CONSUMER PERCEPTION OF THE TASTE QUALITY OF A DRINK AND ITS EFFECTIVENESS ACCORDING TO THE BRAND AND TYPE OF GLASS IN WHICH IT IS SERVED: THE CASE OF AN ENERGY DRINK

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Abstract

The brand has an impact on the consumer, on his perception of product quality and the expected user experience. In the present study, we investigated the impact of the brand on consumer's perception of taste and energy efficiency of tested energy drinks and wanted to confirm the impact of irrational (emotional) perception of taste quality of tested energy drinks and their energy efficiency. The testes were users of energy drinks and were familiar with the energy drinks they tested. Their decisions relied solely on their own experience and knowledge. We investigated the impact of properties that are not related to product components and confirmed the assumption that these properties play an important role in developing a competitive advantage. A study of S-Budget, Monster and Red Bull energy drinks showed the influential power of the brand in all cases. It also demonstrated how the perception of the taste quality and energy efficiency of the tested beverages is affected by the shape of the glass in which a particular brand is tested.

Key Words

Brand; perception; taste quality; energy efficiency; energy drink.

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INTRODUCTION

Numerous case studies and some previous tests have shown that a brand influences product perception (Rigaux-Bricmont, 1982). Also, different types of glasses affect the perceived level of beverage quality (Cliff, 2001; Newton, 2015). If respondents do not know what kind of drink is located in the same type of glasses, their answers are independent of factors that are not the characteristics of the product and focus only on the characteristics of the product itself. For example, the popular Coca Cola and Pepsi test showed that the brand has a very strong influence on taste perception. When participants did not know which brands they tried, they rated Pepsi as better than Coca Cola, but when they tried a drink and knew which brands they were testing, most rated Coca Cola as tasting better (Yglesias, 2013). Our research will try to confirm the theses on the influence of glasses and the influence of the brand on the quality of taste and energy efficiency of three selected energy drinks.

BACKGROUND, IDEA DEVELOPMENT, IDEA FRAMEWORK

Impact of value added (effect)

Many basic product characteristics can be enriched with characteristics that are not directly related to the physical product itself (Agyekum et al., 2015). As published by Rao and Monroe (1989), “Meta analyzes show that for consumer products, the relationship between price and perceived quality and between brand and perceived quality is positive and statistically significant”. As stated in the literature: “Brands act as a prism that upgrades the objective properties of a product by creating new / additional perceptions and associations.” (Calkins, 2005, Gabrijan and Snoj, 2012). In the competitive market a product can stand out with using its properties, but it must be unique in certain properties and have significant advantages over competitors in the form of new / additional features, But if the product cannot compete with product advantages, the market advantage can be achieved through intangible values that become product added values. This is how brand equity is created. Keller (1993, p. 1) defines brand equity: “Brand equity is the effect of the marketing of a brand on its knowledge and consequently on consumer response to it.” Brand equity is the result of past investment in its marketing and is the acquired product added value, directed to the customer's minds.The brand equity shapes the customer's mental image of the brand (Riezebos, 2003) .The biggest challenge is to create positive perceptions by providing the relevant product experience, where both functional and emotional experiences are linked to the product (Ramanjaneyalu et al., 2013). Thus, brand perception is an image that a brand creates in the minds of customers through a variety of connections and associations (Pompe, 2017). One way to understand what a brand equity is to understand the results of product benchmarking.

Perception

The process of perception consists of exposure, attention and interpretation (Vukasović, 2012, pp. 99–100). Woodruff (1997, p. 142) points out that “value systems shape customer perceptions, preferences, and evaluations”. Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) said that "perceived quality is a special type of association, partly because it affects brand associativity in different contexts, and partly because it has been empirically proven to generate profitability." Perception is not only conditioned by physical stimuli, but also by the relationship between these stimuli and the environment and the client's internal state (Kotler in Konečnik, 2011, p. 88). According to Zeithaml (1988), perceived quality is “the consumer’s judgment of overall product excellence or redundancy”. Perceived product quality is the consumer's perception of all components of a product - both tangible and intangible properties (Vantamay, 2008). Intangible characteristics include a brand that becomes stereotyped over time and represents a certain consumer belief about labelled products (Kervyn et al., 2012; Kolbl, 2018), and such beliefs can guide consumer perceptions (e.g., brand ratings), intentions (e.g. purposes of purchase) and actual behavior (e.g., brand ownership) (Kervyn et al., 2012). Thus, marketers face some fundamental issues. One is the influence of the brand and the other is the effect of the offer / presentation / packaging of the product. The issues we face in this article are:

- How the perceived quality of glasses affects the perception of the quality of taste and energy efficiency of tested energy drinks?
- How the consumer's knowledge of energy drink brands affects their perception of taste quality and energy efficiency?
- How well can the buyers / users of the researched energy drink brands recognize them?

The power of a brand is a component of customer's knowledge, feelings and experiences with brand, gained over time. Similar, this can be asserted with the perception of different shapes of the same types of objects (in our case glasses). The challenge for marketers, while creating an influential brand, is to ensure that customers have the right kind of experience with products and services and accompanying marketing messages, so that the desired thoughts, feelings, images, beliefs, opinions and perceptions are the same as the manufacturer / marketer wants to create. In our article, we found out how the perceptions of the studied energy drinks, which do not derive from their basic characteristics, affect the quality of taste and energy efficiency of the researched product.

Benchmarking

One of the fundamental conclusions of the “Pepsi paradox” described by Lone Frank in Science American is that we should accept the possibility of brand perception prevailing over the actual property of the product. Coca Cola’s victory is a brand’s victory over taste and a clear sign that companies producing consumer products need to invest a lot of money in creating quality awareness (Frank, 2009). Researchers who were

enthralled by the paradox, suggest that Coke's ads actually change the human brain. Another example, Larry Percy did an experiment with beer tasting, showed how consumers are able to differentiate if they know which brand of beer they drink and how little difference they can perceive if they don't know the brands of beer. Good connoisseurs-consumers also have trouble distinguishing between brands. When consumers choose products with or without a brand, it is found that knowledge of the brand changes their perception. Thus, consumers 'perceptions of product quality, performance, and performance are highly dependent on their perceptions and impressions created about the brand (Ramanjaneyalu et al., 2013).

On the other hand, Margaret Cliff (2001) proved that "a wine glass significantly affects the overall perceived intensity and color of wines". As he says, there is little published scientific information on the interaction between drink, glass and drink perception and it is mostly technical information from producers who, for example, claim that "certain wine glasses are optimized for a particular type of wine." Most publications also do not distinguish between sensory influences, aesthetic perception, and hedonistic evaluation. In fact, it is more about the results of advertising and marketing glasses, which creates a certain perception, which is biased and involves various aesthetic and cognitive influences associated with the use of certain glasses (Fischer, 1999).

CONCEPT

Our emphasis was on the quality of taste and energy efficiency of three different and well-known brands of energy drinks in Slovenia, each of which represents a different price range. The testes were users of energy drinks and were familiar with the energy drinks they tested. Their decisions relied solely on their own experience and knowledge.

Objective of the study: To understand the consumer's perception of taste and energy efficiency of different energy drinks. We wanted to confirm the influence of irrational (emotional) perception of the taste quality of tested energy drinks and their energy efficiency and understand the influence of properties that are not related to product ingredients and confirm the assumption that these properties play an important role in developing competitive advantage.

Fundamental questions of the study: Do the different type and quality of glasses in which the researched energy drinks are served affect the perception of taste quality and their perceived energy efficiency? Will the taste quality of the energy drink and its perceptual effectiveness differ when we compare two different tests, in the first test takers will try drinks from different glasses and in the second test from the same glasses? If participants know in which glass the drink of a certain brand is (assuming that all glasses are of the same quality), will the brand affect the perceived taste quality and the perceived energy efficiency of the drinks studied?

Our hypotheses:

H1: Different levels of glass quality affect the perception of the quality of the taste and the energy efficiency of energy drinks.
H2: A product comparison without the influence of non-product elements reflects a real attitude towards the perceived quality and efficiency of the product.
H3: The perceived quality of an energy drink brand affects the quality of the taste and its energy efficiency.
H4: Blind recognition of a particular brand of energy drink is rare.

This paper also seeks to understand whether non-product-related associations play an important role in product differentiation.

METHODOLOGY

To understand the impact of the brand's intangible assets on the perception of taste quality and energy efficiency of energy drinks, we performed comparative testing. In addition, we also tested the influence of the type of glass on the perceived taste quality and on the perceived energy efficiency of energy drinks. We measured the consumer preferences and the decisions of participants relied solely on their own experience and knowledge. We used a taste quality test in which participants tested drinks in both different glasses and in the same glasses without knowing the brand. To this test we added a test in which participants know which brand they are testing. We collected and analyzed perceptions of taste quality and energy efficiency of the product and compared the results. It turned out that in each of the tests (test # 1, test # 2 and test # 3) the results were different.

Research sources: Primary and secondary data were used to achieve the study objective. Primary data were obtained by testing taste and energy efficiency. Secondary information was obtained from various books, magazines and Internet sources.

Researched population: Consumers of soft drinks - students from Slovenia. Age 19 to 22 years. Even distribution by gender (approx. 50:50).

Sample: 30 participants

RESEARCH

The research is based on tasting three energy drink brands: Red Bull, Monster and S-Budget (Spar brand). Four separate tests were performed and each of the performed tests was based on two configurations:

1. we used three different types of glasses, each filled with one of the researched energy drinks, and
2. we used three identical glasses, each filled with one of the researched energy drinks.

In tests # 1, # 2, and # 4, except for test # 3, participants did not know which energy drink was in a particular glass (they could not associate the drink with its brand). In test # 1, we used three types of glasses: a plastic glass, a regular glass of water and a wine glass. For tests # 1, # 2 and # 4, the glasses were pre-filled with tested drinks. Only the researcher knew which glass contained a particular drink. The research was conducted individually; each participant was alone with the researchers. The entire survey was videotaped. Participants were encouraged to define their perception of the taste quality and energy efficiency of each of the energy drinks served. The amount in each glass was limited and participants were advised to test in small sips. The task of each test subject was: (a) to determine the taste quality of beverages with two levels of quality: best taste, worst taste and (b) to assess the perceived energy efficiency of beverages by assigning two levels of efficiency: most efficient and least effective. In Experiment # 1, # 2, and # 4, participants did not know which brand they were tasting, only the researcher knew.

TESTING DESCRIPTION

Test # 1 - testing the impact of different glasses on the perceived quality and energy efficiency of energy drinks

Participants tested three energy drinks, each filled in different types of glasses: a plastic glass (filled with Red Bull), a regular water glass (filled with Monster), and a wine glass (filled with S-Budget). The amount of each drink in each glass was the same. Participants, not knowing in which glass each of the three drinks was located, tested each drink and assessed its taste quality and perceived energy efficiency. The researcher wrote down all the answers. The procedure was the same for each test participant.

Test # 2 - Blindly test the quality and energy efficiency of energy drinks

There were samples of energy drinks in three identical plastic glasses labelled A, B, and C: Red Bull, Monster, and S-Budget. Only the researcher knew which drink was labelled with a particular letter. The amount of each drink in each glass was the same. Participants, not knowing in which glass each of the three drinks was located, tested each drink and assessed their taste quality and perceived effectiveness. The researcher wrote down all the answers. The procedure was the same for each test subject.

Test # 3 - testing the impact of different brands of energy drinks on the perceived quality and energy efficiency of energy drinks

Each brand of energy drink was poured into a separate empty plastic glass in front of each participant. Thus, the test subjects knew which drink was in which glass, but they were not labelled. In one was both Red Bull, in the second Monster and in the third S-Budget. Next to each plastic glass, we placed the corresponding branded can of energy drink so that the participants knew at all times which drink was in which glass. The amount

of drink filled was the same for all drinks. Participants, knowing where a particular brand of beverage is located, ranked taste quality and perceived energy efficiency.

Test # 4

In three identical plastic cups labelled with the letters A, B, and C, were filled with samples of energy drinks: Red Bull, Monster, and S-Budget. Only the researcher knew which drink was where. The amount of each drink in each glass was the same. Participants, not knowing where a particular energy drink brand was, had to tell which brand was in which plastic cup. The researcher wrote down all the answers. The procedure was the same for each participant.

THE RESULTS

Test # 1 - testing the impact of different glasses on the perceived quality and energy efficiency of energy drinks

Respondents tried different brands of energy drinks from three different types of glasses that had been prefilled and placed on a table in front of each individual respondent. Respondents did not know which drink was in a particular glass, only the researcher knew. Glass wine glass contained S-Budget drink, water glass contained Monster drink and plastic glass was filled with Red Bull drink. We researched the best taste, the worst taste, the highest energy efficiency and the lowest energy efficiency.

The best taste. Half (50%) of the respondents claimed that the drink served in a wine glass (S-Budget brand) tastes the best. 37% thought that the drink in the water glass (Monster brand) tastes best and only 13% attributed the best taste to the drink in a plastic glass (Red Bull brand).

The worst taste. Less than a half of respondents (44%) thought that the drink in the water glass (Monster brand) had the worst taste, 31% thought that this was true of a drink in a plastic glass (Red Bull brand) and one quarter chose a drink in a wine glass (S-Budget brand) as the one with the worst taste

By comparing the influence of wine glass on taste, we found that the elegant shape of the glass in half of the participants influences the selection of the best taste, while the decision on the worst taste was influenced by such glasses only in a quarter of cases. In the case of the impact of the water glass, an equivalent impact was detected at both extremes, while the plastic glass, given its comparable lowest quality level, had a large impact on the small attribution in determining the best taste. It is also interesting to note that the majority of participants mostly decided between glass cups in determining the quality and to a lesser extent referred to a plastic glass, which suggests that glass cups are more attractive to participants.

The chi square test showed a value of HI2 = 4.22, with a probability of p = 0.12 which means that the results are not statistically significant.

Table 1: Testing the effect of different glasses on perceived quality of taste of energy drinks

	The best taste		The worst taste	
Type of glass	f	%	f	%
wine glass	15	50	8	25
water glass	11	37	13	44
plastic cup	4	13	9	31
	30	100	30	100

Source: Own survey.

Maximum efficiency. The perceived energy efficiency was not significantly different (4 percentage point deviation) among those who opted for a glass cup (wine glass - S-Budget brand; water glass – Monster brand). 89% of all participants opted for a glass jar. The remaining 19% thought that a drink in a plastic glass was the most effective (Red Bull brand).

Minimum efficiency. As many as 63 percent of testers agreed that a drink in a plastic glass was the least effective (Red Bull brand), a quarter thought it was a drink in the wine glass (S-Budget brand), and a good tenth attributed the lowest energy efficiency to drinks in the water glass (Monster brand). Perceived energy efficiency was affected in almost 2/3 of cases by a glass of the lowest quality, and both glass cups together accounted for 37 percent.

By comparing the influence of the type of glass on efficiency, we found that the perceived obviously lowest quality glass (plastic) has a significant effect on the lowest energy efficiency of the tested drink, as it exceeds this by 13 percentage points from the average influence of glasses. The impact of a wine glass is 25 percentage points on average, and a glass of water is even 38 percentage points. In the variable 'maximum efficiency', the pronounced influence of both types of glass was not shown (both between 37% and 44%), but in the total they both had a significant effect on the perceived energy efficiency (89%).

The hi square test showed a value of HI2 = 12.52, with a probability of p = 0.02, which means that we can confirm the results as statistically significant.

Table 2: Testing the influence of different glasses on the perceived energy efficiency of energy drinks

	Maximum efficiency		Minimum efficiency	
Type of glass	f	%	f	%
wine glass	13	44	8	25
water glass	11	37	3	12
plastic cup	6	19	19	63

	30	100	30	100

Source: Own survey.

Test # 2 - blind testing the quality and energy efficiency of energy drinks

The energy drinks were previously poured into three identical plastic cups labeled with the letters A (Red Bull brand), B (S-Budget brand) and C (Monster brand), so respondents could not know which glass contained the drink of a particular brand. The questions we were interested in were the same as in the first test: the quality of the taste and the energy efficiency of the energy drink.

The best taste. Half of the respondents said that the drink in glass A (Red Bull brand) tasted the best, just under a third attributed the best taste to the drink in glass B (S-Budget brand) and a good fifth in glass C (Monster brand)***.***

The worst taste. The worst-taste was attributed by 43 percent to the drink in glass B (S-Budget brand), 29% to the drink in glass A (Red Bull brand) and 28% to that in glass C (Monster brand).

The chi square test showed a value of HI2 = 3.56, with a probability of p = 0.16 which means that the results cannot be confirmed as statistically significant.

Table 3: Blind testing of the taste quality of energy drinks.

	Best taste		Worst taste	
Plastic glass	f	%	f	%
A	15	50	8	28
B	9	29	13	43
C	6	21	9	29
	30	100	30	100

Source: Own survey.

Maximum efficiency. The highest energy efficiency (50% of responses) was attributed to the drink in glass C (Monster brand), a few less (43%) to the glass A (Red Bull brand) and only 7% of respondents recognized the most efficient the drink in glass B (S-Budget brand).

Minimum efficiency Fifty-seven percent of respondents chose the drink in glass B (S-Budget brand) as the least energy efficient, while the other two drinks (glass A - 21% and glass C 22%) were less represented in the definition of minimum efficiency.

The hi square test showed a value of HI2 = 21.40, with a probability of p = 0.0002 which means that we can confirm the results as statistically significant.

Table 4: Blind testing of energy efficiency of energy drinks

Maximum efficency	Minimum efficiency

Plastic glass	f	%	f	%
A	13	43	6	21
B	2	7	17	57
C	15	50	7	22
	30	100	30	100

Source: Own survey.

Respondents fluctuated between glasses A and C in terms of maximum energy efficiency, with the drink in glass C (Monster brand) being the most represented with 50%. In a negligible proportion, the beverage in glass B (S-Budget brand) was selected as the most efficient, and therefore stood out in the definition of the lowest energy efficiency with just under 60% of attributions. The other two drinks had almost the same percentage of energy inefficiency attributions (each with just over 1/5 of the attributions). None of the beverages tested would be the most convincing in determining the best energy efficiency, and therefore the beverage in glass B has been shown to be the least energy efficient.

Test # 3 - testing the impact of different brands of energy drinks on the perceived quality and energy efficiency of energy drinks

The drinks were poured directly from original cans (Monster, S-Budget and Red Bull) in front of each participant, so that she or he had a clear information about which glass contained which brand. The questions we were interested in were the same as in the first and second tests.

The best taste. Half of the respondents attributed the best taste to Red Bull, Monster has the best taste for a good quarter of the respondents (28%), and a fifth believe that S-Budget has this property.

The worst taste. Among the tested drinks, 43% of the tested drinks attributed the worst taste to the S-Budget drink, and the other two drinks were evaluated in a similar percentage (just under 30% each).

The chi square test showed a value of HI2 = 32.15, with a probability of p = 0, 0006 which means that we can confirm the results as statistically significant.

Table 5: Testing the influence of different brands of energy drinks on the perceived taste quality of energy drinks

	Best taste		Worst taste	
Brand	f	%	f	%
S-Budget	15	22	8	43
Monster	11	28	13	29
Red Bull	4	50	9	28
	30	100	30	100

Source: Own survey.

Maximum efficiency. Half of the respondents (50%) chose Monster as the most energy efficient drink, followed by Red Bull with 44%, followed by S-Budget with 6%.

Minimum efficiency. Almost 60% of respondents declared S-Budget to be the least energy efficient, the other two drinks are each represented by just over 20%.

The hi square test showed a value of HI2 = 145.56, with a probability of p = 0.000, which means that we can confirm the results as statistically significant.

Table 6: Testing the impact of different brands of energy drinks on the perceived energy efficiency of energy drinks

	Maximum efficiency		Minimum efficiency	
Brand	f	%	f	%
S-Budget	13	6	13	6
Monster	11	50	11	50
Red Bull	8	44	8	44
	32	100	32	100

Source: Own survey.

Given the popularity and leadership of the Red Bull brand, test takers were expected to attribute both the best taste and energy efficiency to it, but the Monster brand turned out to be a very strong competitor in terms of energy efficiency, as it was awarded 6 percentage points more than the Red Bull brand. Red Bull was the most frequently chosen drink when choosing the best flavor (half of all attributions), while the other two were relatively evenly represented, with S-Budget being the worst (22%). The most energy inefficient is S-Budget (just under two thirds), while the other two drinks received 1/5 of each.

Test # 4 - Blind recognition of tested brands

All three energy drinks were pre-filled into plastic cups, so test takers did not know which glass contained a particular brand of energy drink. Glass A contained Monster drink, glass B S-Budget drink and glass C Red Bull drink. The testers tried to determine which cup contained one of the three brands tested. The results showed that in half of the cases, the test takers mixed between the flavors of the Red Bull and S-Budget brands, as 50% of them thought that the B glass contained Red Bull, even though it contained S-Budget. Only 38% of respondents correctly identified the Red Bull drink. Even with a glass of C filled with an S-Budget drink, the claims were wrong, as 44% of respondents thought it was Red Bull. The 69% of the participants correctly recognized which glass contained Monster, which points to the fact that this energy drink has a well-recognized taste.

The hi square test showed a value of HI2 = 24.71, with a probability of p = 0.000, which means that we can confirm the results as statistically significant.

Table 7: Blind identification of tested brands by tasting

	Red Bull		S-Budget		Monster	
Glass - Brand	f	%	f	%	f	%
A - Monster	3	12	8	25	**20**	**69**
B - S-Budget	15	50	**9**	**31**	3	12
C - Red Bull	**12**	**38**	13	44	7	19
	30	100	30	100	30	100

Source: Own survey.

FINDINGS

This study unequivocally showed that associations unrelated to product characteristics play an important role in their differentiation and preference. When participants did not know which brands they test, they found that the drink tasted best in a wine glass, even though it contained a low-priced S-Budget brand drink. But once they knew which brand they were drinking, they thought the Red Bull drink tasted the best. The elegant wine glass impressed the participants and added irrational value to the perception of taste. This result confirms that the taste quality of a product (in our case an energy drink) is influenced not only by the brand, but also by the type of glass and the attractiveness of the way the product is presented (drink served). When the test subjects perceived the drink served in the wine glass as more attractive, it gained a different perception of properties, in our case better taste quality and higher energy value, but when the test subjects perceived a certain glass as something average or less valuable, this also reflected in the assessment of perceived taste quality and energy efficiency. When the glass was no longer a variable and the subjects rated the drink as such, with no additional influencing elements and relied only on their sense of taste, the ratings of taste quality and energy efficiency were assessed differently. However, when they were influenced by the brand, they chose according to how they perceived each brand and the results were again different.

Table 8: Comparison of tests # 1, # 2 and # 3.

Energy drink property	Test #1	Test #2	Test #3
best taste	S-Budget	Monster	Red Bull
worst taste	Monster	S-Budget	S-Budget
maximum efficiency	S-Budget	Monster	Monster
minimum efficiency	Red Bull	S-Budget	S-Budget

Source: Own survey.

Table 9: Blind recognition of energy drink brands - test # 4.

Energijska pijača	Correct recognition	False recognition
S-Budget	31%	69%
Monster	69%	31%
Red Bull	38%	62%

Source: Own survey.

Tests have shown that the same product (factory-packaged drinks were tested in all tests) is perceived differently each time, whether it is the influence of factors that are not directly related to the actual properties of the product (different glass and brand) or when testing without additional impacts.

Exclusively test # 2 showed an objective assessment of the respondents on the quality of taste and on the energy efficiency of the studied drinks. The results we obtained with the third test showed an actual picture of people's opinions about a particular brand of energy drinks tested.

In Test # 3, where test takers knew which drink was in which glass, testers identified S-Budget as a lower-end brand and expressed a negative opinion about its energy efficiency. This also influenced the opinion that it tastes the worst. In fact, people often perceive quality based on the price of a product, as consumers are mostly convinced that a lower price means a lower product quality and a higher one means better (DelVecchio, 2012). Similarly, researchers at the University of Texas, through field studies, experiments, and secondary data, found that consumers rely heavily on price as a starting point for quality assessment when choosing between different brands (University of Texas, Arlington, 2019). This suggests that the price of a product is not only a representative of the cost of preparing it for the market, but is an orientation that helps consumers judge the quality of products or brands and determine the expected level of satisfaction with use (Martins and Monroe, 1994; Brijball, 2003).

Test # 4, however, demonstrated the importance of distinctive taste in blindly identifying a particular brand. Interestingly, the Red Bull brand failed in this test (the test subjects mixed the Red Bull and S-Budget brands), which otherwise, as many studies and statements show, perceptually belongs to the very top of energy drinks. The Monster brand proved to be the best here.

DISCUSSION

Daniel Kahneman (2012, p. 30), winner of the Nobel Prize, wrote in his book *Thinking, fast and slow*: "He had an impression, but some of his impressions are illusions." A paraphrased quote would be, "He had a perception, but some of his perceptions were just guesses." Benny Rigaux-Bricmont quotes Cox, Jacoby, Olson, and Haddock (1982, p. 472): "From an information-theoretical perspective, product and brand perceptions are based on a set of characteristics (e.g., price, brand, packaging, color, etc.),

each of these, however, is the basis for developing the different impressions that the product creates in consumers. ”These properties are not part of the physical product (Cox 1962 Jacoby, Olson, & Haddock 1971).

Participants ’responses were largely due to their perception of what they were tasting. The research clearly showed how the perceptions of the respondents differ according to the presence or absence of non-physical characteristics. Although the questions were always the same in the first three tests, the answers of the respondents in each test were different. Since there was no association in test # 2 with the non-physical properties of the beverages tested, we can conclude that in this case, respondents attributed true and honest answers about taste quality and perceived energy efficiency. In test # 1, the shape of the glasses was the perceptual driver of the answers, and in test # 3, the perceptual driver was the brand. Test # 4 also showed that the taste recognition of the two brands of energy drinks (Red Bull brand and S-Budget brand) was weak (incorrect recognition from 62% to 69%). The recognition of the third (Monster brand) was the most convincing (69%).

CONCLUSION

The test results showed:

1. The quality of the service of the product has a significant impact on the perception and perception of the quality of the taste of the product and its effectiveness. This confirms H1, which reads: "Different levels of glass quality affect the perception of the quality of the taste of drinks and the energy efficiency of energy drinks."
2. Absence of any information about the product, on condition that all products are displayed and served in the same way, represents the consumer's objective assessment of the quality of the product and its energy efficiency. This confirms H2, which reads: "A comparison of a product without the influence of non-product elements reflects the true attitude towards the perceived quality of the product."
3. Where consumers know which brand of a particular product is located, then the assessment of its taste quality and energy efficiency is significantly influenced by the perceptual value of the brand. This also confirms the H3, which reads: "Perceived quality of the energy drink brand affects the quality of taste and its energy efficiency."
4. It is difficult for a consumer to recognize brands if there are no elements associated with it, thus partially confirming H4, which reads: "Blind recognition of a particular brand of energy drink when testers try them from the same glasses is weak."

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The effects of packaging and promotion on the taste experience have been a central theme of many studies, all conducted with the aim of discovering as many effective ways as possible to help market a product and create its desired perception. Most results confirm that the appearance of a particular food product affects expectations about what taste quality a consumer can expect (Del Castillo et al., 2013). Our research also confirms that (a) serving affects consumers' perceptions of the quality of taste and energy efficiency of energy drinks tested, and (b) that perceived brand perceptual value affects perceptions of the quality of taste and energy efficiency of energy drinks tested.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

There are a number of other opportunities to explore how the non-physical properties of products affect taste perception. One option would be to taste the same drink in different types of glasses, and that respondents would not know that they are only trying one type of drink. The question would be: Which drink is the best?

Another option would be a test of the quality of taste and energy value, whereby for each tested beverage (regardless of the brand), the test subject would be informed about the composition of the product with all the stated information that is legally prescribed. The question would be: Which drink tastes the best and which is the most energy efficient?

The third option is to test the quality of pre-prepared food. Test subjects should be divided into two groups - the first group should not know that the food was packaged in plastic or paper packaging, and the second group should be aware of this fact. Food would be served attractively in both cases. Question: Will the perceived taste quality of the food served be the same in both groups?

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