

A MARKETING RESEARCH REGARDING THE PERCEPTION TOWARDS PEPSI-COLA AND COCA-COLA SOFT DRINKS WITHIN THE TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY FROM CLUJ-NAPOCA

Naghiu M. O.

Technical University, 28 Memorandumului Str, 400114 Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Abstract. This paper presents a marketing research that focuses on the perception, experience and attitude of persons from the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca (especially students), regarding Coca-cola and Pepsi-cola soft drinks. Given the fact that within the Technical University from Cluj-Napoca (in the places where they serve food) the only soft drinks you can buy are from the PepsiCo range, due to the fact that they've won this commercial right.

Keywords: marketing research, Pepsi-cola, Coca-Cola.

INTRODUCTION

The market research, defined by Philip Kotler as being “design, collection, analysis and systematic report of data and conclusions regarding the situation the company faces on the market” (Kotler, Ph., “Managementul marketingului”, Ed. Teora, Bucharest, 1997), presented here, follows a non-stochastic method, the sampling is based on accessibility (this means that the researcher chooses those members of the community from which he can easily get information). The instrument of research is the questionnaire which represents the most frequently used instrument in obtaining primary data. The questionnaire consists of a set of questions at which subjects are asked to respond, and the importance of the way it was conceived, made, implemented and interpreted is decisive for the success of the inquiring – “No investigation can be better than its questionnaire, so the importance of the questionnaire is major” (Paina, N., and co., “Marketingul unităților din turism și comerț”, Ed. Universitatea Creștină “Dimitrie Cantemir”, Cluj-Napoca, 1997).

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The survey was performed on a sample of 150 subjects, all adults (mostly students), and belonging to the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, from October to November in year 2012. It focuses on identifying the perceptions, experiences and attitudes towards Coca-cola and Pepsi-cola soft drinks.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

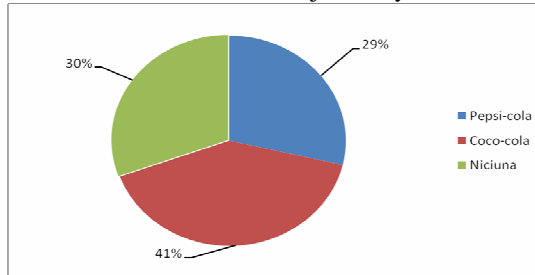
Objectives:

- Finding out which of the investigated soft drinks was the most bought in the past and which is the most bought in the present;
- Finding out which is the first factor that determines the decision to buy or not to buy the investigated soft drinks;
- Finding out which of the investigated soft drinks has the most persuasive commercials;
- Finding out what is the perception about the health issue regarding the investigated soft drinks.

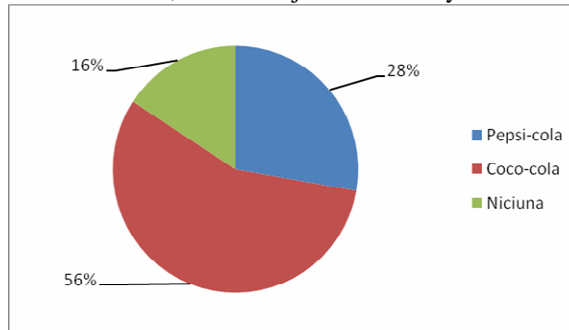
The study was performed on a sample of 150 people (33% female and 67% male) from which mostly were students under 25 years old (86%). Further details about the age of the studied sample are given below (paragraph 2.8).

Here are a part of the results of the research that focuses on the perception, experience and attitude of persons from the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca (especially students), regarding Coca-cola and Pepsi-cola soft drinks:

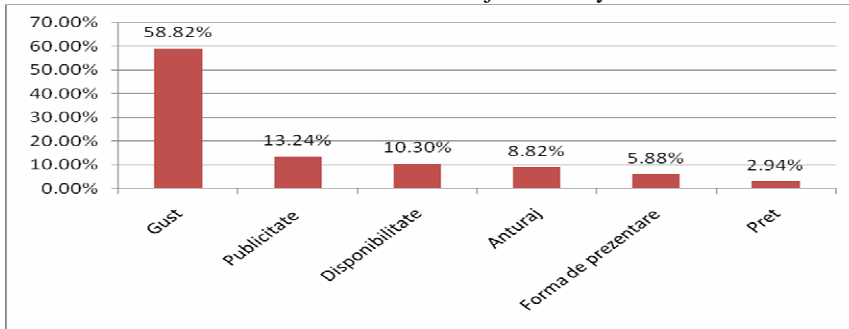
2.1. What soft drink from those listed, do the subjects buy more now



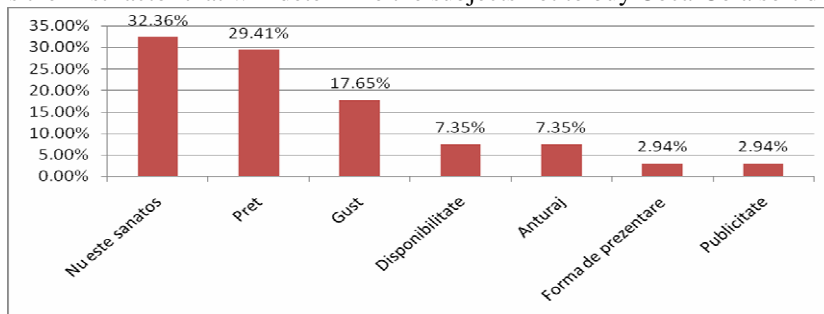
2.2. Which soft drink from those listed, do the subjects use to buy more



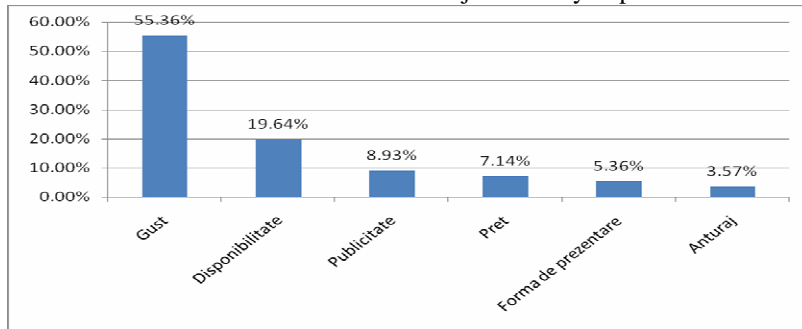
2.3. Which is the first factor that will determine the subjects to buy Coca-Cola soft drink



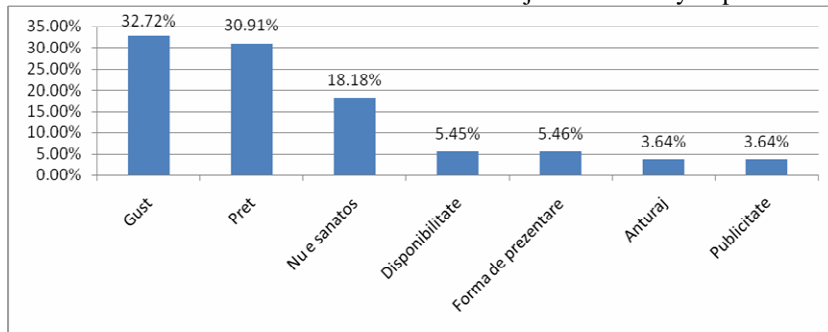
2.4 Which is the first factor that will determine the subjects not to buy Coca-Cola soft drink



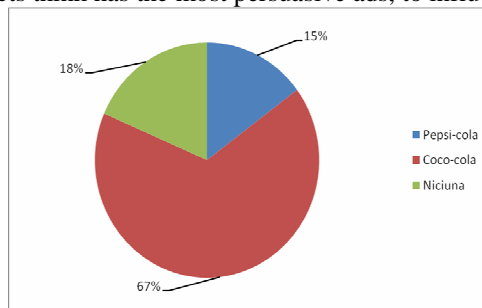
2.5. Which is the first factor that will determine the subjects to buy Pepsi-cola soft drink



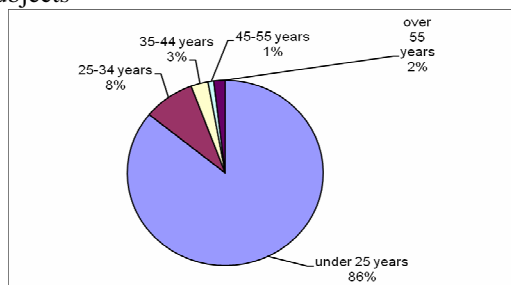
2.6. Which is the first factor that will determine the subjects not to buy Pepsi-cola soft drink



2.7. Who do the subjects think has the most persuasive ads, to influence consumer decision.



2.9. The age of the subjects



CONCLUSIONS

At the level of the investigated sample, the results show that Coca-Cola soft drink is the most bought in the past as well as in the present, but it should be noted the downward trend that this soft drink is following in the present opposite the purchasing preference. At the level of the investigated sample, the results show that Pepsi-cola has

more faithful buyers than Coca-Cola, because the percentage of those who buy Pepsi-Cola in the past is about the same as those who buy now; At the level of the investigated sample, the results show that taste is by far the first factor in the decision to purchase the Coca-Cola soft drink; At the level of the investigated sample, the results show that ones that don't buy Coca-Cola soft drink, generally invoke two factors: 1) is not a healthy product and 2) the price is too high; At the level of the investigated sample, the results show that taste is the first factor in taking the decision to buy a Pepsi-cola soft drink, but it becomes noticeable a second factor: product availability, which indicates the fact that PepsiCo strategy is promising; At the level of the investigated sample, the results show that the ones that don't buy Pepsi-cola soft drink, generally invoke two factors: 1) taste and 2) the price is too high. The factor related to health is only on the third place; At the level of the investigated sample, the results show that Coca-Cola soft drink has by far the most persuasive ads, in order to influence the consumer decision.

Following the undertaken research it can be said that the Coca-Cola soft drink is facing a serious image problem caused by the perception of the investigated subjects regarding the impact that the product has on their health. Given that more and more articles appear on the Internet which bring scientific evidence regarding the danger that the Coca-Cola soft drink presents in particular, but also other products from The Coca-Cola Company range in general, for the health of the consumers, the Coca-Cola motto "has natural flavors and contains no preservatives" (http://cokeandmeals.coke.com/ro_RO/secretformula) becomes less and less credible.

It looks like PepsiCo has done a better job in masking the topic mentioned above, so on the PepsiCo Romanian site is lunched the PepsiCo promise: "performance with a goal means to ensure durable development investing in a healthier future for people and our planet" (<http://www.pepsico.ro/>) and the promise towards society: "for people around the world, is a promise that we will encourage people to live healthier" (<http://www.pepsico.ro/>). Instead, Coca-Cola Romania site goes more on superficial elements, like games, fun, and avalanche of prizes under the caps and kind of ignoring the part related to social responsibility (<http://www.coca-cola.ro/>).

On the other hand, the advantage of the Coca-Cola soft drink is its unique and unmistakable taste, so given that a significant proportion of investigated subjects have given up buying Coca-Cola, however they have not migrated towards a competing company (PepsiCo). To win back customers, the prices of Coca-Cola must drop, because students have a limited budget and every penny counts, even if this means to enlarge their offer with products in smaller than 0.5 liters containers that can be sold at a lower price. So, in the future there is room for more research on the perception, experience and attitude of persons regarding these two eternal competitors.

REFERENCES

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3. ***<http://www.pepsico.ro/>
4. ***<http://www.coca-cola.ro/>
5. ***http://cokeandmeals.coke.com/ro_RO/secretformula