



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS  
SCHOOL OF COMMERCE  
MA in Marketing Management Program

FACTORS AFFECTING CONSUMER BRAND PREFERENCES:  
THE CASE OF CULTURAL FOOD (BALTEA) PRODUCERS'

THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
OF MASTER OF ART IN MARKETING MANAGEMENT, ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA.

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SEPTEMBER, 2021  
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

# CERTIFICATION

**Addis Ababa University School of Commerce**

Postgraduate Program

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Frehiwot Alemu, entitled: “*Factor affecting cultural food producers’ brand*” submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Masters of Marketing Management complies with the regulations of the university and meets the accepted standard with respect to originality and quality.

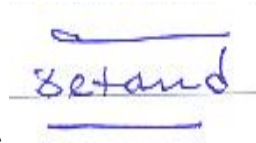
Signed by the Examining Committee:

Examiner \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Examiner \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor: Dr Getie Andualem;

Signature

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Getie Andualem", is written over a horizontal line. Above the signature is another horizontal line, and below it is a third horizontal line.

Date: 29/9/21

## DECLARATION

I, Frehiwot Alemu, declare that this research work entitled as “**the factors affecting cultural food producers’ brand in Addis Ababa**”, is the outcome of my own effort and study and that all sources of materials used for the study have been duly acknowledged. I have produced it independently except for the guidance and suggestion of the research advisor. This study has not been submitted for any degree in this University or any other University. It is offered for the partial fulfillment of the degree of MA in Marketing Management.

Frehiwot Alemu Lemma

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **LETTER OF CERTIFICATION**

This is to certify that Frehiwot Alemu has carried out her thesis on the topic “factors affecting customers brand preference in the case of cultural food products (baltena) at Addis Ababa”. This work is original in nature and is suitable for submission for the award of Degree of Master of Arts in Marketing Management.

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Getie Andualem (PhD)

Thesis Advisor

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Every consumer has his/her own brand preference for products and apply it while making a purchase. The objective of this study was to examine the factors that affect customers brand preference for cultural food producers' brand. The independent variables included in this study are advertisement, packaging, price, availability and quality; whereas brand preference is the dependent variable. The population of the study were all customers who purchases cultural food products from supermarkets and shops in Addis Ababa. The total sample size was 384. A total of 200 sample responses were collected from 384 sample size. The respondents were selected based on convenience sampling technique. The research design was explanatory and descriptive while the research approach used was Quantitative method. The effect of independent variables (advertisement, packaging, price, availability and quality) on customers brand preference were analysed using correlation and multiple regressions. The findings of the study showed that advertisement, price and availability have a significant and positive impact on brand preference of cultural products while packaging and quality were found insignificant. The study recommends cultural product producers ((baltena) to focus on advertisement, price and availability of their product in order to be preferred by consumers.*

**Key words:** *Brand Preference, advertisement, packaging, Price, availability, quality,*

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## **CHAPTER-ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the study**

According to Kotler & Keller (2012), “A brand is a name, term, sign, symbol, design, or a combination of these elements that is intended to identify the goods or services of a seller and differentiate them from competitors.”

Branding began sometime around 1500 BC, when the ancient Greeks marked their cattle, a practice that still exists in the livestock industry. However, branding initiatives relevant to an institutional enterprise began in 1931, when Procter & Gamble started placing labels on its products to help consumers differentiate one product from another. Shortly after the Second World War, Ford and General Motors started in heated advertising battles, which continue today, as a means of educating their audiences about the distinctive qualities of their respective products Whisman (2009).

The functions of brands have changed over the years. Brands are no longer treated just as differentiation tools but have nowadays become vital for a Firm's success. In addition to tangible assets of a Firm, the intangible assets also generate its market value. Brands being intangible assets are essential for a Firm's existence. This emerging importance of brands emphasizes the need to effectively manage the brand so as to maximize the profit as well as value of the Firm (Bauer and Keller, 2000, 2008).

Consuming is one of the common denominators among all of us. Each of us participates in the phenomenon of consumption in our everyday lives. Consumption of one or the other thing is part of an individual's natural existence. Consumer psychologists consider consuming as an essential dimension of our day-to-day living; which presses us into modeling and re-modeling of our identities, beliefs, attitudes and practices (Dittmar, 1994). Being a consumer is a social role, which almost everybody experiences quite regularly. Whether one preferred to shop or otherwise, consumption happens to be part and parcel of one's existence. This is so because, the buying process starts long before the actual purchase and its consequences last long afterwards.

Ethiopia differs in many respects from the remainder of tropical Africa, both in natural scenery and in culture. The topography of the country varies from high mountains and great plateaus 2000 – 3000 meters above sea-level to grasslands, jungles and deserts. Various ethnic groups, predominantly Hamitic and Semitic, speaking different languages, populate this vast country.

Like people in other parts of the world, each tribe in Ethiopia has its own beliefs and attitudes relating to foods. Some of these are related to foods and diseases, others to qualities, such as hot and cold or light and heavy foods.

Traditional foods or beverages are natural diets or drinks which nourished our ancestors throughout the evolutionary history of human particularly in the prehistory of the industrialization of food or beverage. In Ethiopia, the history of traditional foods or beverages is dating to the early of crop domestication and agriculture innovation, and it is linked to celebrations such as holidays, festivals, social gatherings, funeral, to honor guests, and special occasions. Traditional foods or drinks have been serving for multipurpose in the country for a long time: nutrition, ensuring food security, medication, and socio-economic benefits. For example, during “Zamana Mesafint” (1769–1855) traditional foods and beverages were prepared targeting specific occasions: Tej to honor royalty and nobility and Besso and Chekko for military campaign [6]. Nowadays, Besso and Chekko are popular public foods that people carry with them (commonly called Sinq) to ensure food security during long distance travels, and Tej is a famous public drink available throughout the country.

Ethiopia is endowed with ethnic diversity manifested in cultural diversity and a variety of indigenous knowledge such as traditional foods and beverages’ processing practices (Hunduma 2012). Varieties of traditional food products such as Injera), Dabbo (varieties of bread), Kocho (fermented food product of enset, are produced through traditional fermentation. Local foods such as Kollo (roasted cereals and pulses), Nifro (boiled cereals and pulses), Besso (roasted and powdered barley), Genfo (porridge), kitta (unfermented bread), Chuko (barley roasted, powdered, and spiced into paste), Kinche (coarsely milled barely/wheat, boiled, and spiced), Dabbokollo (wheat dough sliced into pea size and roasted),

The increasing customer demands and expectations make competition among market players even tougher. Furthermore, several studies (Enz 2010; Parsa et al. 2011; Wood 2015) claim the food industry has the highest business failure rates among other industry sectors. Parsa et al.

(2011) further note the poor performance and business failures are the consequence of a misconception of the growing customer demands, needs, and expectations. Production and marketing strategies are determined by consumers' beliefs, attitudes, preferences, and willingness to pay for the products. To implement the appropriate marketing concepts, sellers require information about the characteristics, needs, wants, and desires of their target markets. The choice of food is influenced by a number of factors including demographic characteristics such as age, sex, education level, health status, and income and time constraints. Other factors are the product's attributes such as price, taste, quality, package and information obtained from its label (Sunelle et al. 2010).

Understanding what consumers expect from a particular cultural food producer's brand or what aspects they consider when choosing a brand of cultural food products is critical to building a good brand. While consumer brand choice is a key concept in building a strong brand, no researches investigate the underlying factors of brand preference. Particularly in a cultural food producers sector the factors that influence consumers' brand choice has not been identified yet. Furthermore, customers may use a variety of criteria in their decision-making. As a result, identifying and understanding consumers' choosing criteria is essential for developing a successful marketing plan that can demonstrate the existence of differences in consumers' buying behavior as well as in selecting among different brands.

Ethiopia is one of a few numbers of countries that has been gifted with a rich tradition. There is a lot of amazing foodstuff in Ethiopia that can't be found anywhere else. There are also traditional households that have amazing designs and are equipped to carry out a wide array of functions.

Ethiopia is a country which is enriched with different cultural heritages. All Ethiopian foods are organic and prepared at home. Some food ingredients specially the spices will take time to be prepared.

Selam baltena is one of the most leading companies in Ethiopia which produces more than 33 baltena products and different spices. It was established in 1993. Their customers are hotels, government organizations. They will also export the products for Ethiopian food lovers.

Among the Baltena products the following are the major ones

1. **Berberé** is the essential ingredient in any wot – that is, a spicy Ethiopian stew, made with meat or vegetables. Berbere is so essential to Ethiopian cooking today that it's hard to imagine the cuisine without it. But for at least half a millennium, and probably even longer, that was the reality of the Ethiopian kitchen



Selam Baltena Berbere

2. **Shiro (pea flour)**. Pea flour which is the main ingredient for the famous Ethiopian food Shiro wot. It can be made at home or can also be bought in shops and in some of the local markets.



3. **Mitmitta** is a spice mixture mainly used for raw meat. Bird's-eye chili is dried with Ethiopian cardamom, black cummin, and bishop's weed, and then mixed with salt and ground. This spice mixture should be stored in an airtight container in the dark.



Selam Baltena Mitmita

**4. Makalesha** is a spice mixture made up of Black pepper, long pepper, cloves and cinnamon used to sweeten different traditional Ethiopian food. It is often used in wot and allichia, when the dark colour of the spice mixture does not interfere with the desired colour of the dish

#### **5. Beso**

Beso is made from roasted barely. This barely powder will be used to prepare different types of cultural foods. Chuko and genfo are among the famous ones. Genfo is one of the most widely consumed foods in Ethiopia, and it is preferred as a main meal of breakfast, but most commonly consumed during a special celebration such as birthdays and weddings. Traditionally, in many parts of Ethiopia, there is a habit to prepare genfo for an expectant mother. For this purpose, barley grain is the number one crop to choose According to most Ethiopians. Chuko is one of the best traditional barley foods of Oromo people and it is mostly prepared in festivals, like holidays and weddings. Beso juice prepared from the beso powder and water cures gastritis in Ethiopia



Selam baltena beso

#### **6. Kolo**

Kolo is the most widely consumed roasted whole barley grain in Ethiopia. This popular local snack, kolo, is consumed either alone or mixed with peanuts, field pea, faba bean, sunflower, and chickpea. . It is usually consumed as a snack dish served before the main dish, and during coffee ceremony and other cultural occasions. As it is already known, coffee is the most common social drink that is shared with neighbors and at that time barley kolo is the most commonly served food. They accompany most social gatherings and have recently been commercialized to great success and fandom by the likes of Elsa Kolo



Making this entire possible are the spices, which themselves take skill and time to prepare. They are used to flavor, color and preserve almost all the types of food items. Indeed, the talent of any cook lies in their ability to identify and figure out how different spices might combine to give a certain taste. It is a saying that a great chef of traditional Ethiopian foods should be able to tell what spices are in a food just by smelling it.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

The capacity of a marketer to build a great brand is dependent on a detailed grasp of the client profile and why they favor one brand over others (Njuguna, 2014). Maintaining a competitive advantage can be aided by a strong brand (Rijal, 2013). The key concern of management is the development of a strong brand (Aaker, 1991). Companies that have better and superior data can create better products and conduct better marketing initiatives for their customers (Kotler and Keller, 2012). Regardless, marketers make decisions on how to develop and execute the most effective and efficient brand-building marketing campaigns possible and strategies as possible. The success of these marketing programs and techniques is ultimately determined by how customers react to a specific product brand over competing offerings.

Due to the severe competition in the market in terms of product similarity, marketers have been studying variables that influence consumers' brand choice decisions, as well as how to deal with rivals, changing customer tastes and preferences (Das, 2012). Marketers must comprehend customer intelligence in order to increase market share. Buyers exhibited diversified, unplanned, and surprising purchase behavior in today's marketing climate, when customer preferences are

constantly shifting and becoming extremely diversified (Nakmongkol, 2009). In these situations, businesses must assess a wide range of consumer wants and aspirations in order to offer products that meet those needs (Batra, 2015).

Ethiopia is a multiethnic country with diverse cultural practices to prepare foods and beverages having significant contributions in socioeconomic development. Contrary, comprehensive documentation of the products, associated knowledge, and their sociocultural roles is incomplete.

Along with the growing demand for cultural food products (baltena), many cultural food producers are joining the industry. The growing number of these producers provides customers with a set of alternative brands from which to choose. On the other hand, to be the winner the competition requires producers/marketers to differentiate their products and/or brands. As stated by Kapferer (2008), branding is one of the very few ways of achieving a sustainable advantage over competition and it started from the customer, asking what does customers value. Furthermore, Kapferer (2008) elucidate that the necessary first step for differentiation owns a value. To become number one in any market it is necessary to understand what the market values are and to build a strong brand understanding what consumers expect from a certain brand or what factors they consider to choose is important.

While consumer brand choice is a key concept in building a strong brand, in the researcher's knowledge, no research has investigate the underlying factors of brand preference for cultural food products (baltena). The factors that consumers consider while purchasing these cultural food products have not been identified yet.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The main research questions are:

- What is the effect of advertisement on the consumer's cultural food producers brand preference?
- What is the effect of packaging on the consumer's cultural food producers brand preference?
- What is the effect of price on the consumer's cultural food producers brand preference?
- To what extent brand availability affect consumer's cultural food products?
- What is the effect of product quality on the consumer's cultural food producers brand preference?

## **1.4 General objective of the study**

### **1.4.1 General Objectives**

The general objective of the study is to assess factors that affect consumers' brand preference of cultural food products

### **1.4.2 Specific Objectives**

- To examine the effect of advertisement on the consumers' preference of cultural food producers brand?
- To assess the effect of packaging on the consumers' cultural food producers brand?
- To explore the effect of price on consumers' preference of cultural food producers brand.
- To assess the effect of availability of the cultural food producers brand on the consumers' preference.
- To what extent product quality influences the consumer's Brand preference of cultural food products.

## **1.5 Significance of the study**

The benefits of studying consumer behavior have significant bearing on marketing decisions. Studies focusing on consumer behaviors yield important information and insight into what consumers are thinking. With these insights, marketers may enhance their particular marketing campaigns & products to successfully connect with consumers. In a competitive environment having a data about factors that influence the brand preferences of consumers have an important value in marketing decisions for companies. Therefore the findings of the research will help marketers and producers to know what factors determine consumers brand preference of cultural food products and provide their products accordingly.

## **1.6 Scope of the study**

This research focuses only on the factors (advertisement, packaging, price of brand, brand availability and product quality) that consumer consider in choice of cultural food producer's brand. Other factors that consumers consider in the brand choice of cultural food producers

brand are not included. The study's geographical scope is limited to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia's capital city. This specific area was chosen not only owing to time, access, and expense constraints, but also because it is thought that Addis Ababa is home to a significant number of cultural food manufacturers' brands as a result of urbanization.

### **1.7 Organization of the paper**

The research will be divided into five sections. The first chapter is dedicated to the introduction, which comprises the research background, issue statement, and research questions, as well as the study's purpose, significance, and scope. The second chapter discusses the literature review. Research Methodology is the third chapter. The fourth chapter will focus on the findings and debate. The fifth chapter will include a summary of the findings, a conclusion, and a recommendation.

## **CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presented the reviewed literature on the major influences on consumer choice in regard to pricing, brand name, advertising, availability, quality and packaging. The review was divided into six sections to cater for the above areas of investigation. It was further sub-divided to allow for more intimate understanding of the key influences based on the research questions.

### **2.2 Theoretical Review**

#### **Concept of Branding**

In earlier time, branding came to being as identifier of one's property from the others. There was a time when some marks were used to keep one's cattle separate from other people's cattle, so that they can identify their own herd. However, in today's world, branding has evolved to encompass much more than simply developing a means of identifying a product or corporation. According to DeChernatony and McDonald (2003), brands have been considered as encompassing extra traits in addition to the physical components of what they stand for, which are key considerations for customers' purchasing decisions.

Brand meanings are several; different authors offer their own description to the meaning of a brand. The meanings are important to recognize a brand from many viewpoints. According to Kotler and Keller (2012), a brand is a product or service whose dimensions differentiate it in some way from other products or services designed to satisfy the same need. These changes may be useful, normal or real associated towards product performance of the brand. They may also be more symbolic, emotional, or intangible—related to what the brand represents or means in a more abstract sense.

Furthermore, Keller (2004) defines brand as a perceptual entity anchored in truth, but it is also more than that, reflecting consumers' views and even even quirks. According to this definition, a brand is what exists in consumers' minds, and the ultimate purpose of all attempts to create a brand is to create a perceived value of products and services in customers' minds. Keller's description is supported by Kapferer (2008), who defines a brand as a set of mental associations held by a client that add to the perceived value of a product or service. These relations should be exceptional (exclusive), solid (salient), and encouraging (desirable).

The American Marketing Association's definition of brand is one that is backed up by a number of authors and may be found in a variety of sources. A brand is defined as a name, word, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of these, used to identify and distinguish the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers from those of competitors. The definitions above all have one thing in common: they all define what a brand is. A product's brand is an added value that identifies and distinguishes it from other brands/items. Furthermore, customers will be able to make a mental association with a brand when they are able to do so. DeChernatory and McDonald (2003) provide a definition that takes into account the perspectives of numerous experts. A successful brand is a recognizable product, service, person, or location that has been enhanced in such a way that the buyer or user perceives relevant, unique additional values that are most closely aligned with their needs. Its success also stems from its ability to maintain those added values in the face of competition.

Both consumers and businesses benefit from branding. Branding, according to Kotler and Keller (2012), builds mental frameworks that help consumers arrange their information about products and services in a way that clarifies their decision-making and adds value to the company. Brands, according to Keller (2004), are used to identify a product's origins and allow consumers to attach blame to a specific manufacturer or distributor. Brands have an essential function in indicating product quality and other important features. They can, in effect, lower the risk connected with product purchases.

A brand is, in the end, a source of competitive advantage. Although manufacturing techniques and product designs can be easily replicated, the last impression in the minds of individuals and organizations formed over years of marketing activity and product experience may be more difficult to copy. In this sense, branding can be viewed as a potent tool for gaining a competitive edge (Keller, 2004). Similarly, Kapferer (2008) claims that a company's brand is one of the few strategic assets that can provide a long-term competitive advantage. Companies should use good brand strategy to get a competitive edge by providing a benefit to consumers. A strong brand does, without a doubt, distinguish the goods from identical products; however having a strong brand name is insufficient. In addition, the product must be unique in some way (Blythe, 2005). A powerful brand is one that offers essential items or has significant intangible added value (Kapferer, 2008). Consumers must be convinced that there are real differences among brands in

the product or service category for branding tactics to be successful and brand value to be produced (Kotler and Keller, 2012). Keller (2004) further claims that discrepancies in outcomes are caused by the added value bestowed on a product as a result of previous brand marketing activities. Companies should focus on providing added values based on consumer needs in order to persuade consumers and accomplish the desired results. The additional values of a brand are those that are relevant and recognized by consumers and go beyond the product's core functional duty (DeChernatory and McDonald, 2003). According to Peter and Donnelly (2007), the primary focus of strategy creation for some firms is on brand building, development, and nurturing activities. As a result, businesses should pay close attention to the establishment of a powerful brand. Consumers are easily drawn to a company's offering if marketers can build a strong brand. Furthermore, branding allows buyers to choose from a wider range of products. It aids shoppers by giving a wealth of product information and making the purchasing decision easier.

### **Brand Preference**

The word "brand preference" refers to a customer's level of brand loyalty, in which he or she prefers one brand above others and will buy it if it is available (Dibb et al., 2006). If the favored brand is not available, the client will accept a substitute rather than waste further effort in locating and purchasing it (Dibb et al., 2006). According to Alamro and Rowley (2011), brand preference is a prerequisite for brand equity. Keller (2004) also considers brand choice to be a predictor of brand loyalty and equity. Brand preference or the attempt to be the preferred brand should be at the heart of marketing efforts in order to gain brand loyalty and high market share, or to achieve the results of brand equity.

Customer attitude models based on the expectancy-value model, such as Fishbein's (1965), are extensively used to understand consumer preferences. The consumer's preference for a brand is based on his or her cognitive assumptions about the brand's weighted features, according to this concept (Bass & Talarzyk, 1972; Bass & Wilkie, 1973). This model is still commonly used and adds to the study of preferences (Allen, Machleit, Kleine, & Notani, 2005; Muthitharoen, Palvia, & Grover, 2011). It has, however, been chastised over the years for the following: First, brand preference is defined as a single value resulting from an algebraic equation (Bagozzi, 1982), with utilitarian beliefs serving as the primary motivator of consumer evaluation answers. Second, it ignores other factors that influence preference development, such as emotional responses (Agarwal & Malhotra, 2005; Allen et al., 2005). (Bagozzi, 1982; Grimm, 2005; Zajonc

& Markus, 1982). Third, because of the model's restrictive scope, it can only be applied to particular categories of primarily utilitarian goods (Park & Srinivasan, 1994). The applicability of multi-attribute models to products with tangible attributes that only play a minimal role in consumer choices has been called into question (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Zajonc & Markus, 1982). Fourth, incorporating weightings into the algebraic equation offered in this model reduces the model's predictive value (Churchill, 1972; Sheth & Talarzyk, 1972). Furthermore, the halo effect of this paradigm might lead to erroneous brand design and positioning judgments (Leuthesser, Kohli, & Harich, 1995).. This has prompted researchers to investigate alternatives to the consumer's primary perceptions about brand features in forming brand preferences. Furthermore, psychologists regard preference as a concept that can be learned, with experience and information processing as the two primary sources of consumer preference learning (Amir & Levav, 2008; Howard & Sheth, 1969; Sheth, 1968). According to Howard and Sheth (1969), brand preference refers to a consumer's propensity toward specific brands, which sums up their cognitive information processing in response to brand stimuli. This theory and other information processing models (Bettman, Capon, & Lutz, 1975) emphasise both the central control unit and the mental abilities of consumers. Therefore, it follows that a consumer's perception about brand attributes leads to preferences or attitudes, which affects his/her intentions and brand choices (Bagozzi, 1982). Thus, preference represents a transition state between the inputs and outputs of the consumer choice model. It is the link between information processing and the intention to actually purchase or choose (Bagozzi, 1983). It is suggested that experience should be combined with the brand meaning stored in consumers' minds to develop preferences. This research defines brand preference as a behavioural tendency that reflects a consumer's attitude towards a brand.

As a direct source of consumer preferences, it is suggested that experience promotes better memory with vivid and concrete information (Paivio, 1971). Schwarz (2004) indicates that consumers rely on their experiences as trusted sources of information, to judge between alternatives and make choices. Consumers prefer brands that provide a meaningful experience (Goode, Dahl, & Moreau, 2010).

## **Brand knowledge**

Keller's description of the content of brand knowledge stressed the holistic view of brands (1993, 2003). Consumer impressions of brand knowledge formed at the conscious level are not restricted to cognitive beliefs (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). Consumer brand choices have been shown to be influenced by non-attributed associations (e.g. Chitturi, Raghunathan, & Mahajan, 2007; Grimm, 2005; Okada, 2005; Overby & Lee, 2006; Sirgy et al., 1997). The meanings that consumers learn about and associate with the brand in their brains are used to conceptualize brand knowledge. Symbolic or imaginative sensory associations, as well as utilitarian and functional, economic and rational attributes/benefits associations, are among these meanings (Erdem et al., 1999; Keller, 1993; Plummer, 2000). Keller (1993) claims that intrinsic cues elicit brand-related attributes, but information on pricing, look, brand personality, and self-congruity can be used to produce non-related brand attributes. Brand knowledge is defined by Petruzzellis (2010) as symbolic/emotional, utilitarian, and economic linkages. Economists look at price as a restriction in utility maximization when investigating customer preferences. Prior to making a purchase decision, price is given a lot of weight (McFadden, 1999). Price is a significant extrinsic cue (Zeithaml, 1988), and it should be incorporated as a separate component in a utility model that predicts customer choices (Hayakawa, 1976). Apart from intrinsic brand cues, it is a crucial component influencing consumer choice (Horsky, Misra, & Nelson, 2006). Price is a component of brand equity that influences brand preference (Chang & Liu, 2009; Cobb-Walgren, Ruble, & Donthu, 1995; Tolba & Hassan, 2009) and assesses brand loyalty (Chang & Liu, 2009; Cobb-Walgren, Ruble, & Donthu, 1995; Tolba & Hassan, 2009). (Simon & Sullivan, 1993).

Keller (1993) considers appearance to be a non-product attribute that has no bearing on brand performance or usefulness. Creusen & Schoormans (2005) found that a product's look has a symbolic, aesthetic value that influences customers' product evaluations and works as a primary differentiating factor in consumer preference and choices (Reimann, Zaichkowsky, Neuhaus, Bender, & Weber, 2010). Companies are shifting their focus away from real and functional product features and toward visually pleasing designs. Furthermore, consumer preferences have been shown to be formed through connections such as brand personality (Aaker, 1997) and self-congruity (Sirgy et al., 1997). As a result, customer brand knowledge is made up of their

impressions of qualities, pricing, look, and symbolic associations such as brand personality and self-congruency. The functional, economic, aesthetic, and symbolic/emotional brand meanings are reflected in these factors.

### **Attribute perception**

Consumers' primary assumptions about a brand's intrinsic cues, such as product-related features and associated functional and experiential benefits, are referred to as attribute perception (Czellar, 2003; Grimm, 2005; Keller, 1993; Park & Srinivasan, 1994). Consumer perceptions of brand (product-related) qualities influence consumer preferences in a positive way (Cobb-Walgreen et al., 1995; Myers, 2003; Park & Srinivasan, 1994). Consumer preferences, according to traditional approaches such as the Fishbein model (1965), are solely based on consumers' cognitive assumptions about brand features (Allen et al., 2005). These beliefs, in a broad sense, establish the cognitive framework and characterize consumer expertise (Alba & Hutchinson, 1987). Brand experience is influenced by consumer impressions of a brand's physical, functional, and utilitarian features (Gentile et al., 2007; Rondeau, 2005; Tynan & McKechnie, 2009). Verbal cues, on the other hand, are key stimuli that enhance customer brand experiences.

### **Definition of Advertising**

Advertising, sales promotion and public relations are mass-communication tools available to marketers. As its name suggests, mass communication uses the same message for everyone in an audience. The mass communication tools trade off the advantage of personal selling, the opportunity to tailor a message to each prospect for the advantage of reaching many people at a lower cost per person. (Etzel et al., 1997). Today, definitions of advertising abound. We might define it as communication process, a marketing process, an economic and social process, a public relations process or information and persuasion process (Arens, 1996). Dunn et al. (1978) viewed advertising from its functional perspectives, as a result, they define it as a paid, non-personal communication through various media by businesses, non-profit organizations, and individuals who are in some way associated with the advertising message and hope to inform or persuade members of a certain audience. Morden (1991) is of the opinion that advertising is used to establish a basic awareness of the product or service in the mind of the potential customer and to build up knowledge about it. Kotler (1988) sees advertising as one of the four buyers through

the purchase decision process. Individual purchasers will filter out unfavourable or un-known brands and the continued purchase of the branded product will reinforce the brand loyal behaviour. Without brands, consumer couldn't tell one product from another and advertising then would be nearly impossible.

Consumers while selecting beverages give least importance to price, packaging and availability and more importance to quality and advertising (Law & Braun-LaTour, 2004; Uribe, 2016). In a study, it was found that respondents while purchasing beverages give least importance to price, packaging and other variables (Uribe, 2016). Consumer's inclination towards beverages depends on the quality of the product and on heavy advertising. Television advertisements are found to be most effective medium for generating awareness about the product. Therefore it can be used for influencing targeted consumers' purchase intention (Jurca & Madlberger, 2015). Consumers who purchase a brand mainly due its quality and emotional attachment are not price sensitive (Jurca & Madlberger, 2015; Singh & Hu, 2012). In the context of advertising effectiveness, it was found that advertising and consumer choice has a significant relationship. Additionally, television was found to be the most preferred medium followed by internet, outdoor awareness creating activities, newspaper and radio, for creating awareness (Uribe, 2016). Recall rate of television advertisements is highest, which positively influences consumer's purchase decision (Muralidharan, La Ferle, & Sung, 2015). Advertising influences brand switching, but it does not affect consumer's repeat purchase rate especially for the consumers who have recently purchased the brand. The switching generally remains confined to current and previous brands (Volkov & Laing, 2015)

A study on Coca-Cola disclosed that Coke's advertisements and its taste have mainly contributed towards the success of Coca-Cola (Michael & Nedunchezian, 2012). Variables such as price and packaging have not contributed significantly towards consumer purchase intention (Mahmoud, 2015; Michael & Nedunchezian, 2012). Thus, marketers in their advertisement campaign should concentrate on nostalgia to create a bond between the product and the consumers, to increase brand recall and purchase intention. Advertisements are also used to create awareness about quality and taste of products in order to attract and retains consumers (Michael & Nedunchezian, 2012).

## **Advertising and Consumer Behavior**

Advertiser's primary mission is to reach prospective customers and influence their awareness, attitudes and buying behaviour. They spend a lot of money to keep individuals (markets) interested in their products. To succeed, they need to understand what makes potential customers behave the way they do. The advertisers goals is to get enough relevant market data to develop accurate profiles of buyers-to-find the common group (and symbols) for communications this involves the study of consumers behaviour: the mental and emotional processes and the physical activities of people who purchase and use goods and services to satisfy particular needs and wants (Arens, 1996). Proctor et al. (1982) noted that the principal aim of consumer behaviour analysis is to explain why consumers act in particular ways under certain circumstances. It tries to determine the factors that influence consumer behaviour, especially the economic, social and psychological aspects which can indicate the most favored marketing mix that management should select. Consumer behaviour analysis helps to determine the direction that consumer behaviour is likely to make and to give preferred trends in product development, attributes of the alternative communication method etc. consumer behaviour analysis views the consumer as another variable in the marketing sequence, a variable that cannot be controlled and that will interpret the product or service not only in terms of the physical characteristics, but in the context of this image according to the social and psychological makeup of that individual consumer (or group of consumers). Economic theory has sought to establish relationships between selling prices, sales achieved and consumers' income; similarly, advertising expenditure is frequently compared with sales.

### **The Influence of Advertising on the Customer's choice of bottled water brand**

Zain-ul-Abideen and Saleem (n.d) said that advertising is a marketing promotional strategy to catch the people's attraction for specific action for product or service. Vakratsas (1999) also suggested that in order to know how an advertisement works; it should be evaluated on the basis of three aspects. First of all, the behavioral dimension that includes purchasing decision, brand choice and market share. Secondly the effect on the consumer behavior values and believes. And third the most important cognitive dimension that includes product type, the degree of competition in the market, the development stage of the product and the consideration of the market that needs to be captured.

## **Packaging**

Packaging and packaging design have become important aspects of the marketing of a variety of "consumer goods" and play an important role in communicating product benefits to customers. Packaging is described as a component of both the product and the brand in marketing literature. The package of a product represents its qualities and conveys product information. When consumers see it on the store shelves, the product and the package are one and the same. During the purchasing decision, the package aids the consumer by forming an overall product perception that aids in product evaluation and selection. Furthermore, until the actual product is consumed and the package is recycled, the package is the product. (Ksenia et al., 2013).

The packaging design offers value to both the package and the product. Colors, fonts, text, and visuals all play a role in the overall aesthetic of a package. Pictures of appealing locations (mountains, beaches, luxury mansions, and cars) on the box can help to elicit lifestyle desires (Rundh, 2009). The major objective of the box and packaging design at the point of purchase is to capture the attention of the buyer and to stand out amid the competition in the shop or supermarket.

Marketers, designers, and customers all contribute to the success of package design and packaging in general. As a result, packaging is an important tool in modern consumer products marketing. According to Prone (1993), the package can grab buyers' attention, transmit the company's name and image, separate the brand from competitors, and improve the functionality of the product (Garber & Burke & Jones 2000). As a result, the packaging works as a crucial communication instrument, providing product-related information to consumers during the buying decision process.

When developing a new packaging, the most important factors to consider are consumer preferences and purchasing behavior. Consumer decisions and wishes are the important aspects that drive the marketing process, regardless of considerations such as new technology or material development. Consumers are the most important players in the development and implementation of packages. In this case, the most important aspect of packaging design is to comprehend the consumer (Stewart 2004).

Consumers are drawn to a particular brand by its packaging, which boosts its image and shapes their perceptions of the product. Furthermore, packaging provides distinctive value to products as

a tool for differentiation, i.e., it assists consumers in selecting a product from a large number of identical products and stimulates their purchasing behavior. As a result, packaging is a significant part of marketing communications and can be considered one of the most influential factors in a consumer's purchase choice.

### **Packaging as a decision making process**

When it comes to purchasing decisions, packaging is crucial. According to Silayoi and Speece (2007), when a consumer is unsure, the package becomes an important aspect in the purchasing decision since it interacts with the consumer during the decision-making process. The way a consumer perceives a product's subjective existence through communication aspects given by the package has an impact on their decision and is a critical factor in effective marketing techniques (Mets, 2010).

Murphy (1997) emphasizes the significance of package design and how it affects consumer decision-making. Murphy identifies a two-step decision-making process that consumers use while shopping for convenience-packaged goods. The first step is to decide to carefully inspect the product after discovering it on the grocery shelf. In this case, the package design has the capacity to pique the consumer's interest in the product. The package becomes a "salesman" in the second step, which includes direct experience with the goods. As a result, the package and packaging design have a role in the consumer's decision to buy. (Holmes and colleagues, 2012).

### **Influence of Packaging on the Customer's choice of brand**

Packaging can be thought of as a group of actions related with the design, manufacture, and filling of a container or wrapper for a product item in order to protect, store, transport, and identify the product, as well as successfully market it (Kent & Omar, 2003). Packaging with its different functionality to ease and to communicate with consumers, there is no doubt about increasingly important role of packaging as a strategic tool to attract consumers' attention and their perception on the product quality (Deliya&Parmar, 2012). Norman (2004), ponders how the packaging of water has become an art form. Some of the bottles are special, sensuous and colorful. People keep the empty bottles, sometimes refilling them with tap water, which, of course demonstrates that the entire success of the product lies in its package, not its content. How does one brand of water distinguish itself from another? Packaging is one answer, distinctive

packaging, that in the case of water means bottle design. Glass, plastic, whatever the material, the design becomes the product.

### **Price of Brand**

It has been made clear through several articles, books, and other research that a price can be analyzed from different point of views. As for the economist's view a price is equilibrium by the forces of supply and demand in the market, whereas the accountant's point of view includes the aspects, that a price should cover costs so that the company can make profit. Considering the customer, a price is the amount of money the consumer has to pay and therefore it has to represent good value. Otherwise from the point of the marketing perspective, a price is an opportunity to gain competitive advantage and even to increase market share (Simon and Dolan 1997, pp. 10-14). According to Kotler and Armstrong (2009, p. 263) the price is "the amount of money charged for a product or service, or the sum of all the values that customers give up in order to gain the benefit of having or using a product or service."

The price of a product influences the purchasing decision of consumers as well as the sales margin (Osman, Talib, Sanusi, Shiang-Yen, & Alwi, 2012). The product's price is the amount that is expected to be paid when the thing is purchased. In the market, there are two sorts of product prices that are prevalent. When some products have a high market price, the brand image is a critical component of the product. Some products have a low brand price, which is a useful marketing strategy for brands, and consumers rely on the brand's past pricing value (Swani & Yoo, 2010). Existing consumers are genially influenced by price promotion strategy (Dawes, Meyer-Waarden, & Driesener, 2015). This strategy immediately increases sales, but as soon as it ends the sales also drop back to their original levels. In this context studies found that price cuts do increase consumer loyalty and seldom generate new customer (Dawes et al., 2015; Han, Lee, & Kang, 2013). Contrarily others are of the opinion that price promotion undermines company's value and dilutes brand's image. Any positive effects of price cut are short lived (Cummins & Mullin, 2010; Dawes et al., 2015). Price cuts and promotions, according to some provide opportunities to consumers to try new products and brands. If new brands provide desired satisfaction, consumer might develop association and relationship with the new brands (Cummins & Mullin, 2010)

Furthermore, some researchers are of the opinion that the price promotions has a positive effect on the brand in short run time, but in long run it will reduce brand's value (Cummins & Mullin, 2010; Li & Yada, 2015). Nevertheless, price promotions and price cuts enable consumers to try new products, develop an association with them and build a relationship in the long run. If the new product fulfills the needs and satisfies the consumers this may lead to future influence their future purchase choices (Li & Yada, 2015)

While exploring the negative effects of price promotion in retail outlet studies found that price cut although immediately increases the sales and demand of the product, but consumers become apprehensive about the quality of the product. Price discounts also have a cannibalization effects on the sales and it adversely affect power of the brand (Li & Yada, 2015).

### **The Influence of Price on the Customer's choice of brand**

Price is the key rational factor influencing brand choice. In fact, for some customers, price is even a precursor to basic product features. For most, however, there is a direct trade-off between price and quality: customers will pay a higher price if the brand is of sufficient quality (University of Auckland Business Review, 2001). Much research has demonstrated the importance of price in purchase decisions (Monroe, 2003). A more fine-grained analysis suggests that consumers' purchase decisions are driven by price perceptions rather than by actual prices. These perceptions are highly subjective and susceptible to contextual influences (Alba, 1999; Krishna 1991; Krishna, 2002; Zeithaml, 1988). Retailers use various pricing strategies to influence consumers' price perceptions, assuming that they will impact choice; for instance, psychological pricing, perceived value, price framing and reduction.

### **Brand Name**

The brand name is an important consideration since it often expresses the central concept or essential association of a product in a concise and understandable manner. Brand names may be a very effective way of communicating. Some companies assign their product with a brand name that in reality has nothing to do with the emotional experience but is catchy and a name that people can easily memorize. The core base of naming a brand is that it should be unique can be easily discriminated from other names, easy to remember and are attractive to customers (Keller, 2008).

## **The Influence of the Brand name on the Customer's choice of brand**

The name of a brand is the fundamental indicator of the brand. It is the basis for raising awareness of the brand and Communication efforts. Often even more important is the fact that it can generate association which serves to describe the brand (Aaker, 1991).

According to Keller (1993), the brand name is a very significant choice because some time it captures the central theme or key association of a product in a very condensed and reasonable fashion. Brand names can be extremely successful means of communication. Some companies assign their product with a brand name that in reality has nothing to do with the emotional experience but is catchy and a name that people can easily memorize. The core base of naming a brand is that it should be unique and can be easily discriminated from other names, easy to remember and is attractive to customers

### **Quality**

Product Quality indicates the extent to which product is carrying out its desired work & this is treated as an important factor which influence the brand choice. (Khan & Rohi, 2013) Quality can also be defined as the difference customer observes in actual level of performance in comparison to the perceived level of performance. (Kang, 2006). Brand quality is an element which influences the purchase behavior of customer and it is essential to make a brand comprehensive one as compared to the competing brands, especially when it faces competition from well-known brands of the world. (Arif, Ahmed & Farrukh, 2015) (Piktumiene, 2013) Moreover consumer also holds perception associated with quality and safety which also affect their buying decision, but both quality and safety are treated as those variables which are very hard to define and consumers are force to evaluate quality as well as safety of the products on the basis of other signals associated with products whether intrinsic, like product appearance or external like its label and associations. (Nelson, 1970)

Researchers agree that perceived quality is an important element that affects consumer behavior (Akdeniz & Calantone, 2015; Batra et al., 2014; Dabholkar, 2015; Severi & Ling, 2013). Consumer's brand evaluation, purchase experience and brand's association leads to perceived quality and brand image. If consumers have a positive quality perception for a brand, it means their evaluation for the brand will also be positive. Consequently this will affect consumer's

purchase intention, loyalty and hence they will recommend the brand to others (Chabowski, Samiee, & Hult, 2013).

Perceived quality affects marketing communications, builds brand associations and influence consumers' purchase intentions. Consequently, it leads to brand loyalty, forms positive associations and memories in consumer's minds. Therefore marketers must ensure to improve those brand's quality indicators that help in developing consumer's positive associations (Batra et al., 2014).

Consumers generally have a positive image towards global brand as compared to local brand even, if the quality and values associated with local brands are superior. Consequently, companies have been forced to move towards global brands. Studies found that consumers draw the quality inference of a product through brand names. Since global brand have strong brand image, therefore consumer perceive them of high quality (Aggarwal, Singh, & Prashar, 2014; Chabowski et al., 2013; Kapferer, 2012).

### 2.3 Empirical review

A study was conducted by Chen et al. (2012) to analyze the drinking water consumption pattern for a decade in Shanghai, China from 2001 until 2011. The results show that the tap water consumption percentage has continued to be stable and is the preferred choice of consumers, with 58.99 percent in 2001 and 58.25 percent in the year 2011. Consumption of bottled water on the other hand has decreased from 36.86 percent in 2001 to only 25.75 percent in the year 2011. The relationship between perceived quality and consumption behavior is verified as majority of respondents (52.50 percent) believed that tap water is the cleanest and safest water, whereas only 22.50 percent viewed bottled water and barrel water to be the cleanest and safest. This proves that the better the perception of drinking water quality, the higher the consumption of that particular drinking water.

A research conducted by Pintar et al. (2009) in Ontario, Canada indicated that amongst the drinking water consumers, 51 percent consumed tap water exclusively, 34 percent consumed bottled water exclusively and 14.5 percent of consumers drank both tap water and bottled water. In a day, the mean volume of drinking water (tap water and bottled water) consumed was 1.39L.

The key to branding is that consumers perceive differences among brands in a product category. Brand differences often are related to attributes or benefits of the product itself. In other cases, however, brand difference may be related to more intangible image consideration (Keller, 2004). Currently, in this modern era anything can be branded. Even the former commodity products have become branded. As per Keller (2004) explanation, if marketers can convince customers that not all product offerings in a category were the same and a meaningful difference exists, commodities can be branded and differentiated as a strong brand.

Some claim that brand choice may be explained by what is known as the expectation value model, as DeChernatory & McDonald (2003) indicate. Consumers intuitively assign scores to two variables in this model, one being the degree to which they predict a happy outcome and the other being the value they ascribe to a favorable outcome, according to this model. When confronted with competing brands, this model predicts that consumers will give scores to these expectancy-value factors and make a decision based on the highest overall score. The expectancy-value model of attitude formation, according to Kotler and Keller (2012), proposes that consumers evaluate products and services by weighing their brand beliefs—the positives and negatives—in order of priority. The expectancy-value model explains how customers form opinions about different brands by evaluating attributes and forming a set of beliefs about where each brand sits on each attribute. The model posits that each chosen alternative is evaluated against a set of several evaluative criteria (or product features). It's also expected that the consumer gives different weights to each of the desired product features, which are weighed one by one.

The consumer forms perceptions or beliefs regarding the amount to which each desired attribute is manifested by each chosen alternative throughout this evaluation. The consumer's overall assessment of a particular choice option is dependent on how well it demonstrates desired product features as well as how essential each attribute is to the consumer. The expectancy-value model is a compensating paradigm, in which positive aspects of a product might help to compensate for negative aspects. Consumers, on the other hand, frequently use mental shortcuts known as heuristics or rules of thumb in the decision-making process, which is referred to as non-compensatory models of consumer choice (Kotler and Keller, 2012). With non-compensatory model, positive and negative attribute considerations do not necessarily net out.

### **2.3.1 Underlying Factors of Brand Choice**

The focus of research is on the various elements that influence customers' brand preferences. Sumathy and Kumar (2011) used 150 consumers as survey respondents to investigate customers' brand preferences for pasteurized packaged milk. They discovered that the most essential features marketers of branded packaged milk should focus on are advertisement, fair pricing, flavor, brand name, and packaging, using multiple regression analysis and factor analysis. These are the most desired variables in customer brand choosing.

Using a sample of 90 survey respondents, Chimboza and Edward (2007) study the drivers of brand preference in the context of the Zimbabwean dairy product market. The researchers discovered four important variables of dairy product choice using exploratory factor analysis: promotion, price and availability of the product, appealing packaging, and product quality. The most important predictor of brand choice was the promotion of dairy products. In Maharashtra, India, Sarwade and Ambedkar (2011) investigated brand preferences and consumption patterns of edible oils. The researchers discovered that health consciousness and the quality of a particular brand are essential determinants in decision-making using quantitative research (a survey with 1000 respondents) and data analysis using percentile, average, simple correlation, and regression. Vikkraman and Dineshkumar (2012) used a quantitative research technique to investigate consumers' brand preferences for FMCG (Dental Care) products in India (survey on 200 customers as a sample). The researchers discovered through descriptive analysis that customers value product quality the most, followed by price, design, sales, and service. In the rural market of India's Garhwal region, Jain and Sharma (2012) investigate brand awareness and customer preference for FMCG products. According to the survey, the most critical characteristics for brand preference are brand quality, price, convenient availability, and family liking. Usha (2007) used a randomly selected sample size of 180 respondents in the Kolar District of India to investigate consumer purchasing behavior for instant meal products. According to the study, buyers favored a certain brand of goods because of its superior quality, store influence, and ready availability.

Although many studies have been undertaken in various product categories, there is very little literature on brand preference in the bottled water product category. As a result, the above studies in various product categories are taken into account while selecting relevant

variables/factors for this study. As a result, six variables are evaluated in this study. Product quality, price, packaging, brand availability, advertising, and brand name awareness are among them.

### **2.3.2. Advertisement**

Consumers in market-based economies have learnt to rely on advertising and other forms of promotion for information to help them make purchasing decisions (Belch and Belch, 2003). Advertising usually gives you a cause to buy something (Keller, 2004). Advertising, according to Aynawale, Alimi, and Ayanbimipe (2005), aids in portraying product quality and value in front of customers. As a result, it has a significant impact on consumer brand preference. The survey of 538 randomly selected consumers of Pune/India examined the role played by media on consumer brand choice of Cadbury Dairy Milk (chocolate brand). Results revealed that the major reason for brand preference is advertisement (Kazemi and Esmaeili, 2010). Belch and Belch and Belch (2003) explain Advertising as a valuable promotional tool for creating and maintaining brand awareness and making sure a brand is included in the evoked set.

### **2.3.3 Packaging**

Packaging was considered as indicator of quality and a dominant clue in selecting a brand when the consumer is completely unaware about the brand's real quality and performance. As per Etzel et al. (2006) one of the packaging purposes is to persuade consumers to buy the product. Packaging can assist in getting a product noticed by consumers. In the case of convenience goods and operating supplies, most buyers consider one well brand about as well as another. Thus, if an attractive and convenience packaging differentiates such products, consumers will tend to purchase it. The physical appearance of the product, packaging and labeling information can influence whether consumers notice a product in store, examine it and purchase it (Peter and Donnelly, 2007).

Packaging design and size, as well as the package's aesthetic attractiveness and how it affects consumer brand preference, have all been studied. Chimboza and Edward (2007) and Sumathy and Kumar (2011) discovered that attractive packaging and convenience of a brand package were drivers for 28 purchasing decisions. Visual package features, according to Silayoi and Speece (2004), have a significant impact in consumer brand choice, particularly when purchasing low-involvement products and when customers are in a hurry. Many businesses see packaging as a crucial tool to interact with customers and leave a lasting impression on them. In other cases,

packaging might help to expand the brand by providing new applications (Belch & Belch, 2003). Packaging is also defined as an external feature of the product by Deliya&Parmar (2012). Packaging refers to the product's container. Agariya, Johari, Sharma, Chandraul, and Singh (2012) support this notion and define packaging as a container for a product, which includes the design, color, form, labeling, and material used.

The operations of designing and constructing a product's container are included in packaging. The package is the container, and it can hold up to three levels of stuff (Kotler, 2002). Packaging is the process of designing and manufacturing a product's container or wrapping. Packaging also includes the labeling of printed information that appears on or with the product. The box is the buyer's first interaction with the goods, and it has the power to turn them on or off (Kotler and Keller, 2006). Clement (2007) as well as Reimann et al. (2010) importantly raise awareness to the fact that current marketing theory does not sufficiently cover the importance of packaging designs influence on purchasing decision. Packaging design has a great impact on the visual purchasing behaviour of the consumer and thus it is a particularly relevant topic to investigate in more detail with regards to a commodity product like bottled water. In addition, Kumar (2010) states that the product design is directly associated with the desirability of the product and will therefore also influence consumers' satisfaction with the product as well as affect the perception of the entire brand. This may be a factor influencing likelihood of repurchase and brand loyalty (Jennings and Wood, 2007). Furthermore, the product design will shape the product appearance to the consumer and thus have an impact on the consumers' first point of contact with the product (Kumar, 2010). Consequently, the product appearance may be regarded as a great part of the foundation in establishing a consumer-product relationship and may dictate the pleasure of the product for the consumer (Hollins and Pugh, 1990 in Kumar 2010). Hence, the aesthetics pleasure of the product design will also play a great role in the consumers' first holistic impression of the product. In addition, Eckman and Wagner (1994) also state that the aesthetic attributes of products will influence the consumers' choice of product. Reimann et al. (2010) highlight that the aesthetics of product design is increasingly important in markets where consumer's needs are already satisfied, which is highly relevant to the mature and fiercely competitive European bottled water market.

#### **2.3.4. Price**

According to Peter and Donnelly (2007), the price of a product or service has a significant impact on whether or not consumers will buy it, and if so, which competitive offering will be chosen. Higher pricing may not dissuade purchase in some cases because consumers believe the products or services are of higher quality or prestige. Many of today's quality-conscious shoppers, on the other hand, may choose things based on price rather than other factors. As a result, a greater understanding of how customers utilize pricing information to choose between alternative brands within regularly purchased product categories aids in evaluating it and determining its significance in comparison to other aspects or reasons. According to McDonald and Sharp (2000), pricing may be utilized as a justification for brand choice in two ways: going for the lowest price to avoid financial risk or going for the highest price to obtain product quality. According to Cadogan and Foster (2000), the most important consideration for the ordinary consumer is price.

#### **2.3.5 Brand Availability or Accessibility**

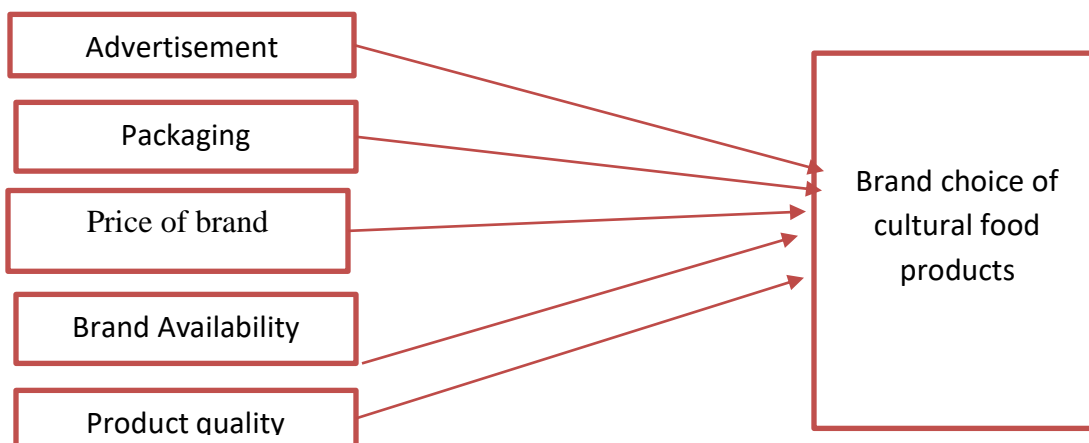
Consistency of supply and availability at convenient locations are vital for choice a brand. The convenience of a brand, according to Lin and Chang (2003), has a substantial impact on customers' brand choice. To put it another way, having quick access to brands is critical when purchasing any product. Brand accessibility is certainly influenced by distribution channels and geography. Furthermore, according to DeChernatory& McDonald (2003), consumers are not driven to seek out low-involvement brands, thus makers should ensure that they are widely available. In the event that a product is out of supply, customers are likely to move to a different brand. The evoked set refers to the individual brands a customer considers while making a purchase within a specific product category in the context of consumer decision making, particularly when considering viable alternative brands during the pre-buy stages (Lin and Chang, 2003). Furthermore, customers will make little evaluation of competing brands once inside a store, therefore placing a brand at eye level or very close to the checkout counter is a key facilitator of brand selection ( DeChernatory& McDonald, 2003). Consumers are more likely to find and buy products that are available in a variety of stores. When consumers are looking for a low-involvement product, they are unlikely to conduct an exhaustive search, so accessibility is critical (peter and Donnelly, 2007).

### 2.3.5 Product Quality

The quality of a product affect the consumers' ability to make a decision, because the consumer always expecting a good quality product at reasonable price (Keller, 2004). Product service attributes and the consequences or outcomes consumers think they will experience from a particular brand are very important, for they are often the basis on which consumers form attitudes and purchase intentions and decide among various choice alternatives (Belch and Belch, 2003). Literatures and studies found out that the perceived quality is the major factor that enables consumers to prefer one brand over another. When it comes to influencing brand choice, quality is critical. Because it is the amount of personal risk that a consumer assumes during the decision-making process and when analyzing the purchase of a product (Hoyer and MacInnis, 2010). Furthermore, Bornmark et al. (2005) discovered that perceived quality helps consumers avoid risk by allowing them to trust the brand and know exactly what they will receive. Sarwade and Ambedkar (2011), Vikkraman and Dineshkumar (2012) and Jain and Sharma (2012) found quality as a major determinant of brand choice or brand preference.

### 2.4 Conceptual Framework for Brand Selection

Marketing mix aspects will be studied as predictors of consumers' brand choice decision in this study. The variables of customers' choosing criteria are depicted in the conceptual framework below.



**Source: Adapted from Dhar et al (1999)**

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

### **Introduction**

The research design and procedures used in conducting the study are justified. Special emphasis is placed on the target population, sampling techniques, methods, data collection, analysis and reporting. It also highlighted the research procedure the study abode by while conducting the research, for example, the criterion of selecting sources of data. The data analysis tool of choice was Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), since it is ideal for statistical analysis and has been widely used by market researchers. The study heavily relied on the questionnaires to collect the data. The researcher opted for this tool because it was convenient and gave precise responses. Due to the research design, quantitative methodology was best suited for the study as it would have been hectic and cumbersome for the application of qualitative methodology.

### **3.1 Research Approach**

The research employs quantitative research approach in order to address the general objective of the study.

### **3.2 research Design**

The study is based on the research principal of descriptive approach. Descriptive approach where it gathered vital information about the influencing factors underlying. It describes or defines a subject by creating a profile of the problem, (Thietart, 2001). The study tried to draw up patterns that could be analyzed about the phenomena; the findings have been able to shed new insights about the problem.

The approach in this case meant that there was less interference with the variables and this ensured that data got from the study was credible and unadulterated. A variable is something that can change, and is typically the focus of the study (Sproull, 2002). By describing the influences or the phenomena, the research set to find out how much, who, when, what and where. The descriptive survey design was useful in gaining insight into the general picture of the situation without utilizing the whole population since the researcher was not able to study the whole population. This study explored the factors that influence customer choice of cultural food producers brand in the case of Addis Ababa city

### 3.4 Sampling Design

The purpose of sampling was to secure a representative group which would enable the researcher gain information about a population. Sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals selected represent the larger group from which they are selected. (Mugenda&Mugenda, 2003).

#### 3.4.1 Target population

The target population of the study comprises individual customers who purchases cultural food producers brand from supermarkets and shops.

#### 3.4.2 Sampling Frame

The sample frame is a list, directory or index of cases from which a sample can be selected. Subject or cases selected from the sampling frame form the units of observation in a study (Mugenda&Mugenda, 2003). The sampling frame of the study was individual customers who uses cultural food producers brand.

#### 3.4.3 Sampling technique

In order to collect data for the study a convenience sampling technique was used. The researcher has adopted the convenient sampling and it was much careful to ensure that the sample represents the whole area of the study.

#### 3.4.4 Sample size

For sample size calculation, the researcher uses the sample size formula developed by Cochran (1953), set 0.95 as confidence level and 0.05 as the margin of error:

$$n = \frac{(1 - p) * z^2}{e^2}$$

n means Required sample size

p means Population proportion picking a choice (0.5)

z means Z value (1.96 for 95% confidence level)

e means Margin of error (0.05)

$$n = \frac{0.5(1 - 0.5) * 1.96^2}{0.05^2} = 384.16$$

$$0.05^2$$

$$n=384$$

### **3.5 Source of Data**

The main data source of the study was primary data. Structured questionnaires were distributed for the respondents.

### **3.6 Data Collection Method**

Structured questionnaires were distributed conveniently for the respondents who are customers of different supermarkets and shops for cultural food producer's brand. The respondents are told to complete a survey for a research project concerning people's brand preference on cultural food products. The unexpected outbreak of covid 19 diseases in the world and in our country makes the data collection process so challenging.

### **3.7 Data collection instrument**

In this study, the major data collection tool was semi-structured questionnaire with a combination of closed-ended and open-ended items.

### **3.8 Data analysis methods**

Profiling information for analysis is best suited to start-off this stage of the research process. Categorizing the questionnaires by their numerical values goes a long way in easing the tasking exercise of analysis. The researcher can categorize the questionnaires according to their nature where close-ended are easily assigned numbers because their responses are either affirmative or negative. The conversion of these data responses to numerical codes is called coding. Categories should be appropriate to the research problem, exhaustive of the data, mutually exclusive, and uni-dimensional (Cooper & Emory, 1995).

After coding, the respective codes are entered into a code book; this is a document that describes in intricate details the coding schemes as assigned to the various data responses. Depending on the data analysis software, one is able to prepare a code sheet where only numerical codes representing the questionnaire responses are entered. This is called data entry process and precedes the actual data analysis. Data analysis is dependent upon the research design, where different research objectives call for different approaches.

Research that is leaning towards qualitative will be analyzed differently from quantitative as one is non-empirical relying on content analysis while the other depends on descriptive statistics to

depict relationships, correlations and variance (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Data is measured in mode, median and mean. Mode is the most frequently occurring data score or value in a sample. Median is the mid-point that divides the array ranks into two equal parts. The mean is the summation of the values divided by the total number of the score values (Mugenda&Mugenda, 2003).

### **3.9 Ethical Considerations**

The study was conducted by considering ethical responsibility. This includes providing information to the respondents which helps them to identify the purpose of the study and the use of the information as well. Informing clearly the data obtained will be held in strict confidentiality by the researcher. Respondents' anonymity will be kept so that participants will be feeling free and safe to express their ideas.

## CHAPTER FOUR : RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4. Data analysis and discussion

All collected data was analyzed as well summarized in order to achieve the aim or objective of the research. The study was held to identify factors affecting customers brand preference of cultural food products (baltena). Hence, the demographic profile of the respondents, factors that affect customers brand preference and their level of agreement was analyzed in detail. Finally, summarized findings followed by conclusions of the study are presented.

The total number of respondents selected was 384 hence questionnaires were distributed after reaching them based on convenience. Out of the total 384 questionnaires that were distributed 220 were collected .Out of the collected questionnaires 200 was properly filled. Accordingly, the data was analyzed and interpreted here below using the possible options of descriptive statistics.

#### 4.1 Descriptive Analysis

##### 4.1.1 Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Table 1

Variables		Total respondents	
		Frequency	Percentage
sex	Male	68	34
	Female	132	66
Age(in years)	18- 25	24	12.0
	26- 35	114	57.0
	36-45	50	25.0
	Above 45	12	6.0

Education	Primary education	19	9.5
	Secondary education	16	8.0
	First degree	110	55.0
	Second degree & above	55	27.5
Marital status	Single	71	35.5
	Married	127	63.5
Income level	Less than 5000	9	4.5
	5000 to 10000	23	11.5
	10000 to 15000	15	7.5
	Above 15000	153	76.5

Table 4.1 shows the demographic profile of 200 respondents. In terms of gender, 132 female and 68 male were involved in the survey. Female respondents outnumbered males (Female 66 percent and male 34 percent). In terms of age, the sample population is predominantly dominated by the age group of 26-35 (57 percent), followed by the age group of 36-45 (36 percent) (25 percent). The remaining responses (12%) ranged in age from 18 to 45 years old (12 percent).

First-degree holders make up the majority of the population, accounting for 55 percent of all responses. This indicates that a higher percentage of responders are well-educated. Similarly, the majority of responders (76.5%) have a monthly salary of more than 15000 ETB. This could be explained by the fact that a large portion of the population is highly educated, and hence earns a higher salary than those who are less educated. Only 4.5 percent of the population earns less than 5000 ETB, according to the survey.

#### 4.1.2 Reliability Test

Cronbach's alpha coefficient was determined to examine the internal consistency of variables in the study instrument. Scales with coefficient alpha between 0.6 and 0.7, according to Zikmund, Babin, and Griffin (2010), imply fair dependability. As a result, a Cronbach's Alpha score of .60 or higher is regarded appropriate for determining reliability in this investigation. The coefficients for all independent variables and the dependent variable were in the acceptable range, i.e. >0.6, according to the Cronbach's alpha result. The overall instrument's Cronbach's alpha is 0.739, indicating that internal consistency is within acceptable limits.

**Table 2 Reliability Statistics Test**

Reliability Statistics Test		
Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	No of items
Advertisement	0.828	4
Packaging	0.71	4
Price of brand	0.817	5
Brand Availability	0.679	3
Product quality	0.619	4
Collective Alpha Value	.739	20

Table 3 Ranking of the cultural food products

	Frequency	percent
Selam baltena	100	50.0
Elsa kolo	81	40.5
Beferekot baltena	9	4.5
Almaz baltena	7	3.5
Etsub baltena	3	1.5

Respondents were asked to rank the cultural food producers brand from the listed options. Selam baltena gets the first rank by being chosen by 100(50%) respondents. Elsas kolo and beferekot

baltena stood second and third i.e 81(40.5%) and 9(4.5%). Almaz and etsub baltena gets the remaining rank fourth and fifth 7(3.5%) and 3(1.5%) respectively.

#### 4.1.3 Descriptive Statistic

As stated, the research method is descriptive statistical analysis to analyze the five components of the conceptual framework developed for this study. Therefore, the discussion of the conceptual framework components has answered the basic research questions and meets the stated objectives of this study. For the analysis of all these variables, mean and standard deviation is used. Particularly mean value of the respondents is considered as an important indicator to the extent of each factor in determining factors affecting consumer brand preference.

**Table 4 Descriptive Statistics Advertising**

<b>ITEMS</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Advertisements have influence over the cultural food producers brand I buy	2.9150	.95516
I buy a cultural food producers brand that I frequently exposed through advertisement.	2.9450	.99848
I buy a cultural food producers brand, which has attractive and recognizable advertisement	3.0350	1.06746
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>2.965</b>	

Descriptive statistics especially means were used to evaluate the effect of Advertisement on respondents brand choice. Under advertisement dimension, there were 3 specific statements in a form of Likert scale. As it can be inferred from the table consumers responded attractive and recognizable advertisement affects their brand choice for cultural products. The mean 2.965 indicates consumers are not highly influenced by advertisement for their brand preference of cultural products.

**Table 5 Descriptive Statistics Packaging**

<b>ITEMS</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
I choose cultural food producers brand, which has my preferred package size	3.3450	.99545
I prefer a cultural food producers brand with a convenient package shape (easy to carry)	3.3850	.88923
Visual appeal of packaging influence my brand choice	3.1950	1.08761
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.3083</b>	

The second item on the questionnaire was packaging to determine if the size, visual appeal and convenient package have any effect on the consumer brand preference. As we can refer from table the consumer indicates the convenient package shape has a high effect on their brand preference. Most cultural food products are packaged in different kg seizes. From the questionnaire above seeing the mean results 3.3083 we can conclude convenient packaging have a moderate effect on the consumer brand preference.

**Table 6 Descriptive Statistics Price**

<b>ITEMS</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
I buy what is affordable for me.	3.7900	1.03015
Low price is one of my priorities when making a buying decision	2.6550	1.10548
I am willing to pay a higher price for my preferred cultural food producers' brand.	2.6050	1.08853
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.0166</b>	

The study listed price as one of the factors that affected consumer brand preference .Affordable Price with mean score of 3.7900 implies that it is the most significant factor among respondents. The average mean 3.0166 shows the moderate effect of price on the cultural products brand.

**Table 7 Descriptive Statistics availability**

<b>ITEMS</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
I prefer a cultural food producers brand, which is widely available	3.2400	1.11743
I buy any kind of cultural food producers brand I found in my surrounding	2.5450	1.06473
If my preferred brand is not available in the store, I will buy any kind of cultural food producers' brand that is available.	2.8900	1.01640
<b>Average</b>	<b>2.8916</b>	

When we talk about the brand preference it is important to take into consideration brand availability plays a big role in how a consumer chooses a product. Thus it is also included in this study how the availability of the product affects the consumer brand preference. As we can see on table the widely availability of the brand has the greater mean score indicating it affects the brand choice of the consumers.

**Table 8 Descriptive Statistics quality**

<b>ITEMS</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
I buy a cultural food producers' brand which I perceive as a high quality	4.0600	3.70744
I buy cultural product that is produced as per acceptable quality standard and ingredients	3.8350	1.02618
I buy cultural food producers brand that I consider has a consistence quality.	4.0250	1.01959
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.9733</b>	

The mean score for perceived and consistent product quality was (4.06 and 4.025). This indicates that respondents consider the product quality of a brand when they purchase cultural foods products. Consumers make brand choice decision depending on the perceptions they have about the perceived quality and the consistency of that quality. The average mean 3.9733 indicates that quality highly determine the brand preference of the cultural products brand.

**Table 9 Descriptive Statistics Brand Preference**

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
I usually choose well-promoted brands	3.0950	1.03990
I usually choose a brand with attractive package	2.9450	.96781
I usually choose the least price brand	2.6700	1.04718
I usually buy widely available brand	3.3650	.95200
I usually choose the best quality brand	4.2400	.94704

## **4.2 Inferential Statistic**

### **4.2.1 Correlation Analysis**

This study employs the correlation analysis, which investigates the strength of relationships between the studied variables. Convergent validity was demonstrated using Pearson correlation analysis. The magnitude and direction of relationships (positive or negative) as well as the severity of the link (-1.0 to +1.0) are revealed by Pearson correlation coefficients. The most fundamental and practical measure of relationship between two or more variables is correlation (Marczyk, Dematteo and Festinger, 2005). According to Marczyk, Dematteo, and Festinger (2005), correlations between.01 and.30 are minor, correlations between.30 and.70 are moderate, correlations between.70 and.90 are big, and correlations between.90 and 1.00 are very large. Depending on this assumption, all basic constructs were included into the correlation analysis and a bivariate two tailed correlation analysis was done.

**Table 10 Correlation Analysis**

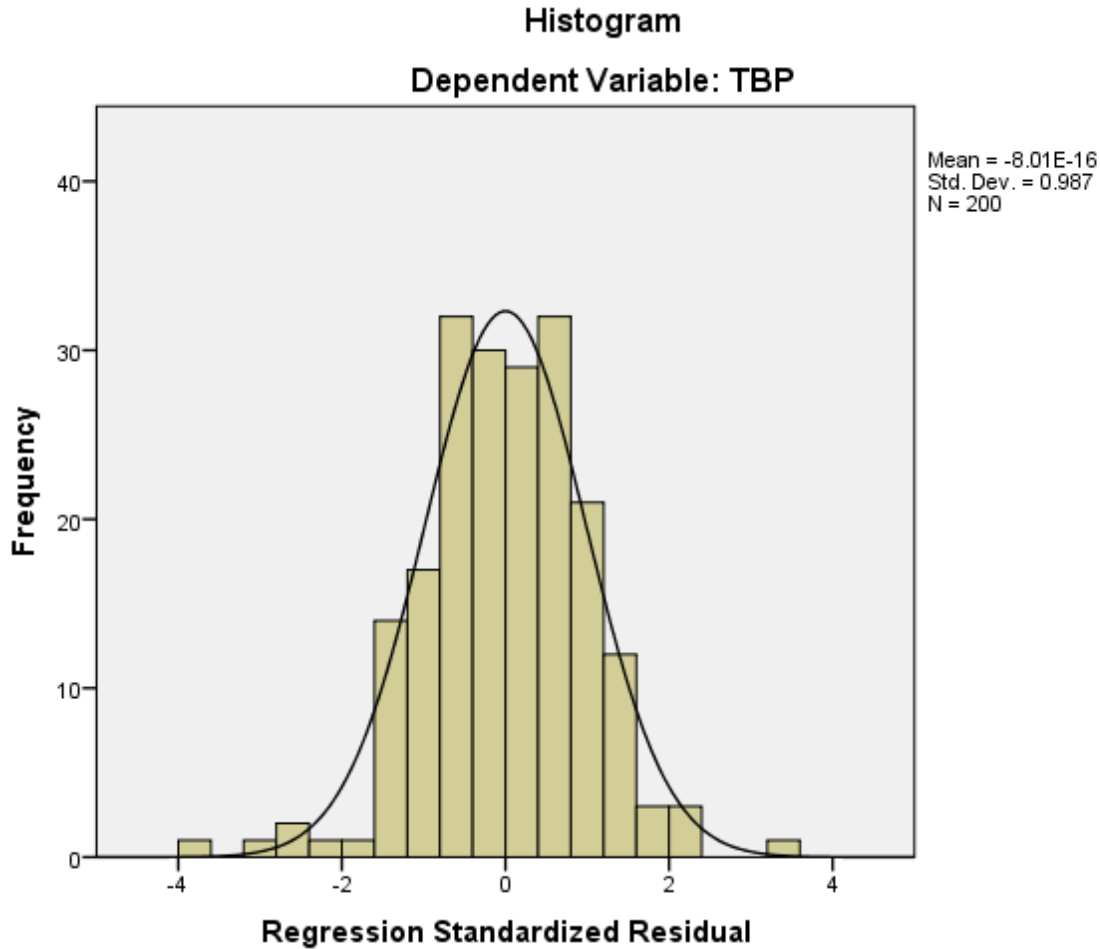
	Advertisement	Packaging	Price	Availability	Quality	Brand preference
Advertisement	1					
Packaging	.429**	1				
Price	.366**	.259**	1			
Availability	.254**	.149*	.382**	1		
Quality	.205**	.341**	.098	.091	1	
Brand preference	.485**	.273**	.428**	.444**	.217**	1

The results of correlation analysis in the table show that advertisement, price and quality moderately correlated with the dependent variable whereas quality and packaging have weak correlation with the dependent variable brand preference. The highest correlation is signified by Advertising ( $r=0.485$ ), followed by packaging and price ( $r=0.429$ ) and ( $r=0.366$ ). Availability and quality with the weak correlation ( $r=0.254$ ) and ( $r=0.205$ )

#### **4.2.2 Test for Linear Regression Model Assumptions**

##### **4.2.2.1 Normality Assumption**

It is also crucial to check the distribution of the error term or the disturbance term before embarking into discussion of the regression result. To check the normality of the distribution of the error term or the disturbance term the graphical approach has been applied. In the graphical approach the histogram is drawn for the error term and the command density is used to evaluate if the histogram resembles a normal distribution shape. As it can be seen clearly from the histogram drawn below one can deduce that the histogram roughly resembles a normal distribution shape. Despite individual subjectivity it is kind of first impression towards the nature of normality. From the graph one can conclude that the error term is roughly normal.

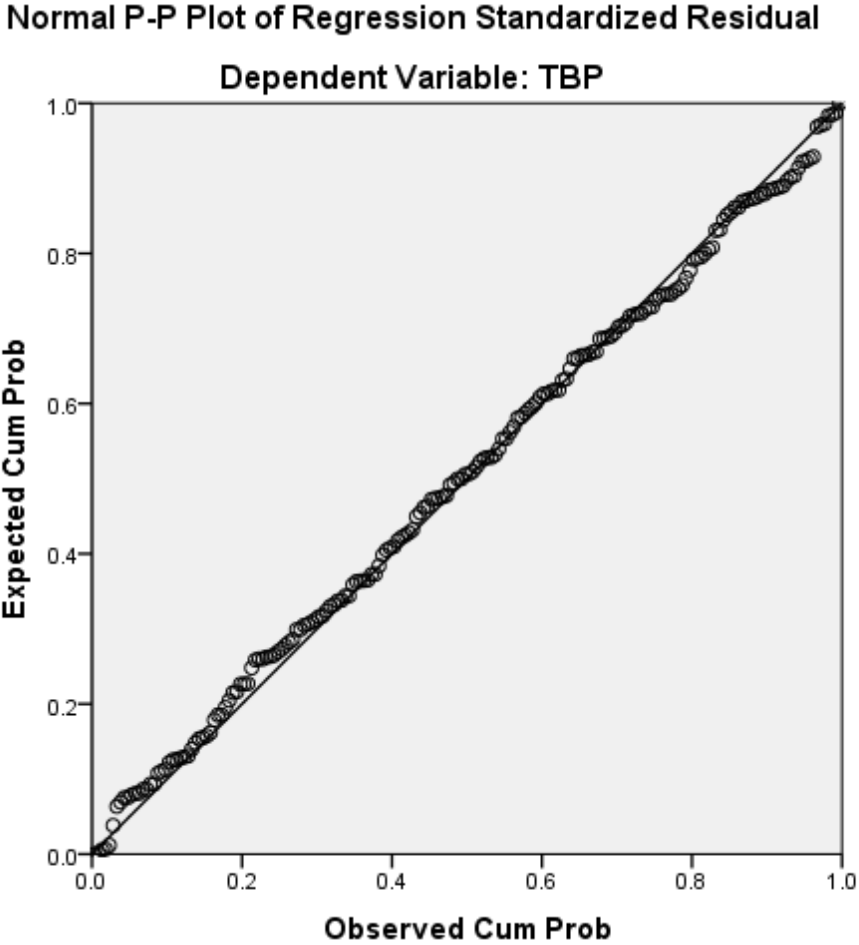


#### 4.2.2.2. Linearity Test

Linearity test is among the diagnosis tests to be conducted before embarking the main regression analysis. One of the basic assumptions of a classical linear regression model is that the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variables is linear. Thus, we have to assure that the relation between the variables is linear before making inference and conclusion based on a linear model.

The relationship between the dependent and independent variables is expected to be linear when the lines on the graph sheet or more or less the same. On the other hand, departure of the lines on the graph sheet from each other proves non-linear nature of relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

As it can be seen from the figure presented below have shown proved that the lines along both graphs found to exactly the same which is an evidence supporting linearity. This shows that the relationship between brand preference and the five covariates is linear and as such non-linearity is shouldn't be a concern for this study.



#### 4.2.2.3 Multi-collinearity test

Multi-collinearity refers to the case in which two or more explanatory variables in the regression model are highly correlated, making it difficult or impossible to isolate their individual effects on the dependent variable (Salvatore and Reagle, 2002, p.206). Tolerance and variance inflation factor or VIF are the two collinearity diagnostic factors that can be used to assess Multi-collinearity problem among explanatory variables.

According to Robert (2006) The VIF is computed as “1/tolerance,” and it is suggested that predictor variables whose VIF values are greater than 10 are indicators of a Multi-collinearity problem and tolerance is computed as  $1-R^2$  and it is suggested that a tolerance which value is less than 0.2 should be further investigated.

**Table 11 Multi-collinearity**

Independent Variables.	Tolerance	VIF
Advertising	.733	1.365
Packaging	.739	1.353
Price	.766	1.305
availability	.838	1.193
Quality	.879	1.138

#### 4.3 Regression Analysis

To study the effect the factors listed to affect consumer brand preference this research used multiple regression analysis. The model was analyzed by using all four selected factors which are advertising, taste, price and packaging. These analysis tells us how much of the variability on brand preference is due to the listed factors.

**Table 12 Model Summary Table**

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
.621a	.385	.370

- a. Predictors:(Constant), quality ,availability ,advertisement price packaging
- b. Dependent Variable: brand preference

R value is the absolute value of the Pearson correlation between the dependent variable and independent variable (Kinnear and Gray, 2010). In this study the R value is .621. The R square number tells you how much of the variation in the dependent variable is explained by the model (Pallant, 2013: 161). The multiple correlation coefficient, often known as the coefficient of determination, spans from 0 to 1. The closer the value of R square is to 1, the more dependent variable variances are explained by the model. The R square value of this study is 0.385, as seen in the table above. This suggests that the independent variable accounts for 38.5 percent of the variance in Brand Preference in this study, while the remaining 61.5 percent is due to unknown variables.

**Table 14 Coefficients Table**

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	significance
	B	Std. Error	beta		
Constant	5.909	1.050		5.627	.000
Advertisement	.390	.081	.318	4.843	.000
Packaging	.013	.083	.010	.159	.874
Price	.292	.098	.191	2.975	.003
Availability	.384	.085	.279	4.537	.000
Quality	.070	.041	.104	1.727	.086

The coefficient table for factors affecting brand preference indicates the beta values of the Independent variables. From this the regression equation is derived. A **regression equation** is a statistical model that determined the specific relationship between the predictor variable and the outcome variable. A model regression equation allows you to predict the outcome with a relatively small amount of error.

$$Y_i = b_0 + b_1 X_i + \varepsilon_i$$

In this model,  $Y_i$  represents an *outcome variable* and  $X_i$  represents its corresponding *predictor variable*. The equation also contains numerical relationships between the predictor and the outcome. The term  $b_0$  represents an intercept for the model if the predictor be a zero value. You could consider it something like a baseline or control point. The term  $b_i$  represents the numerical relationship between the predictor variable and the outcome for the  $i^{\text{th}}$  term.

In this research there were 5 independent variables identified as factors affecting customer brand preference which are advertisement, package, price, availability and quality.

Regression Equation:

$Y_i = b_0 + b_1 x_1 + b_2 x_2 + b_3 x_3 + b_4 x_4 + b_5 x_5 + \text{stochastic error}$

**$Y_i = 5.909 + 0.390x_1 + 0.13x_2 + 0.292x_3 + 0.384x_4 + 0.070x_5 + 0.86x_4 + e$**

Where:

$X_1$  = Advertisement

$X_2$  = package

$X_3$  = Price

$X_4$  = availability

$X_5$  = quality

## **CHAPTER 5 - SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This is the last chapter of the research. A summary of the findings, the overall conclusion, recommendations, and research limitations are described in this chapter. The goal of this study was to look at the elements that influence brand preference, specifically in the case of cultural food manufacturers.

### **5.1 Summary**

Based on the data analysis the major findings are summarized as follows:

- The data was collected based on the research questions using structured questionnaires. In order to get the data, the questionnaires had been distributed to 384 respondents who purchases cultural food producers brand from supermarkets and shops. From the total distributed questionnaire 200 was collected. Data analysis was done through the use of SPSS 20 version as well as Microsoft Excel 2007.
- Out of the total population 66% of the respondents were female and 34% were male. Hence the majority of the respondents were female. Majority of the respondents are between the ages of 26 to 35 consisting of 57% of the respondents. Based On education 55% respondents were first degree holders. From the total respondents 63.5% of them were married.
- From data analysis the Cronbach's Alpha of this study for brand preference was 0.739 which shows that there is internal consistency among the variables.
- Selam baltena ,elas kolo and beferekot baltena stood first to third in the brand preference of the respondents'.
- The correlation results show that three independent variables (advertisement, packaging and price) are moderately correlated and two variables (availability and quality) have week correlation with brand preference. The highest correlation number was found between advertisement and brand preference ( $r=.485$ ), followed by packaging( $r=.429$ ), in third place price ( $r=.366$ ) forth availability ( $r=.254$ ) and lastly quality ( $r=.205$ ).

- The result of regression analysis showed that the R Square value was .385 and this implied factors affecting brand preference (predictors) constitute for 38.5% of the variation in brand preference.

## 5.2 Conclusions

The study was carried out to investigate factors affecting consumer brand preference; the case of cultural food producers brand. The factors were Advertisement, packaging, Price, availability and quality. All the five factors were found to have a positive effect on brand preference but not in equal dimension. This means advertisement, price and availability were selected as a major factor in the consumers brand preference. According to the research analysis consumers responded quality and packaging were found to be insignificant in their brand choice of the cultural food products.

Regarding advertisement most cultural food producer's brands are not advertised well. Among the products that are well known in the markets are selam baltena, elsa kolo and etsub selam baltena is the one that is mostly advertised. Respondents indicate that advertisement is one of the factor that affects their brand preference of cultural food products.

In terms of packaging the respondents indicated it has an insignificant effect on the brand of cultural products they purchase. Since all the producers use the same type of packaging customers do not recognize it and make it a factor to choose their brands.

Price was indicated as a significant factor in the brand preference of the cultural products. Affordability has a great impact in the choice of any product. Since cultural food products(baltena) are a major food ingredients for Ethiopian food customers are very sensitive for the prices. As we can infer from the research affordability determines their brand preference of cultural food products.

Literally Wide availability of any product in the market will determine ones brand preference for any product. From the research we can infer that the availability has its own impact on the cultural food producer's brand. Baltena products are used in a daily food consumption of any Ethiopians. Therefore they have to widely available for the consumers. Among the five independent variables quality was chosen as an insignificant for the brand preference of customers.

Over all the study concludes among the listed factors; advertisement, price and availability were found as a significant factor whereas, packaging and quality were found insignificant.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

The purchasing of prepared foods from the supermarkets or shops is a recent phenomenon in Ethiopia. Most Ethiopians prefer food staffs that are prepared at home. But the growth of urbanization and life style change in the cities brings the commercialization of cultural food products in the markets. Currently different types of cultural food products are available in different supermarkets and also habit of purchasing them have increased a lot. Here are the recommendations from the study;

Most cultural food products are not advertised on Medias. In order to increase their market share and expand their customer base producers have to advertise their products. As we can infer from the respondents' advertisement has an impact for their brand preference of cultural products. Therefore in order to increase their market share get many customers the producers have to advertise their products widely.

Because of the expansion of urbanization and life style change there is still a wide market for new comers. Even though the researcher only selects the widely known brands, there is many cultural food producers' brand that are found in the markets. Since price is also among the determinants of the brand preference, the price of their product has to take in to consideration the purchasing power of their customers.

As cultural food products are basic food ingredients of Ethiopian foods, they have to be widely available to the customers. Every customer of the products needs to found them in their nearer markets or shops. Therefore producers have to work hard for the easily availability of their products. Most of our respondents are women in the age of 26 to 35 who are sensitive for their brand preference on the products they purchase. Therefore producers have to give due attention what their customers want from their product.

### **5.3 Limitation of the Study**

Every scientific research is faced with limitation and this research is not an exception in this regarded. The first limitation was there was no previous study that shows the factors affecting

cultural food producer's brand. So there was lack of data that describes about the cultural food products industry.

The limitations sited in here are as recommendations for future researchers who are interested in investigating factors affecting consumer brand preference.

The researcher finds out advertisement, packaging, price, availability and quality will only responsible for the 38.5 % variation in brand preference which indicates that there are other variables that are responsible for the variation. Therefore in order to fully examine factors affecting brand preference additional dimensions should be included to investigate its effect.

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## Questionnaire

Dear respondents

The objective of this survey is to gather, analyze, and synthesize relevant, accurate, sufficient, and timely information that will provide insights about “factors affecting customers’ choice in the case of cultural food producers brand in Addis Ababa.”. The result of the study will assist marketers in developing a better marketing strategy that can improve their existing offering and satisfy customers in a better way possible. The information you provide in this survey will be used for the stated purpose and it will be held confidential. Taking part in this survey is completely voluntary and anonymous. The questionnaire will take no more than 20 minutes. Your co-operation is highly appreciated!

Thank you in advance for your kind cooperation.

Frehiwot Alemu

(Graduate Student Addis Ababa University, School of Commerce)

### Part I: General Profile (please put a $\sqrt$ mark on the box that best describes you)

1. Age: 18- 25  26- 35  36-45
2. Gender: Female  Male
3. Highest educational level obtained: Primary education  Secondary education  First degree  second degree & above  XX
4. Monthly income less than 5000  from 5001-10000  from 10001 - 15000  above 15000
5. Marital status: single  married

### Part II: Brand awareness, source of information and reason for brand preference

1. What is the first brand that comes to your mind when you think of cultural food producers’ brand?

Please rank your preference of baltena producers brands from the list below.

Name of the cultural food producers brand	Rank	Name of the cultural food producers brand	Rank
Selam baltena			
Elsa kolo			
Beferekot baltena			
Almaz baltena			
Etsub baltena			

### Part-III: Underlying Factors of Brand Choice

Instruction: Please select the degree of agreement/disagreement with respect to the following statements associated with factors affecting Brand choice by placing a  $\surd$  mark that best describe your view. Where, SDA= Strongly Disagree; DA=Disagree; N-Neutral; A=Agree; SA=Strongly Agree.

S. No	Statements	SDA	DA	N	A	SA
AD1	Advertisements have influence over the cultural food producers brand I buy					
AD2	I buy a cultural food producers brand that I frequently exposed through advertisement.					
<b>AD3</b>	I buy a cultural food producers brand, which has attractive and recognizable advertisement					
PG4	I choose cultural food producers brand, which has my preferred package size					
PG5	I prefer a cultural food producers brand with a convenient package shape (easy to carry)					
PG6	Visual appeal of packaging influence my brand choice					
PR7	I buy what is affordable for me.					
PR8	Low price is one of my priorities when making a buying decision					
PR9	I am willing to pay a higher price for my preferred cultural food producers' brand.					
AV10	I prefer a cultural food producers brand, which is widely available					
AV11	I buy any kind of cultural food producers brand I found in my surrounding					
AV12	If my preferred brand is not available in the store, I will buy any kind of cultural food					

	producers' brand that is available.					
PQ13	I buy a cultural food producers' brand which I perceive as a high quality					
PQ14	I buy balena products that is produced as per acceptable quality standard and ingredients					
PQ15	I buy cultural food producers brand that I consider has a consistence quality.					

**Part-IV: Consumers Brand Choice Decision**

**Instruction:** Please select the degree of agreement/disagreement with respect to the following statements associated with Consumer brand choice by placing a  $\checkmark$  mark on the alternative that best describe your view. Where, SD= Strongly Disagree; DA=Disagree; N-Neutral; A=Agree; SA=Strongly Agree.

		<b>SDA</b>	<b>DA</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
1.	I usually choose well-promoted brands					
2.	I usually choose a brand with attractive package					
3.	I usually choose the least price brand					
4.	I usually buy widely available brand					
5.	I usually choose the best quality brand					

If there are any additional factors that affect your brand (cultural food producers) choice, you can list on the space provided below.

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