

**Consumer Sensitivity of Country-of-origin and other stimulators in
Non-Alcoholic/Non-Carbonated Beverages in Georgia**

Mari Iakobadze

Rusudan Guliashvili

Ana Kurshbadze

Master's Project/Thesis is submitted for Ilia State University Business School

Project Supervisor: Nino Tandilashvili, Associate Professor

Ilia State University

Tbilisi, 2019

ABSTRACT

The main purpose for this particular thesis is to investigate the influence of different stimulators, giving the Country-of-Origin effect main importance, with regard to Georgian consumer decision-making process during the selection of non-alcoholic, non-carbonated beverages.

The main importance of this study is to analyze Georgian retail market, which is never be done before. The research mainly focusing on COO effect, which is essential for the local producers, and can be applied to other food and beverage industries. This project has been carefully chosen for two reasons, first, increasing local product value and number of local producer companies, and secondly, governmental initiations for domestic business support. This research is useful for local companies and marketing managers of all type.

The paper is divided into several sections. The first section displays all the theories that served as the background of the study by giving the clear explanation of all the processes associated with consumer behavior, buying decision process and analyzing the COO effect as an influential factor affecting all the above-mentioned topics. The second part is concentrated on giving the clear description of the research conducted in order to examine what is the level of the influence of all the stimulators with and without the presence of COO effect, analyzing all the data gained through survey, which served as the main attribute of conducting the research. The third and final section includes the summation of all the information gained and analyzed, and accordingly giving recommendations for the local companies' marketers.

The knowledge obtained through research can be divided into three parts. The First finding was the fact that the majority of consumers produce imported non-alcoholic, non-carbonated beverages rather than locally produced ones. The second discovery was the fact that two of the most important stimulators appear to be High quality and Country-of-Origin while making purchase decision. In addition, the final and main fact discovered was the cognitive dissonance among the consumers, most of them claimed that locally produced product is supreme and preferred over the imported ones, while the majority of them still purchases imported ones.

The main recommendation from the authors of the research would be the advice to give more importance and attention to emphasizing the quality of the locally produced products, and make the origin of the production easily visible and understandable for the consumers.

Acknowledgment

Foremost, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to our supervisor Associate professor Nino Tandilashvili for the continuous support of our Master thesis and research, for her motivation, enthusiasm and immense knowledge. Her guidance helped us in all the time of research and writing of this thesis.