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A STUDY ON MEASURING CONSUMER CONFUSION USING STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELING

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Abstract
The purpose of this paper is to assess the reliability and validity Consumer Confusion Scale in Indian context and study the impact of various dimensions of consumer confusion on brand loyalty and decision postponement. Researcher used the three components conceptual model of confusion is developed, operationalized and validated using a sample of 250 consumers. Data has been collected through structured questionnaire. Using structural equation modelling, the results support the three dimensions of similarity, overload and ambiguity which have a significant impact on decision postponement and loyalty behaviour. This research will helpful in designing all marketing strategy related to Price, Product, Place and particularly Promotion.

Key Words: Marketing Strategy, Brand Loyalty, Consumer Confusion, Ambiguity, Promotion.

Introduction

At the beginning of the third millennium, in a competitive environment characterized by; a plethora of choice, a surge of marketing communications, decreasing inter-brand differences, increasing complexity of information and its sources which increase search costs, it is no wonder that some consumers find information processing for some tasks confusing.

Consumer confusion is a state of mind that leads to consumers making imperfect purchasing decisions or lacking confidence in the correctness of their purchasing decisions. Confusion occurs when a consumer fails to correctly understand or interpret products and services. This, in turn, leads to them making imperfect purchasing decisions. This concept is important to marketers because consumer confusion may result in reduced sales, reduced satisfaction with products and difficulty communicating effectively with the consumer. It is a widely studied and broad subject which is a part of Consumer behavior and Decision making.

As consumers are provided with ever-increasing amounts of information from more products sold through more channels and promoted in more ways, the notion of marketplace confusion is becoming increasingly important. We can say that there are three types of confusion resulting from brand similarity, information load, and misleading or ambiguous information.Snider contends that confusion pervades almost every decision that consumers make and incidences of consumer confusion have been reported in many different countries and in a host of product markets (Clancy and Trout 2002) such as; watches, telecommunications, health and travel insurance and own-label brands.

Despite its importance, no consistent approach has been taken to defining and measuring consumers' proneness to confusion. Although situation specific confusion has been linked to information overload and ambiguous and misleading information, most situation specific studies on consumer confusion have focused on stimulus similarity.

Dimensions of Confusion

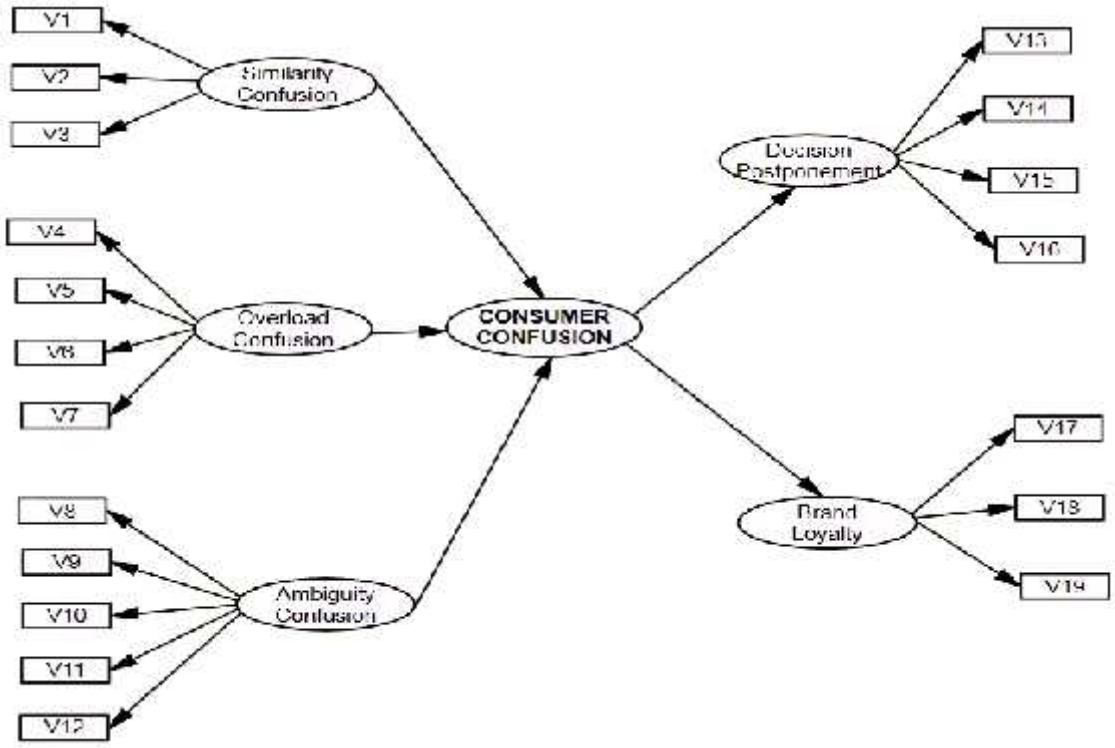
- We define Brand Similarity Confusion as: 'a lack of understanding and potential alteration of a consumer's choice or an incorrect brand evaluation caused by the perceived physical similarity of products or services'
- We define overload confusion as: 'a lack of understanding caused by the consumer being confronted with an overly information rich environment that cannot be processed in the time available to fully understand, and be confident in, the purchase environment'.
- We define Ambiguity Confusions being: 'a lack of understanding during which consumers are forced to re-evaluate and revise current beliefs or assumptions about products or the purchasing environment'.

Problem

- With ever increasing amounts of marketplace information, confusion is becoming a problem for consumers and marketers, yet the topic remains under researched. This research work explores the dimensions of consumers' general tendency to become confused and its relevance for marketing practitioners.
- Awareness and knowledge of consumer confusion is relevant to successful marketing because confused consumers are less likely to make rational buying decisions and to choose products offering the best quality or best value for money.

- The importance of consumer confusion to companies is ultimately assessed on the basis of its consequences and their economic relevance.
- Consequences such as, dissatisfaction, negative word-of-mouth, cognitive dissonance, decision postponement, have been mentioned and all can negatively affect company profits. Although research has identified some confusion antecedents, our understanding of the relationships between the dimensions of consumer confusion and potential outcomes is limited.
- With regard to decision postponement and in the context of overload confusion information overload such that a customer feels overwhelmed and dissatisfied, or chooses not to make a choice at all".
- Moreover, conventional managerial wisdom holds that reducing customer attrition rates and attending to customer loyalty makes good business sense because customer retention is less costly than acquisition.

Research Model



Research Objectives

1. To assess the reliability and validity Consumer Confusion Scale in Indian context.
2. To evaluate the validity consumer confusion proncess model.
3. To study the impact of Brand similarity on Consumer confusion.
4. To study the impact of Overload of information on consumer confusion.
5. To study the impact of Ambiguity on consumer confusion.
6. To analyze the relationship between Consumer confusion and postponement.
7. To analyze the relationship between Consumer confusion and Brand loyalty.

Research Hypothesis

1. Brand similarity has impact on Consumer confusion
2. Overload of information have impact on consumer confusion.
3. Ambiguity has impact on consumer confusion.
4. Consumer confusion has positively related with decision postponement.
5. Consumer confusion has negative relation with Brand loyalty.

Literature review

Author	Title of paper	Finding/Conclusion
Vincent-Wayne Mitchell And Alan Giles	Counteracting consumer confusion	Companies should do a confusion audit to find out which consumers are most confused in order to rectify it.
Lee Ann Runy And Jennifer Towne	Consumer confusion	They talks about consumer confusion at health centers.
Woodward Sand Hill Econometrics	Consumer confusion in the mortgage market	Borrower confusion is strongly related to the level of interest Rates.
Susan E. Woodward And Robert E. Hall	Consumer confusion in the mortgage market: evidence of less than a perfectly transparent and competitive market	Confusion related to interest rate the higher the rate more borrowers try to pay points to Reduce their rate, and the more mistakes they make, to the broker's benefit.
Ioana Chioveanu and Jidong Zhou	Price competition with consumer confusion	A model of competition in both prices and price frames where price framing can obstruct consumers price comparisons.
Paurav Shukla	Consequences of Consumer Confusion	The significant impact of information confusion on information satisfaction
V.W. Mitchell &Walsh, G.	The effect of consumer confusion proneness on word of mouth, trust, and customer satisfaction	The three dimensions of similarity, overload, and ambiguity have a differential impact on word of mouth behavior, trust, and customer satisfaction.
Paurav Shukla	Antecedents to Consumer Confusion In Financial Services Industry	The hypothesized antecedents namely; expectations, attribute confusion and information confusion significantly affect overall confusion.
Vincent-Wayne Mitchell, Gianfranco Walsh, Mo Yamin	Towards a conceptual model of consumer confusion	Consumers who experience confusion regularly across different products categories are likely to become more Frustrated with and tired of shopping
George Chryssochoidis	Repercussions of consumer confusion for late introduced differentiated products	Differentiated products are at a disadvantage compared to existing products in the marketplace as they suffer from consumer confusion regarding such differentiation
Turnbull, Peter W., Sheena Leek, And Grace Ying	Customer confusion: the mobile phone market	Suppliers should build up a strong brand image and be aware of the importance of word of mouth sources.
T. Devasenathipathi And P.T. Saleendran	A study on consumers confusions among male and female students and their adoption of reduction	Consumer confusion is state of mindset of a consumer due to influence of ever experiencing of purchase related internal and external factors
West G.E.; Larue B, Gendron C & Scott S.L	Consumer confusion over the significance of meat attributes: the case of veal	Most consumers will not categorically reject pale veal meat with a grain-fed label.
Malaika Brengman, Maggie Geuens & Patrick De Pelsmacker	The impact of consumer characteristics and campaign related factors on brand confusion in print advertising.	Consumers with higher levels of product category involvement and higher levels of brand awareness and brand loyalty confuse brands less frequently.

B.C Poiesz & M.M Verhallen	Brand confusion in advertising	Advertising can also be counter effective
Pamela Bons	An investigation of consumer decision making styles in a Market characterized by choice overload	Consumer decision making styles with the theory on choice overload
Best R. J. and Ursic, Michael L	The Impact of Information Load on Variability And Choice Accuracy	This research found that the alternative variance and the similarity of the choices has more influence on decision accuracy than numbers of brands or attributes.
Sheena leek, Dai kun	Consumer confusion in the Chinese personal computer market	Technological complexity is the major source of confusion. Word of mouth is the most common source of information used to reduce confusion due to its credibility and reliability.
Maureen Morrin	The impact of brand extension on parent brand memory structures & retrieval process	Compared with parent brand advertising, brand extension advertising does not have as a great facilitative effect on parent brand recognition in which the brand appears on the shelf.
Barbara Loken & Ronald L. Hinkle	Consumer confusion of origin & brand Similarity perceptions	The similarity in physical appearance of two brands of a common business origin between them
Jacoby, Jacob, Speller, Donald E. And Kohn, Carol A.	Brand choice behavior as a Function of information load	While consumers do feel more satisfied and less confused they actually make poorer purchases
Nicholas H. Lurie	Decision making in information-rich Environments: the role of information Structure	The amount of Information processing mediates the relationship between information structureand Information overload.
Sheena leek, Dai kun	Consumer confusion in the Chinese personal computer market	Technological complexity is the major source of confusion. Word of mouth is the most common source of information used to reduce confusion due to its credibility and reliability.
Maureen Morrin	The impact of brand extension on parent brand memory structures & retrieval process	Compared with parent brand advertising, brand extension advertising does not have as a great facilitative effect on parent brand recognition in which the brand appears on the shelf.
Gianfranco Walsh, Vincent-Wayne Mitchell	Demographic characteristics of consumers who find it difficult to decide	ANOVA suggested that high levels of marketplace decision difficulty were characteristic of older, less well-educated female consumers. Subsequent cluster analysis identified four distinct and meaningful consumer types, in terms of "marketplace decision difficulty"
Kapferer, Jean-Noel	Stealing brand equity: measuring perceptual confusion between national brands and 'copycat' own-label products (Article)	The power of the brand-name towards their own product, causing consumers to become confused about the different between the brand-name product and the own-label product

Research Methodology

Data Collection Methods

The purpose of this research is mainly exploratory. In this study, survey methods have been preferred. Researcher adopts well-known consumer confusion measurement. For this study, Consumer confusion proneness instruments for measuring consumer confusion have been used for consumer confusion and its impact on consumer purchase postponed decision and

brand loyalty. Researcher preferred to use a probabilistic systematic random sample method of data collection. The instrument was administered by a researcher himself and the investigators trained by the researcher till they were familiar with the instrument. The data was collected from the respondents at outside the store. The data was collected for the period of three months during the evenings and weekends from the customer of store who was willing to respond.

Data were collected by means of a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of three sections A, B and C. Sections A and B required respondents to evaluate the confusion components at the time of buying at mall/supermarket. Section C contained questions pertaining to respondent profile. The perception statements were measured on a five-point Likert type scale with "1" being "strongly disagree" and "5" being "strongly agree".

In this study, the research instrument was administered through personal interviews conducted outside the store. To minimize bias, prospective respondents were approached and interviewed after to conducting their intended transactions. The method of personal interviews is superior to self-administered questionnaires in perceptual or attitudinal surveys while face-to-face administration maximizes response rates and field researchers' availability to answer respondents' questions.

Sample Size

According to guideline provided by Nunnally(1978) that ten times of total number of items, so sample size was 250. However, Hair et al. (1992, 1995) cautioned that, if the sample size exceeds 400, the goodness of fit is poor because almost any difference is detected. Therefore, by considering the constraints of the research setting and theoretical aspect of this study, the targeted sample size was set at 250.

Data Analysis and Tool

For analyzing the data researcher used various test like Preliminary Analysis, Correlation coefficient Analysis, Chi-square test, Multiple regressions Analysis, Structural Equation Model (SEM), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) through SPSS 19.0 and AMOS 18.0.

IV. Result and Discussion

Every analysis has some basic assumption for further analysis. Below table shows the some test for fulfillment of advance analysis.

Normality of Data

Kline (1998) suggested that all variables in the analysis for univariate skewness and kurtosis were satisfactory within conventional criteria for normality i.e. *-3 to 3 for skewness and -10 to 10 for kurtosis.* Multivariate normality (the combination of two or more variables) means that the individual variable is normal in a univariate sense and that their combinations are also normal (Hair *et al.* 2010).

Table No. 1 Descriptive Statistics

	N	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Due to great similarity of many products it is often difficult to select new product	250	-.666	.154	-.106	.307
Some brands looks so similar that it is difficult to judge whether they are made by the same manufacturer or not	250	-.333	.154	-.577	.307
Sometimes i want to buy a product seen in an advertisement but cannot prioritize between similar products.	250	-.341	.154	-.394	.307
I do not always know exactly which products meet my expectations.	250	-.145	.154	-.788	.307
I get confused due to many brands.	250	-.420	.154	-.793	.307
Due to the host of stores it is sometimes difficult to decide where to shop.	250	-.328	.154	-.605	.307

Most brands are very similar and are therefore hard to distinguish.	250	-.578	.154	-.277	.307
Products such as computer or laptop often have so many features that a comparison of different brands is barely possible.	250	-.361	.154	-.672	.307
The information i get from advertising often are so vague that it is hard to know what a product can actually perform.	250	-.383	.154	-.637	.307
When buying a product i rarely feel sufficiently informed.	250	-.391	.154	-.639	.307
When purchasing certain products, such as mobile phone or laptops i feel uncertain about which product features are important for me.	250	-.443	.154	-.667	.307
When purchasing certain products i need the help of sales personnel to understand differences between products.	250	-.557	.154	-.471	.307
Sometimes it is difficult to arrive at a decision when making a purchase.	250	-.657	.154	-.257	.307
Sometimes when making a purchase i delay the decision.	250	-.352	.154	-.936	.307
Sometimes i postpone a planned purchase.	250	-.341	.154	-.822	.307
Sometimes the choice in a store is so large that a purchase takes longer than expected.	250	-.557	.154	-.523	.307
Once i find a brand that i stick with it.	250	-.332	.154	-.924	.307
I usually buy the same brands.	250	-.123	.154	-.943	.307
I often change the brands that i buy regularly.	250	.043	.154	-1.070	.307

All skewness value is from .043 to -.666 and kurtosis value is from -1.070 to -.106. According to the guideline suggested by Kline (1998), all variables are univariate normal and the individual variable is normal in a univariate sense and that their combinations are also normal. So researcher can conclude that data is multivariate normal and should be used for further multivariate analysis.

Multicollinearity

The correlations between the variables in your model are provided in the table labeled *Correlations*. Check that your independent variables show at least some relationship with your dependent variable (above .3 preferably). (Pallant, 2005)

Table No. 2 Correlations

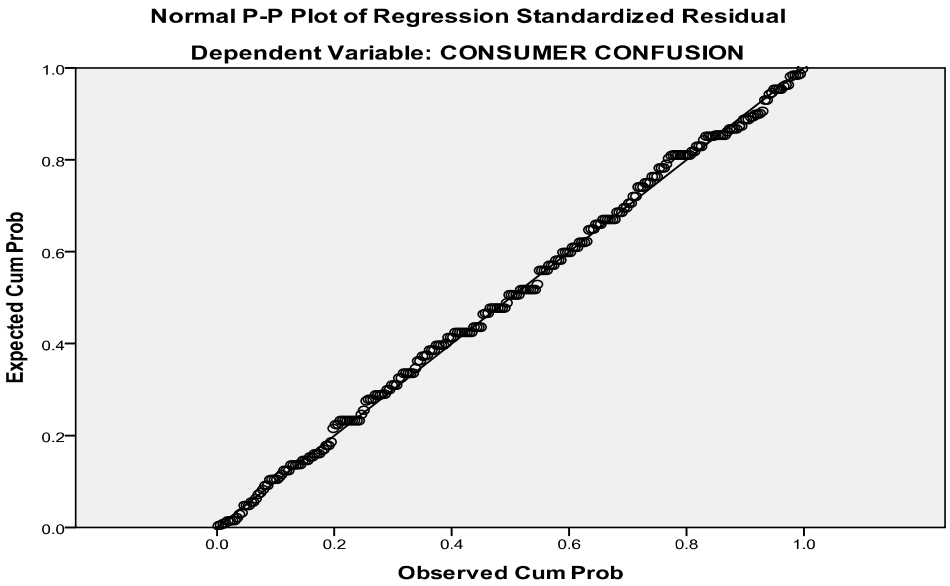
		Similarity Confusion	Overload Confusion	Ambiguity Confusion
Similarity Confusion	Pearson Correlation	1	.349**	.488**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	250	250	250
Overload Confusion	Pearson Correlation	.349**	1	.283**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	250	250	250
AmbiguityConfusion	Pearson Correlation	.488**	.283**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	250	250	250

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

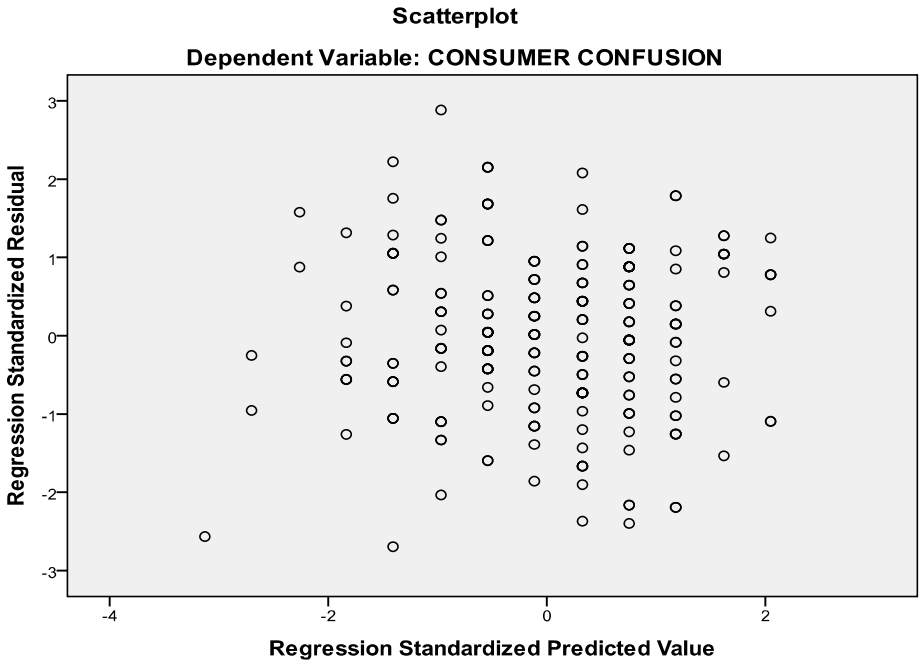
In Consume Conflict construct, the correlation between all independent variables are less than 0.9, therefore, as per guideline suggested by Pallant (2005) all variables will be retained. It indicates that data is free from multicollinearity problem and need not to remove any variable form further analysis. All dimensions are correlated with each other and it's statistically significant as p-value is less than 0.01.

Outlier, Normality, Homoscedasticity, Independence of Residual

One of the ways that these assumptions can be checked is by inspecting the residuals scatterplot and the Normal Probability Plot of the regression standardized residuals that were requested as part of the analysis.



In the Normal Probability Plot, we observed that our points have lie in a reasonably straight diagonal line from bottom left to top right. This would no major deviations from normality.



In the Scatter plot of the standardized residuals, we observed that the residuals were roughly rectangular distributed, with most of the scores concentrated in the center (along the 0 point). Standardized residual (as displayed in the scatter plot) concentrated of more than 3.3 or less than -3.3.

Table No. 3 Residuals Statistics[a]

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	24.9543	50.6703	40.5040	4.96787	250
Std. Predicted Value	-3.130	2.046	.000	1.000	250
Standard Error of Predicted Value	.272	.889	.367	.106	250
Adjusted Predicted Value	25.4507	50.7696	40.5044	4.96080	250
Residual	-11.5048	12.30926	.00000	4.26023	250
Std. Residual	-2.695	2.884	.000	.998	250
Stud. Residual	-2.711	2.895	.000	1.003	250
Deleted Residual	-11.64429	12.40565	-.00043	4.29950	250
Stud. Deleted Residual	-2.747	2.939	.000	1.007	250
Mahal. Distance	.013	9.797	.996	1.345	250
Cook's Distance	.000	.156	.005	.011	250
Centered Leverage Value	.000	.039	.004	.005	250

a. Dependent Variable: CONSUMER CONFUSION

According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2001, p. 69), cases with values larger than 1, are a potential problem. In data, the maximum value for Cook's Distance is .005, suggesting no major problems.
In nutshell, data are not violating of assumption of Normality, Linearity, Multicollinearity, Outlier, Homoscedasticity, and Independence of Residual and fit for multivariate analysis.

Reliability Analysis

Table No. 4,Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.724	12

According to Pavot, Colvin and Sandvik (1991), Consume confusion Scale has good internal consistency with a Cronbach alpha coefficient reported of .60. In the current study the Cronbach alpha coefficient was .724.

Scale Validation:

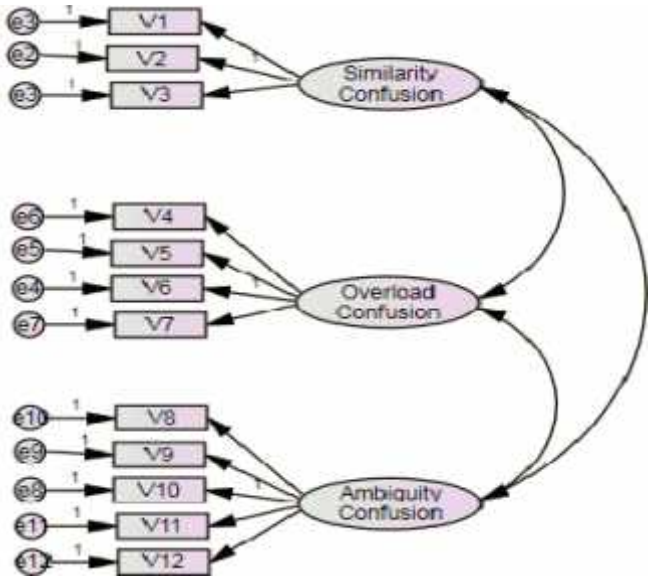


Table No.5: Goodness-of-Fit Statistic

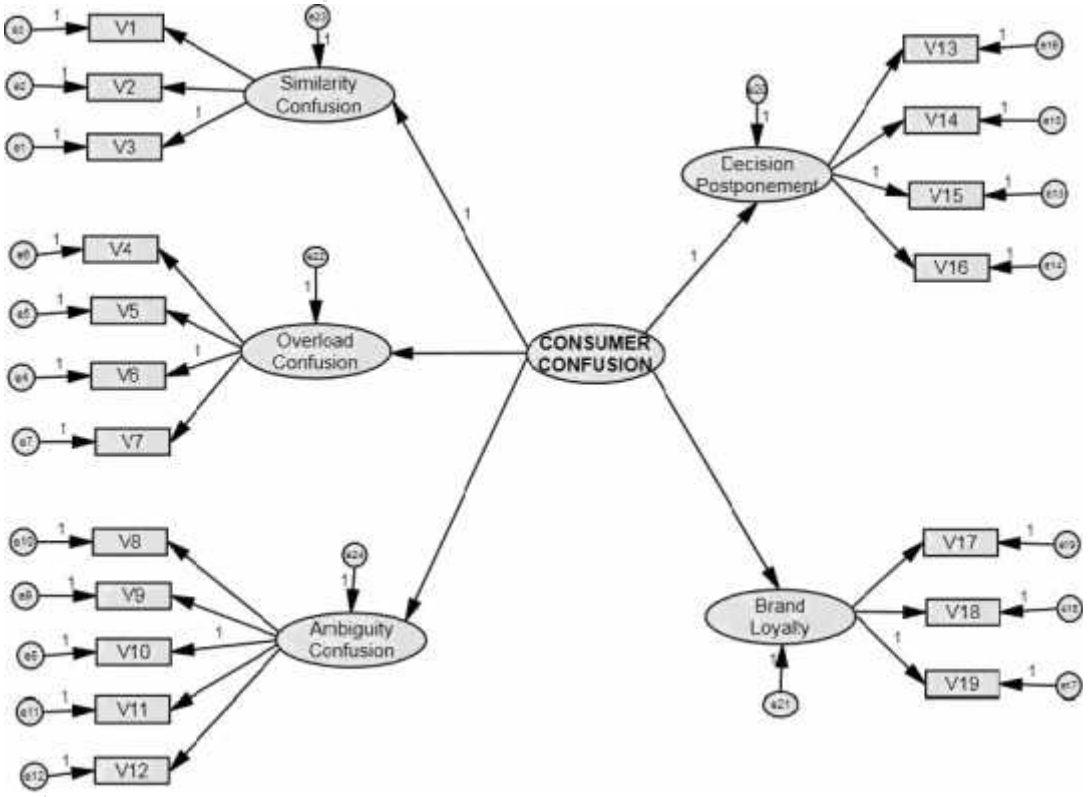
Goodness-of-fit model index	Recommended Value*	Model
Chi-square/degree of freedom(CMIN/df)**	≤ 5.00	2.16
Goodness-of-fit index(GIF)	≥ .90	.90
Adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI)	≥ .80	.92
Normalized fit index (NFI)	≥ .90	.91
Tucker-Lewis index (TLI/NNFI)	≥ .90	.94
Comparative fit index (CFI/RNI)	≥ .90	.95
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	≤ .08	.06
Standardized root mean square residual (standardized RMR)	≤ .08	.0429

* These criterias are according to Hair et al. (1998,2010) and Arbuckle and Wothke (1995).
** Ullman (1996) recommended chi-squar/degree of freedom value of < 5.00.

The score obtained from the analysis suggested an excellent fit between the data and model (χ^2 =430.51, *df*=199, χ^2/*df*=2.16, TLI=.939, CFI=.947, RMSEA=.06). All the fit indices comply with the values recommended by Haire *et.al.(*2010) and Arbuckle and Wothke (1995) .

Model Validation

Based on the theoretical framework, following model has been developed. The examination of the hypothesised relationships between the three dimensions of the confusion-proneness scale and the two outcome variables can provide evidence for nomological validity when, overall, the measures correlated in a manner predicted by theory. The conceptual model was tested simultaneously with AMOS. The global fit statistics indicated that the model represents the data well.



Researcher estimated the structural model with same sample yielding the following model fit results:

Table No.6: Goodness-of-fit Statistics (Structural Model-SERVQUAL)

Goodness-of-fit model index	**Recommended Value***	**Structure Model**
Chi-square/degree of freedom**	≤ 5.00	2.264
Goodness-of-fit index(GFI)	≥ .90	.867
Adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI)	≥ .80	.839
Normalized fit index (NFI)	≥ .90	.891
Tucker-Lewis index (TLI/NNFI)	≥ .90	.929
Comparative fit index (CFI/RNI)	≥ .90	.936
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	≤ .08	.066
Standardized root mean square residual (standardized RMR)	≤ .08	.0531

* These criterias are according to Hair et al. (1998) and Arbuckle and Wothke (1995)

** Ullman (1996) recommended chi-square/degree of freedom value of < 5.00

Collectively, these fit indices indicate that the structural model is acceptable. That is, the consumer confusion model is robust.

Hypothesis testing

H1: Brand similarity has impact on Consumer confusion.

Table No. 7 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.759[a]	.576	.575	4.26881

a. Predictors: (Constant), Similarity of Information

From above table, the value of R-Square is .575, which means that about 58 per cent variation in the dependent variable Consumer confusion is explained by the independent variable- Brand similarity.

Table No. 8 ANOVA[b]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6145.254	1	6145.254	337.230	.000[a]
	Residual	4519.242	248	18.223		
	Total	10664.496	249			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Similarity of Information

b. Dependent Variable: CONSUMER CONFUSION

The F-value is the Mean Square regression dived by the Mean Square Residual, yielding F=337.230. The p-value associated with the F value is very small (.000). These values are used to answer the questions "Do the independent variable reliably explain the variations in the dependent variables?" The p-value is compared to chosen alpha level (0.05) and, if smaller, one can conclude that the independent variable explain variations in the dependent variable. If the p-value was greater than 0.05, then the group of independent variables does not show a statistically significant relationship with the dependent variables nor does it explain the variation in the dependent variables. Here we can say that Brand similarity explain the significant amount of variation in the Consumer confusion.

Table No. 9 Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	18.525	1.227		15.099	.000
	Similarity of information	6.429	.350	.759	18.364	.000

a. Dependent Variable: CONSUMER CONFUSION

From above table, the beta of From above table, the beta of Brand similarity variable is .759 and it's significant (p<.05), it means Brand similarity have strong impact on Consumer confusion.

2. Overload of information has impact on consumer confusion.

Table No. 10 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.710[a]	.503	.501	4.62097

a. Predictors: (Constant), Overload of information

From above table, the value of R-Square is .501, which means that about 50 per cent variation in the dependent variable Consumer confusion is explained by the independent variable-Overload of information.

Table No. 11 ANOVA[b]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5368.852	1	5368.852	251.428	.000[a]
	Residual	5295.644	248	21.353		
	Total	10664.496	249			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Overload of information
b. Dependent Variable: CONSUMER CONFUSION

The F-value is the Mean Square regression dived by the Mean Square Residual, yielding F=521.428. The p-value associated with the F value is very small (.000). Here we can say that Overload of information explain the significant amount of variation in the Consumer confusion.

Table No. 12 Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	19.396	1.363		14.231	.000
	Overload of information	6.451	.407	.710	15.856	.000

a. Dependent Variable: CONSUMER CONFUSION

From above table, the beta of From above table, the beta of Brand similarity variable is .710 and it's significant ($p<.05$), it means Overload of information have strong impact on Consumer confusion.

H3.Ambiguity has impact on consumer confusion.

Table No. 13 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.813[a]	.661	.659	3.81885

a. Predictors: (Constant), Ambiguity of information

From above table, the value of R-Square is .661, which means that about 66 per cent variation in the dependent variable Consumer confusion is explained by the independent variable-Ambiguity.

Table No. 14 ANOVA[b]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	7047.759	1	7047.759	483.266	.000[a]
	Residual	3616.737	248	14.584		
	Total	10664.496	249			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Ambiguity of information
b. Dependent Variable: CONSUMER CONFUSION

The F-value is the Mean Square regression dived by the Mean Square Residual, yielding F=483.266. The p-value associated with the F value is very small (.000). Here we can say that Ambiguity of information explain the significant amount of variation in the Consumer confusion.

Table No. 15 Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	13.441	1.255		10.714	.000
	Ambiguity of information	7.885	.359	.813	21.983	.000
a. Dependent Variable: CONSUMER CONFUSION						

From above table, the beta of From above table, the beta of Brand similarity variable is .710 and it's significant ($p<.05$), it means ambiguity have strong impact on Consumer confusion.

H4.Consumer confusion has positively related decision postponement.

Table No. 16 Correlations			
		Consumer `Confusion	Decision Postponement
Consumer Confusion	Pearson Correlation	1	.322**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	250	250
Decision Postponement	Pearson Correlation	.322**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	250	250
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The relationship between Consumer Confusion and Decision Postponement was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumption of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. There was a positive correlation between HRM Practices and Firm Performance.

There is linear positive correlation between Consumer Confusion and Decision Postponement. The correlation coefficient is 0.322 and is statistically significant as the p-value is less than 0.05.

H5. Consumer confusion has negative relation with Brand loyalty.

Table No. 17 Correlations			
		Consumer Confusion	Brand Loyalty
Consumer Confusion	Pearson Correlation	1	-.095
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.136
	N	250	250
Brand Loyalty	Pearson Correlation	-.095	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.136	
	N	250	250

- There is linear negative correlation between Consumer Confusion and Brand Loyalty. The correlation coefficient is -.095 and is not statistically significant as the p-value is greater than 0.05.

Summary

Sr.No.	Hypothesis	Decision
1	Brand similarity has impact on Consumer confusion.	Supported
2	Overload of information have impact on consumer confusion.	Supported
3	Ambiguity has impact on consumer confusion.	Supported
4	Consumer confusion has positively related with decision postponement.	Supported
5	Consumer confusion has negative relation with Brand loyalty.	Supported

Conclusion

Since the word consumer confusion is used frequently as a basic label for phenomena that cannot be explained with existing constructs, it is not shocking that no commonly accepted conceptualisation of consumer confusion proneness is available. Sometime the consumer confusion has been broadly defined by various authors in different context. The objective of this paper was to conceptualise the consumer confusion dilemma. *Walsh et. al*. has suggested the model of consumer confusion, and this would be required to check the applicability in Indian context. This research contributed to more clear understanding about the applicability of consumer confusion scale in Indian context. Result suggested that consumer confusion scale has multidimensional in mature and have three dimension which; leads to consumer confusion.

This research also focused on how consumer confusion effect the decision postponement and brand loyalty of consumer. More confused consumer try to postpone their purchase decision and wait for the otherwise decision with the help of some market stimuli.

Reducing the level of confusion will increase the cognitive clarity of consumer and which is very much required in such highly competitive market specially in those sector where completion is very high e.g. Telecommunication and financial service sector.

One implication of overload confusion proneness leading to delayed decision making, which could motivate some consumers to abandon planned purchases altogether, is that manufacturers and retailers need to recognise when this is happening and engage strategies to help the consumer in that situation. For example, this could be as easy as in-store signs saying 'are you confused by all the cameras we have? If so, speak to Mr./Mrs. X our camera expert' or as complicated as producing in-store computer or website decision making aids, which takes the consumer through a series of steps to identify their performance preferences and ends with recommending the best alternative.

Loyalty is a primary marketing goal, but can wane quickly if consumers feel confused about the company or its product which they no longer trust. Since loyalty is an important goal of brand management and relationship marketing, avoiding losing consumers to imitators is likely to be important. Brand owners could increase attempts to get trademark protection for as many of their brands as possible so as to make them more difficult, and risky in financial terms, for imitators to copy. At the same time, the results show that similarity confusion proneness has a significant negative impact on loyalty, which may lead to loss of future sales and should be of concern to marketers in highly competitive markets where there is little difference between brands.

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