

Title: Effects of Branding on Soda Taste

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The purpose of this research is to determine whether different brands of cola are distinguishable by taste. According to fMRI research conducted by a group of neuroscientists, people display strong branding bias for Pepsi or Coca-Cola, despite the sodas being nearly identical in chemical composition (McClure et al.). Both Pepsi and Coca-Cola spend billions of dollars each year on advertising costs to establish and strengthen their brands and find new ways to connect with consumers (Andersson et al.). These advertisements establish long-term brand trust with consumers, triggering emotional effects when faced with opposing brands (Kabadayi & Alan). However, consumers with damage to the ventromedial prefrontal cortex, a part of the brain responsible for emotion and emotion control, do not exhibit the expected effects of brand trust and are somewhat unbiased (Koenigs). My project is a study of ten test subjects. Individuals may prefer either soda or neither. I will be testing three different types of soda: Pepsi, Coca-Cola, and Shasta Cola. I will be pouring equal amounts of randomly selected soda into three cups and asking the subjects to identify the soda based on taste. Without deception, information indicating the presence of these three sodas will be given as a placebo. I expect experimental results to show a low accuracy in the test subjects' ability to distinguish the different sodas by taste, especially between Pepsi and Coca-Cola. I also expect the experimental results to show higher accuracy when provided brand information due to the effect of brand trust.

Works Cited

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