RESEARCH ARTICLE

Impact of Cartoon Images on kids and their Parents Buying Behavior with reference to Cheetos and kinder joy (Muscat, Oman).

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Abstract

This study was implemented to examine the impact of cartoon images on kids and their parents buying behavior of food products with a reference to Cheetos and kinder joy. The objectives of this research are: 1) identifying the effects of cartoon images on kids and their parents buying behavior. 2) Focusing on factors, which motivate their parents to make buying decision. 3) Finding out the creative strategies to enhance product development. To carry on the research, literature from previous researches on a similar topic was reviewed.The questionnaire for this research were designed using a mixed-method (50 questionnaire and 5 interviews). The sample that we will use to distribute the surveys and conduct interview is convenience, non-probability sampling method. The research covers 50 participants who have kids from 4-10 years or they are in position of parents of their brothers, sisters, nieces or nephews. Also, the interviews are conducted in the malls (LULU Hyper Market, Carrefour). The data collection is done through online qualitative research (online questionnaire), while the interview questions are semi-structured and are analyzed by generating keywords for each question.The analysis of the questionnaire is done using the SPSS analysis software and MS. Excel as the long questions was entered in the software by categorizing them in themes. The results of the study shown that both Kinder joy and Cheetos are well known. In fact, most of the children are influenced by the cartoon images of those brands.

1. Introduction / Rationale of the Study

Consumer behavior

"Consumer behavior is the act of individuals or groups while purchasing the products, services, ideas or experiences."

Consumer behavior is basically how the customer acts when buying a product or service. It can be affected by different factors such as demographics, income, attitude and much more. [1]

The importance of understanding consumer behavior is to know why the customer buy a particular good or service. Moreover, which products are demanded and needed in the market. By understanding customer behavior it will be easier for the business organization to fulfill the need of customer. In addition, it helps to understand the decision process by the customers. [2]

Brand image: is the perception of customer about the products or services. It is a set of beliefs held about a specific brand. [3]

Each and every organization tries their best to establish strong brand image as it can have many benefits on the organization sales and profit. [4]

Sales of products can be influenced by the brand image. With a strong brand image organizations can get many benefits such us building customer loyalty, increase profits, develop customer relationship, and increase the number of existing customers for the brands. [5]

There are many companies that use cartoon images or celebrities to representatives Chester Cheetah which represents Cheetos brand. Moreover, Kinderino which is the cartoon character of Kinder Joy. [6]

Cheetos and Kinder Joy use these cartoon images to build the brand image in the mind of customers. Using these representatives would have an influence on the customers (kids and their parents) to motivate them to purchase the products. [7]

In Oman there are few studies linked cartoon characters with kids' buying behavior. This study is going to explore how cartoon images motivates kids and their parents to purchase the product with reference to "Cheetos" and "kinder joy". This research planned to apply a mixed-method approach. The data will be collected through questionnaires and interviews. The main participants in this study are parents with kids aged 4-10 years residing in (Muscat, Oman). [8]

2. Statement of the Problem

This project is going to explore the impact of cartoon images on kids and their parent's buying behavior with respect to "Cheetos" and "Kinder Joy. It focuses on identifying the factors which motivates parents in buying decisions. There are a lot of studies that tried to identify the impact of

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cartoon images on kind and their parents buying behavior. This research will study how brand image affect the choice of parents while purchasing the product. [9]

3. Aims and Objectives of the Study

This study aims to achieve the following:

1. To examine the impact of cartoon images on kids and their parents buying behavior with respect to brands Cheetos and Kinder Joy.

2. To identify the factors which motivates parents for purchasing decisions.

3. To find out the creative strategies to enhance product development.

4. Research Questions

1. What is the impact of cartoon images on kids and their parents buying behavior with respect to brands Cheetos and Kinder Joy?

2. What are the factors that motivates parents for purchasing decisions?

3. What are the creative strategies in order to enhance the product development?

Hypothesis:

Hy1: Cartoon images have an impact on children and parent's purchasing decisions.

Hy2: Cartoon images do not have an impact on children's and parent's purchasing decisions.

Hy3: children influence parents' decisions to buy products with cartoon images.

5. Scope and Limitation

This study focus on examining and exploring the effect of cartoon images of Cheetos and Kinder Joy on kids and their parents purchasing behavior in Muscat- Oman only. It will not cover any other cities in Oman where consumers can have different purchasing behavior from one place to another. In addition to that, respondents to the questionnaire and interviews are only parents where this research will not involve kid's opinion because it is difficult to get clear responds from the kids. [10]

6. Significance of the Study

First of all, this study will be a reference for students who wish to explore and study about the impact of cartoon images on kids and their parents buying decision it provides the researcher and other people with a clear picture about the topic and add to their knowledge. As well it might help companies and advertisement agencies that would like to understand more about impact of cartoon images on kids buying decision to develop their packaging and marketing strategies. [11]

7. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Consumer behavior: how people act when buying and making purchase decisions that can rely on many factors.

Kids: children aged from 4-10 years.

Parents buying behavior: how parents act and make decisions as customers.

Brand image: perception of the customer about the products or services.

Cartoon image: cartoon character that can be an imaginary person or animal (figure) that is used to grab kids attention.

Cheetos: brand of cheese-flavored snack that use a cartoon character in their products.

Cheetah Cheste: cartoon that Cheetos use in their products.

Kinder Joy: an egg shaped chocolate brand from kinder.

Kinderino: the cartoon character that kinder use in kinder joy.

7.1. Conclusion:

To conclude, the research concentrates on how cartoon characters influence kids and their parents purchase decisions in Muscat-Oman with respect to Cheetos and Kinder Joy. This chapter had discussed the basic parameters, objectives and goals of the study. In addition to that, a few basic definitions of keywords that will be heavily used later in the report is given above. Also, the scope and limitation was mentioned, the significance on who will benefit from this research. It is anticipated that kids and their parents buying behavior are influenced by cartoon images and using it can increase the awareness of the brand image as well as the sales of the product. [12]

8. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE
Related Literature
- **Brand image:**

Has interpret brand image as "the set of beliefs, ideas, and impression that a person holds regarding an object"

Made a study on (Brand Image: Past, Present and Future). The research used the qualitative method by conducting interviews. It was found that many literature suggests that brand image is an essential part of Marketing mix activities and a great concern of brand management. Also they mentioned that utilizing anthropology and ethnography could help to strength the concept. Anthropology is the domain that deals with symbols based on culture and society and symbolism is very important in brand image research, as it is the latest domain to be worked on using qualitative techniques.

Carried a research that aim to understand the influence of brand image on public perception and loyalty. The research used a mixed method to get the data from respondents the customer of the insurance company who were between 20-30 years. The researcher found that there is a positive relationship between the variables. Favorable brand image leads to increase customer loyalty and high public relations perception. [13]

- **Consumer behavior:**

Over time marketers noticed that consumers are acting differently when purchasing, consuming and making buying decisions. From here "consumer behavior" was introduced as a separate marketing discipline. Consumer behavior is defined as "The study of individuals, groups or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, use and dispose of products, services, experiences or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have

on the consumer and society." [14]

"Consumer behavior is very complex because each consumer has a different mind and attitude towards purchase, consumption, and disposal of the product."

Understanding the behavior of consumers and the decision process is extremely important for any firm. If the firm did not understand and analyzed its consumer purchasing behavior they will face significant losses. Understanding customer's decision process explains how they make purchasing decision, who or what factors influence and motivates them.

There are different types of customers with different characteristics and motives. There are children, teenagers, adults, and elders. Each segment of them acts differently and that's why organizations use different marketing techniques and packaging to attract their attention.

Children plays an essential role in the family, they have an influence on their parent's decisions and buying behavior. Therefore, many companies focus their advertising and marketing efforts on children to influence their behavior towards a product or service.The powerful influence that children have on their parents made some researchers consider them as a leading primary market. Besides that made marketers pay more attention on this segment and use different techniques to attract them.

Conducted a quantitative research to examine the influence of packaging on kids goods preferences and how it effect their parents in decision making. They emphasis that packaging have a significant influence on kids preference and have a strong influence on their parent's buyer behavior.

Concluded that consumer behavior influenced by four major factors which are culture, social class, personal, and psychological. Understanding these factors leads companies to have a chance to develop their strategy and make it more efficient. Culture is an important factor that affects consumer behavior totally. Also social class may play a great role in changing the behavior of customers. In addition, personal factor which contains age, life cycle and occupation may increase purchasing power of consumer. Moreover, psychological factors including motivation, learning, attitude, and beliefs influence consumer behavior. From this point, Rani recommended companies to focus and examine these factors in depth because it can lead to success in market.

Kids buying behavior:. Above 50 million kids and youth represent a big portion of the market and they affect their parents buying decisions.

Studying kids as consumer has become a significant field in consumer behavior as kids play an important role in family purchasing decision and parents pay much more attention to their kids preferences and taste.

Kids are the future customers, they play an important role in market and making decisions. Understanding the behavior of the customer is very important for any organization. As it customer decision illustrates how buying decisions are made, and the things that effect their decisions in a positive way or negative way.

• **History of Cheetos and Kinder Joy:**

Cheetos is a brand of cheese-flavored snack. The main manufacture is located in USA and the distributor of GCC is located in Saudi Arabia. It is one of the most famous snack brands all around the world. It's a cheese puffed corn snack produced by Frito-Lay associated with PepsiCo. Frito-Lay introduced different flavors, colors and shapes of Cheetos to attract more customers.

Kinder Joy is an egg shaped chocolate brand from kinder brand. The main branch of kinder joy is located in Italy. Kinder is a brand of Ferrero Company and it is directly distributed by Ferro Company to Oman.

How brand image affect consumer behavior:

Companies studying consumer so that they can understand their behavior and improve the ways to educate customers about their brand using different tactics and techniques to build customer reality and retention.

(Roberto, 2010) conducted a qualitative research to study the influence of licensed cartoon characters on children taste and preference. It was found out that products with a cartoon character were more preferred by kids then the products without a cartoon character on it.

A study done by Jose, aimed to examine the relation between cartoon character and brand preference among children showed that cartoon characters have a strong relation with brand preference as it attracts kids to purchase the products.

As the previous researches showed that brand image and specially cartoon characters can increase brand awareness and develop loyalty of children. It attracts customers to make repetitive purchase.

• **(AIDA):**

The diagram above is known as the AIDA model or the demand chain as some people call it. AIDA in short for awareness, interest, desire, and action. It is one of the models used in marketing to identify and point out the phases that customers go through when making a purchase.

It shows the objectives of advertisements and helps you decide where you want your customer to be at what phase.

It basically involves four phases:
1. Awareness
2. Interest
3. Desire
4. Action

Using the AIDA model helps to remain and maintain the interest of customers, create desire and get potential customers to take action.

Cheetos and Kinder Joy use this model. They use Cheetah Chester and Kinderino. to create and make kids desire the product. This leads parents to take action which is the last stage in the diagram. Having Cheetos and Kinder Joy using this characters led to increase in awareness and sales of the products.

• **Research Gap**

It was found that researchers have not much focused on this study in Oman. This research is going to bring the Omani context into the front to discuss how cartoon images affects kids and their parents buying behavior with respect to Cheetos and Kinder Joy.

9. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
Introduction

Chapter three represents the research methodology. It introduces the entire data gathering and analysis of

the study. The research is using a mixed-method supported by deductive reasoning. The study employs convenience sampling to generate and collect data. The design of the study aims at exploring the effect of Chester Cheetah (Cheetos) and kinderinon (kinder joy) on kids and their parents' purchasing behavior.

• **Type of Research**

In this research, a mixed-method approach is used. Predominating method is used where questionnaires will be more than the interviews. A questionnaire will be distributed to 50 respondents and 5 interviews will be conducted with parents (married, single, divorced, window) who has kids aged 4-10 years. Mixed-methods research is a methodology for directing research that includes gathering, analyzing and merging quantitative and qualitative study together. This method approach is used to obtain a full understanding of fundamental causes, motives, and viewpoints (interviews and questionnaires), which will result in reliable data. It provides methodological flexibility and an understanding of the conflict between quantitative outcomes and qualitative findings. In addition to that mixed-method helps get additional information about this topic and identify uncovered data when using questionnaires only.

• **Research design:**

The population of this study is pretty large but this research specifies Cheetos and Kinder Joy customers in Muscat only. The variables of this study are consumer behavior and cartoon images. In order to define which variable depend on other, Consumer behavior is depended variable as it is depending on cartoon images. However, cartoon images are independent variable.

• **Research Method:**

In this study, a correlation method will be applied. Correlation method is a statistical look at the relationship between two variables. In this research we are studying if there is a relationship between cartoon images (regarding Cheetos and Kinder Joy) and children's and parents purchasing behavior in Oman. Deductive reasoning will be used to test the theory we applied as shown in the figure (AIDA model). Deductive reasoning is where research builds hypotheses based on the theory chosen, after that researchers observes what is there in the society and finally confirm the theory. As it is shown below

• **Research Respondents:**

In this research, convenience sampling will be used to ask respondents (married, single, divorced and window) who have kid's age (4-10) from the mall (Lulu and Carrefour). Convenience sampling is chosen because of the time constraint, it's less expensive, least time-consuming and most convenient. We will cover 50 respondents. Questionnaires will be answered in malls (Lulu and Carrefour) to fill the questionnaires online and conduct the interviews. Questionnaires filling and interview will be conducted at same time. Interviews will be also through convenience sampling where we choose the persons who were more open to answer the questionnaire.

• **Research Instrument:**

In this research, questionnaires and interviews will be used. 50 questionnaire and 5 interviews will be conducted with respondents (married, single, divorced and window) who have kids aged 4-10 years.

9.1. Research Procedure
• **Gathering of Data**

Primary data is data gathered by someone for a specific objective. In primary data, you gather the data by yourself using qualitative and quantitative methods. The key point here is that the data you collect is related to your research and no one will know about it until you publish the research. There are many methods of gathering primary data such as questionnaires, interviews, survey and focus group interviews. In this research primary data will be gathered using questionnaires and interviews. Participants will be chosen using non- probability sampling (convenience sampling) and a judgmental sampling will be used for interviews.

"Secondary data are data that have already been collected for some other purpose. These data include published summaries as well as raw data and therefore include both quantitative and qualitative data "(sander, 2013-2014). Gathering secondary data usually takes less time than gathering primary data where you have to collect all information from the beginning.

Secondary data of this research was gathered from related literature reviews, articles, and websites.

• **Ethical procedure:**

All information will be only for our senior project. The information will be deleted and disposed. Contact number will be given for any withdrawal or cancelation.

Anonymity was avoided in our research where the speeches/scripts of the participants are paraphrased and confidentiality achieved by not mentioning any names, addresses or house numbers neither their telephone numbers of the participants

Keeping in view ethical implication to the research, the researches assures that the following:

1- Research participants will not be harmed in physical, emotional or any ways.

2- Respect for the dignity of research respondents will be prioritized.

3- Full consent will be obtained from the respondents before to the study.

4- Adequate level of confidentiality of the research data will ensured.

• **Treatment of Data**

In this research mixed method is used (qualitative and quantitative). The data will be collected through distributing an online questioners and interviews.

1) Online questionnaire: Is used to gather the opinions, beliefs and feelings of selected groups of individuals, often chosen for demographic sampling. It can be handed out physically, or digitally and is a very robust tool for data collection.

2) Interviews: It is a formal meeting as the interviewer ask face to face questions to the interviewee in order to get specific information/feedback about certain things.

3) Data Analysis Procedure: after finishing from the

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collection of all the data,

• Online questionnaire will be analyzed using SPSS software and excel which will show (diagrams, tables, pie chart, bar chart)

• Researchers will analyze the interviews manually by taking the important information and ignore the rest.

10. PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter will discuss the analyses of the questionnaire as well as the interviews. The analyses is done using SPSS software. It shows the diagrams and tables of answered questionnaire and analyses of data as well for the interviews by using themes for categories the answers and insert it in SPSS software.

As the chart above shows that most of the respondents are married (29) 100%. However, the divorced respondents are few (2) 4%.

On the other hand, all of the respondents are having kids from 4 to 10 years which is 100%.

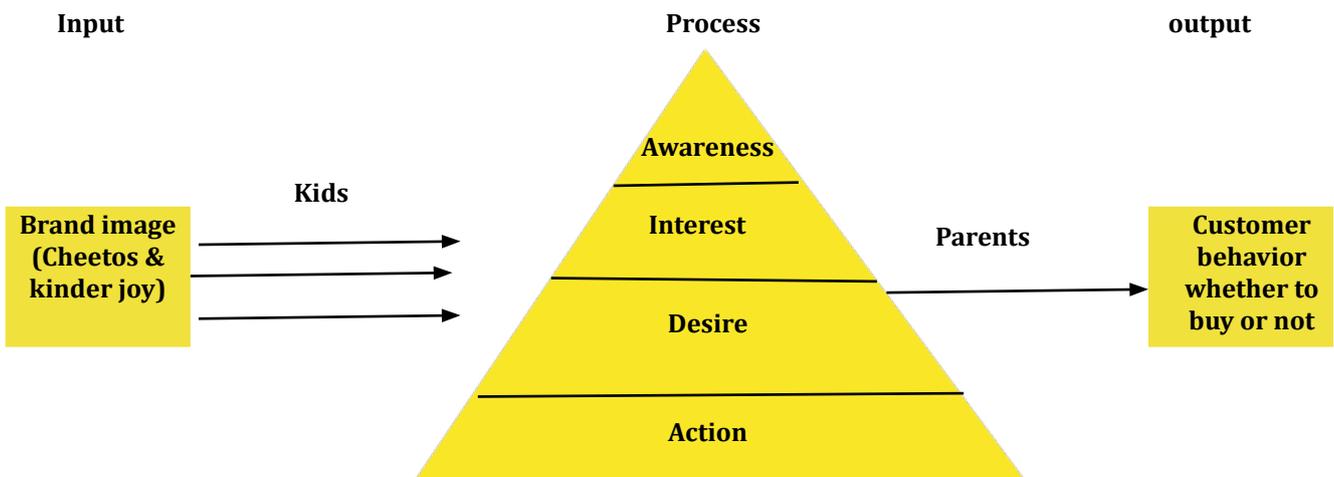## 11. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF DATA: MEAN, MEDIAN, MODE AND STANDARD DEVIATION

• **Scale of Measurement**

The scale of measurement and its analysis used in the study is based on the five-point Likert scale. It is explained below:
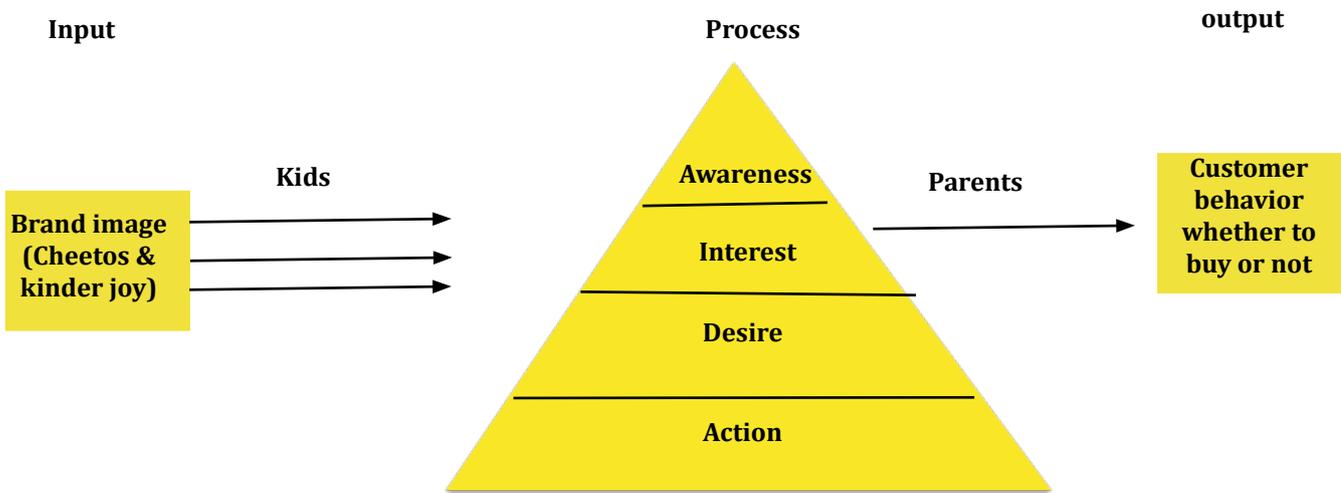
(Image Source: Philip Kotler, Gary Armstrong (2008) Principles of Marketing, 12th edition, Pearson Education Inc.)

Figure 1: AIDA model

(Image Source: Philip Kotler, Gary Armstrong (2008) Principles of Marketing, 12th edition, Pearson Education Inc.)
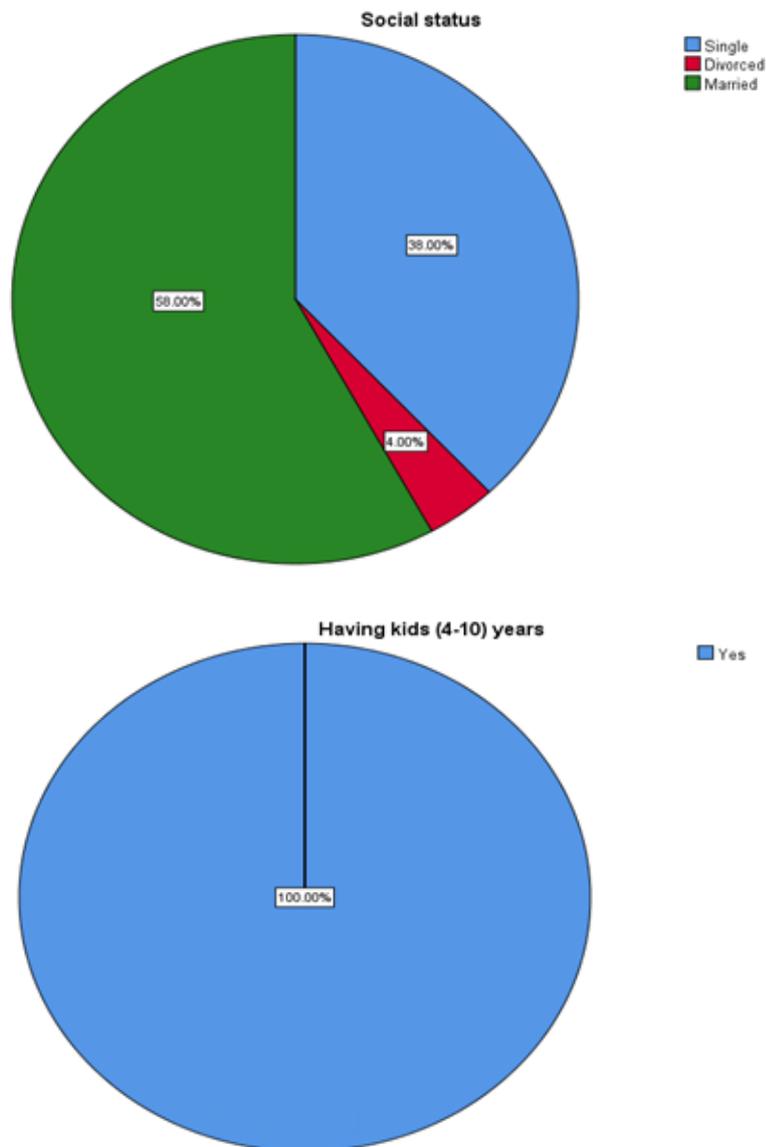
Figure 2: AIDA model

Questionnaire analyses

Demographic:

Questions	Participants	Percentage
1- Social status:		
- Single	19	38%
- Divorced	2	4%
- Married	29	58%
2- Having kids (4-10) years:		
-Yes	50	100%
-No	0	0%

Source: Primary data (Questionnaire)

As the chart above shows that most of the respondents are married (29) 100%. However, the divorced respondents are few (2) 4%.
On the other hand, all of the respondents are having kids from 4 to 10 years which is 100%.

TABLE 4.1: SCALE OF MEASUREMENT

Scale	Verbal Scale
1.00 - 1.79	Strongly disagree
1.80 - 2.59	Disagree
2.60 – 3.39	Uncertain
3.40 - 4.19	Agree
4.20 – 5.00	Strongly agree

TABLE 4.2: AWARENESS OF KINDER JOY AND CHEETOS

Awareness:					
Statements	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard Deviation	Verbal Scale
I am aware about kinder joy& Cheetos.	4.10	4.00	4	0.931	Agree
My kids are aware about the cartoon images of kinder joy& Cheetos.	3.98	4.00	5	1.097	Agree
I am fully aware about the advertisement of kinder joy& Cheetos	3.32	3.00	3	1.269	Uncertain
The brand image of kinder joy& Cheetos is in my kid's minds.	3.78	4.00	3	1.016	Agree
Overall weighted mean, median, mode & SD	3.80	3.75	4	1.078	Agree

Source: Primary data (Questionnaire)
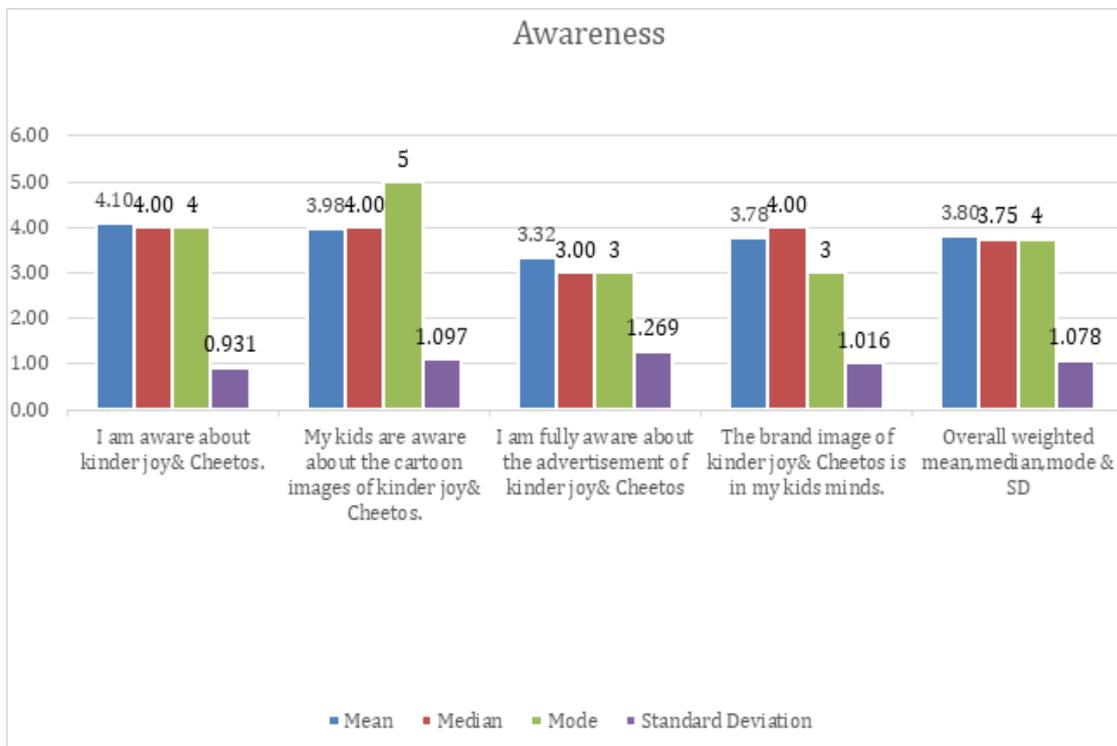
Weighted mean, median, mode and SD calculated in Table 4.2 shows an overall 'Agree' to the Awareness of Kinder joy and Cheetos. The Respondents(parents) agree that they are aware about the kinder joy and Cheetos and also their kids are aware about it. Also, they state that they are uncertain about the advertisements but also states that the brand image of the kinder joy& Cheetos is in their kid's minds

TABLE 4.3: INTEREST IN KINDER JOY AND CHEETOS:

| Interest					
Statements	**Mean**	**Median**	**Mode**	**Standard Deviation**	**Verbal Scale**
My kids are always having interest in kinder joy& Cheetos.	4.20	5.00	5	1.030	Strongly Agree
I too have more interest on kinder joy& Cheetos than other brands.	3.18	3.00	3	1.155	Agree
Overall weighted mean, median, mode & SD	3.69	4.00	4.00	1.09	Agree

Source: Primary data (Questionnaire)

The table above shows that the majority of respondents(parents) agreed that they have full interest in purchasing kinder joy and Cheetos as well their kids too.

TABLE 4.4: DESIRE FOR KINDER JOY AND CHEETOS:

| Desire:					
Statement	**Mean**	**Median**	**Mode**	**Standard Deviation**	**Verbal Scale**
The cartoon characters of kinder joy& Cheetos influence my kids to buy the product.	3.92	4.00	4	1.007	Agree
Overall weighted mean, median, mode & SD	3.92	4.00	4.00	1.01	Agree

Source: Primary data (Questionnaire)
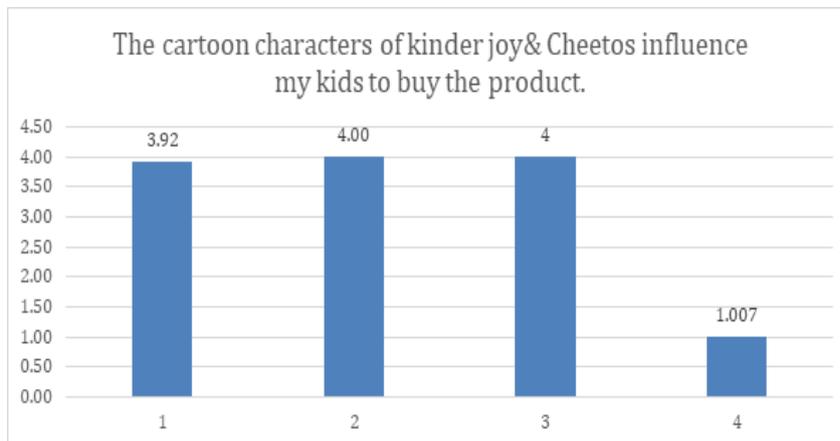
The table above shows that most of the respondents(parents) agreed that they have a desire to purchase kinder joy and Cheetos. They also agreed that the cartoon characters of kinder joy& Cheetos influence their kids to desire for the product.

TABLE 4.5: ACTION TAKEN FOR KINDER JOY AND CHEETOS

Statements	Action				
	Mean	**Median**	**Mode**	**Standard Deviation**	**Verbal Scale**
My kids force me to buy kinder joy& Cheetos very often.	3.80	4.00	5	1.294	Agree
I am willing to buy the kinder joy & Cheetos apart from kids influencing me with respect to cartoon images.	3.30	4.00	4	1.147	Uncertain
Overall weighted mean, median, mode & SD	3.55	4.00	4.50	1.22	Agree

Source: Primary data (Questionnaire)
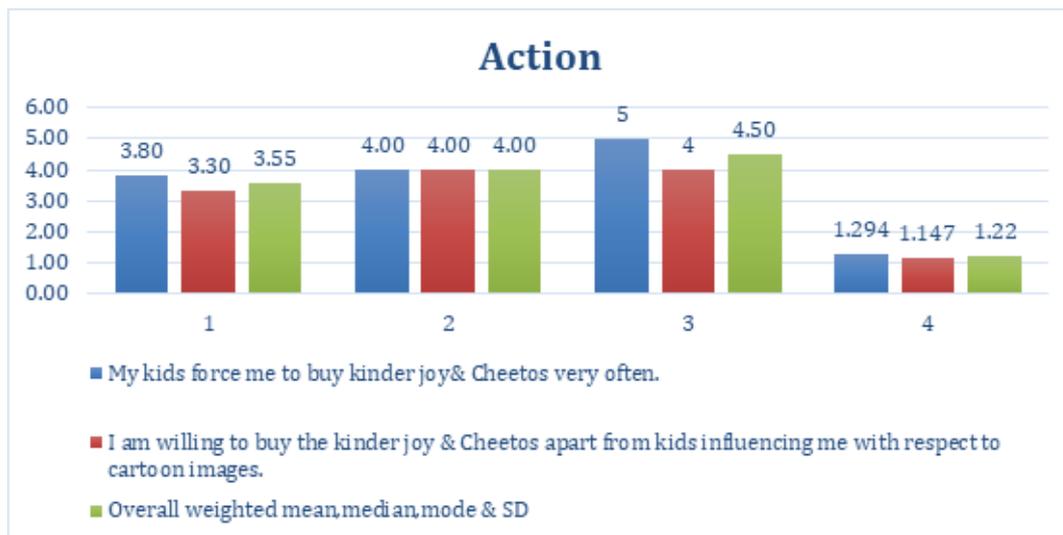
The table above showing that the majority of respondents agreed that they take the action in purchase of kinder joy and Cheetos very often because of their kids influence. Some of the respondents are uncertain in taking action on their interest. Overall, most of the parents agreed that they buy the product based on their kids influence

12. Finding:
Questionnaire:
- The results showed that more than 50% of the respondents (parents) are aware about Cheetos and kinder Joy.
- As stated in the analysis, kids aged (4-10) years have strong 38% awareness in Cheetos and Kinder Joy.
- Thirty four percent of the participants are not sure whether they are aware of the Cheetos and Kinder Joy ads, but in return, 30% of the participants are aware of the Cheetos and Kinder Joy ads, as the results show a slight variation between the two options.
- Forty percent of parents were uncertain if these brand images in their kids mind, however four percent disagreed with it.
- The results showed that most children (4-10) have an interest in Cheetos and Kinder Joy while parents had no interest in Cheetos and Kinder Joy.
- Sixty-eight no. of parents said that they have more interest in kinder joy and Cheetos than other brands, 8 % strongly agreed, however 16% disagreed.
- Many respondents (38%) said that cartoon characters of kinder joy and Cheetos influence their kids to buy

products, however 4 % strongly disagreed with it.
- 36% of the respondents indicated that their children are force them to buy Cheetos and Kinder Joy, while 10% of their children do not force them to buy Cheetos and Kinder Joy. This shows the interest of the majority of kids aged (4-10) in Cheetos and Kinder Joy. More than 50% of respondents are willing to purchase kinder and Cheetos not because of influencing of their kids.
- Majority of the respondents are saying that cartoon images are wrongly influencing their kids.
- Most of respondents are recommending to develop the new packaging, change the pictures, labels, and the colors. While around 10 to 12 percent gave suggestions to conduct more activities about cartoon images.
- As stated in the analysis, there are different factors which influence parents buying behavior, all the participants answers are almost in modifying the test and contents of the product while some of them mention price one of factors to purchase the product.

Interview:
- The results showed that most of the respondents believe Cartoon image of Cheetos and kinder joy influence kids

buying behavior.
- Majority of them think that colors and design attract kids' attention.
- Respondents mentioned that the taste is not important as much as the design.
- Most of the participants stated that the Kinder Joy gift one of the reasons to attracts kids to Kinder Joy.
- The results of the interviews showed that when the participants are generally asked about Cheetos, they refer to Cheetah Chester. This is an indication that they remember the cartoon image even if they do not know the name of it. Also an indication that the Cheetah Chester reminds people of Cheetos.

13. Conclusion:

Cheetos and kinder joy are considered as two of the most famous snacks among kids as well as adults. Both products uses cartoon images on the packaging and to represents the brand as well. This motivated us to obtain survey and interviews to help understanding the impact of cartoon images on kids and their parents buying behavior. The questionnaire covered 50 parents who have kids aged from 4 to 10 years and 5 interviews as well. The outcome of the research showed that cartoon images do have an impact on kids and their parents buying behavior. Moreover, factors such as price and promotions play an important role in their buying behavior. In addition to that, most kids do not really pay attention to the taste of the product as much for the cartoon images on it. The research found that there is a significant impact of cartoon images on kids and their parents buying behavior.

Recommendation:
- Many respondents recommended that these products introduce a healthy snack for kids.
- Conduct events related to these brands.
- Some of respondents suggested changing the price.
- Having more advertisements of the two brands.
- Based on the analysis, it is suggested to Cheetos and kinder joy to change the pictures, labels, and the colors as in product development.
- From the findings it is found that there are some respondents suggesting to develop their packaging instead the taste.
- Majority of the respondents are saying that cartoon images are wrongly influencing their kids. Therefore, it is suggested to conduct some events for awareness about the product to the customers about cartoon images.

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