolonged study—one or perhaps five years—could produce more accurate findings.

The authors of this study were constrained in terms of technique to a geographical sample selection of the city of Durrës rather than the entire country of Albania. A comparison study including additional areas or nations might have been an option. The writers could receive a better response rate and conduct a more thorough study analysis by concentrating on a wider geographic area, which might have a more significant research impact. The reliability of the study could have been improved by expanding the research area. However, the authors established a reasonable initial

response rate by amassing a substantial number of surveys replies from the target group.

The questionnaire then asked for a significant amount of self-reported information because a few questions still needed to be answered. The authors utilized reverse-labeled questions to assess participants' honesty and accuracy. While there is no reason to believe that participants were dishonest in their assessments, it is plausible that some of their judgments were slightly off. A pre-qualification study and an additional correlation analysis could have reduced the error margin.

Directions for Further Research

The impressions of bottled water brands and their consumption in Albania's second-largest city are valuable insights from this study. This can be the basis for a more in-depth investigation into this expanding sector. Based on the study`s findings, an excellent potential for further investigation exists. First and foremost, as this study was a pioneer in examining consumer behavior and brand impressions of bottled water, follow-up studies should confirm its results using a different sample of participants. Second, this study was single-regional. Instead of merely looking at monolithic regions and behavior, a future study within a single region would allow for collecting actual behavior data. Third, other factors like consumer trust and customer satisfaction might be incorporated into the model.

To summarize, our research has shown that the key determinants of customer satisfaction are brand performance and brand response. As a result, future research may look into whether buying behavior can be significantly increased by brand performance, brand response, and the satisfaction they get, considering other product categories and in other geographic locations. To create high-quality research results, the authors would like to support a future study to improve the understanding of advanced analysis of brand factors.

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