



ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

PROGRAM OF MARKETING MANAGEMENT

**DETERMINANTS OF CUSTOMER LOYALTY TOWARDS AQUA
ADDIS BOTTLED WATER CONSUMERS IN ADDIS ABABA**

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ID NO.SGS/0215/2013B

Advisor: Ephrem Assefa (Ph.D.)

A Research Submitted to St. Mary's University

**January, 2023
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work, prepared under the guidance of Ephrem Assefa (PhD). All sources of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged. I further confirm that the thesis has not been submitted either in part or full to any other higher learning institution for the purpose of earning any degree.

Name: Samrawit Meseret Signature _____ Date _____

Endorsement

This thesis entitled “*Determinants of Customer Loyalty towards Aqua-Addis Bottled water Consumers in Addis Ababa*” has been submitted to St. Mary’s University, School of Graduate Studies for examination with my approval as a university advisor.

Name of Advisor: Ephrem Assefa (PhD) Signature _____ Date _____

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ABSTRACT

In today's highly dynamic business environment, the ability of firms to retain their customers plays an important role in terms of ensuring sustained competitive advantage. The purpose of this study was to determine factors affecting customer loyalty on the case of Aqua Addis bottling water in Addis Ababa. The study used product quality, price, and customer satisfaction availability as independent variables and customer loyalty as a dependent variable. This research was conducted using survey through structured questionnaire with 5-point likert scale items. Explanatory and descriptive research design using cross-sectional survey was carried out at selected, super markets in Addis Ababa. Non-probability sampling techniques were employed to select study area and participants. The data were processed by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.0 software and analyzed through descriptive and multiple linear regression analysis. The result of the study indicates that: product Price, customer satisfaction, and Product Availability have a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty of the aqua Addis bottled water ($p < 0.05$). Product quality has no significant influence on customer loyalty of Aqua-Addis bottled water. However, this study couldn't find a statistically significant effect of product quality. Therefore, the study concluded that all determinants except product quality on customer loyalty in the study area. Thus, aqua Addis bottled water marketers should work more on the determinants in order to be competent enough in stiff market in Ethiopia. Moreover the Organization is advised to broaden its distribution plan in order to make its product widely accessible to clients and foster customer loyalty.

Key words: product quality, price, availability, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty

CHAPTER ONE

This introductory part aims to highlight introduction to the study. More specifically, this chapter consists of background of the study, statement of the problem, general and specific objectives, research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitations of the study, organization of the study, and definition of key terms

1.1. Background of the study

Consumers are overwhelmed with a vast array of choices in today's retail marketing environment. This is especially because they are exposed to so many items in the market and they have to make quick decisions based on the items they ought to buy and which can be catered for by their disposable income. The decision the consumers make determines the item they select and eventually buy. The manufacturers, on their part, have to be innovative and creative to ensure that customers get to pick their items if their firms have to remain competitive in the market. Branding of their items is one of the strategies that companies such as supermarkets may adopt to attract consumers to their goods and to ensure these goods get picked and re-picked (Reuben K. Njuguna, 2014).

In this age of information where customers have access to many products and services how do brands stand out in the face of the consumers? To remain competitive in the market, identifying the interests of customers is crucial. Businesses that can satisfy the interests of customers win the heart of customers. Through this way it enables to build good customer relationships as a result and get profitable in return. Customer loyalty is essential to sustain the business. The business sectors' progress and success depend on their loyal customers. The business sectors must give first priority to their customers then only think about the profit. They must have the motto of "Serve first, sell second". Customer satisfaction is the key element or leading indicator of every business to uplift as well as to create loyal customers. Loyalty of customers is considered to be a function of satisfaction and that loyal customers contribute to company profitability by spending more on company products and services, via repeat purchasing, and by recommending the organization to other consumers (Bowen & Chen, 2001; Fecikova, 2004).

To further understand the behavior of loyal customers, recent research has attempted to integrate the concept of customer commitment (Fullerton, 2005; Zins, 2001). For the most part, these recent studies have been built upon customer commitment as a key media to rother relationship between the customer's evaluations of afirm's performance and the

`Customer's intentions regarding the future relationship with the firm (K. Lenin John (2016).

Researches indicate that consumption of bottled/package water is in continuous rise around the world. A worldwide review of bottled water market by Zenith International (2009) indicates significant increase of bottled water consumption with potential upsurge in developing nations around the world particularly in the last two decades. In contrast, many organizations (including United Nations) and activists are campaigning against the manufacturing bottled water due to the high cost added for manufacturing, promotion and disposal of the plastic containers as well as environmental concerns related with pollution and ground water drainage (Arnold & Larsen, 2006). water has been increasing exponentially as well as the number of bottled water manufacturing facilities have been on the rise. It was in the early 1990's that Ethiopia first got its own bottled water, when the local Apex Bottling Company introduced the iconic "Highland Spring Water". Any brand of bottled water has in fact continued to be known as simply 'highland' until very recently. (Ruth Kassaye 2018). According to the Ethiopian Ministry of Trade and Industry, currently there are 67 water bottling companies. Their products are more or less similar including their features and price. Thus, the objective of this study is to investigate the factor affecting customer loyalty in bottled water consumers in Addis Ababa by giving special emphasis to large supermarket customers residing in ten sub cities.

1.2. Background of the organization

ASKU PLC Food and Beverages Group strives to become the leading Food and Beverage Company in Ethiopia by making different products the preferred people's choice. Established in 1999 by Ethiopian shareholders, ASKU PLC is a company engaged in the manufacturing sector with the aims to build a high performing organization which will play a key role in making Ethiopia a growing food and beverage exporting nation. Currently, the company is producing Bottled Water under the brand name - Aqua Addis; Carbonated Soft Drinks (CSD) in five different flavors namely RC Edge, RC Cola, RC Orange, Royal Tonic and RC Lemonade and Juices under the brand name Ethiopiana.

In addition, having been engaged in this sector for the past two decades, the Group has long learned the local and regional consumer need for high quality food and beverage products and is in the process of setting up an edible oil company under the name Yid Edible Oil Industry PLC.

1.3.Statement of the Problem

Consumer loyalty is a key factor in the study of brand choice, and its influence on the perception and employment of reference prices and on reactions to losses and gains has been studied in numerous articles. For example, (Mazumdar et, al.1995), stated two important points need to be considered in relation to the customer loyalty on the response to losses and gains. First, loyal consumers may possibly respond with more intensity to gains than to losses, since when the price of frequently purchased products or brands goes up, consumers will continue to buy them. Inversely, when prices fall, consumers perceive a gain and purchase a larger quantity of the product. Second, arguments to the effect that non loyal consumers will respond more to gains have been propounded. Loyal consumers may be insensitive to price changes of their favorite brand. Response is therefore asymmetric, depending on customer loyalty. On the other hand, if the perceived service performance does not meet customer expectations, the likely result is dissatisfaction (Churchill and Surprenant, 1982; Oliver, 1980; Yi, 1990).

The level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction is reflected from perceptions and attitudes from previous service experiences, and may also influence repurchase intentions (McGuire, 1999).The other key element for customers to be loyal is uniqueness of brands. Consumers with incidental pride are more likely to seek uniqueness in options that would show off the pride in their achievements or personal traits (Huang, Dong, & Mukhopadhyay, 2014).

There is an energetic boost in the number of bottled water users as the same time number of bottled water producers are expanding in Ethiopia. Understanding how to retain customer can be done easily if the company knows what make the customer loyal and it will provides insight to formulate a better marketing strategies.

As far as the researcher knowledge from reviewing different literature similar to customer loyalty, there is no enough research conducted about the determinants of customer loyalty in bottled water industry using four variables satisfaction, product quality, product availability, and price, and also there is no research that conducted specifically on aqua Addis bottled water company that show which factors affect the customer loyalty.

Most of the influences on customer loyalty focused on banks and alcoholic/beer products or on different locations and coverage. For instance a study conducted by Yalew,(2014) aimed to assess the packaging attributes which influence the purchase decision of bottled water brand show that packaging attribute such as color, graphic design, size and shape of packaging significantly influence consumer's purchase

decision for bottled water.

In addition, Kidist Bilata (2018) had studied on factors affecting customer loyalty in the case of east Africa bottling S.C at four dimension(Trust, Relationship, Satisfaction and compliant handling) The researcher found that trust, customer relationship, compliant handling and satisfaction significantly influenced loyalty of customers toward coca cola products. This making it different from the current researchers' interest on factors that affect customer loyalty, specifically on bottling water products and a case study of Aqua Addis. However conducting a research like determinants of customer loyalty will fill the gap of the study and in addition it will be an input for Aqua Addis bottled Water Company.

Based on the identified research problem, this study has answered the following questions

1.4. Research question

Based on the identified research problem, this study has specified the following questions.

1. What is the current level of customer loyalty towards Aqua Addis bottled water?
2. To what extent product quality affects customer loyalty in the case of Aqua Addis bottled water Company?
3. To what extent product price influences customer loyalty in the case of Aqua Addis bottled water Company?
4. To what extent product availability affects customer loyalty in the case of Aqua Addis bottled water Company?
5. To what extent customer satisfaction influences customer loyalty in the case of Aqua Addis bottled water Company?

1.4.Objectives of the study

1.4.1 General objective

The general objective of the study is to examine the main factors affecting customer loyalty in the case of Aqua Addis bottled water Company, in Addis Ababa.

1.4.2. The Specific Objectives

1. To assess the current level of customer loyalty towards Aqua Addis bottled water
2. To determine the effect of product quality on customer loyalty in the case of Aqua Addis bottled water.
3. To test the effect of perceived price on customer loyalty of Aqua Addis bottled water.
4. To examine the extent of effect of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty in the case of Aqua Addis bottled water.
5. To determine the effect of product availability on customers loyalty of Aqua Addis bottled water.

1.5. Significance of the study

The study will have the following importance:

The finding of the study will give important insight to the business people to identify the interest of their customer and provide customer center offers bases of interest for another researcher.

First since building customer loyalty is the most important factors in business success; this study provides mechanisms for marketers to build customer loyalty. This study can help manager in bottled water and decision makers to identify the major factors that may influence bottled water brand selection decisions among consumers. Findings of this research could help the management of bottled water companies in formulating appropriate marketing strategies for reaching and attracting customers. Second, it opens the door for researchers to carry out relevant research in the field of marketing management. Third, it is a good opportunity for the researcher to learn from other researchers and interact with respondents. Finally, the researcher also benefited from this study as she expanded her knowledge and experience of customer loyalty. To sum up the findings can contribute to the bottling water industry, particularly in understanding the factors that customers consider when choosing their water brand

1.4 Scope of the study

The scope of the study can be discussed in terms of the theme (conceptual scope), geographical area and the methodology adopted. Conceptually, the study is delimited to investigate the factors affecting customer loyalty. Based on review of prior empirical studies, this study examined the effect of customer satisfaction, product quality, price and product availability of Aqua Addis bottled Water on customer loyalty. Geographically, this study is delimited to one mineral water Company named Aqua Addis Water Bottling Company, located in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. In terms of the methodology adopted, the study applied mixed research approach, explanatory research design, and pertinent data were gathered through structured questionnaire and analyzed via descriptive and inferential statistics (correlation and regression analysis).

Since the source of data for the study is customers of supermarkets, response rate may not be up to the level of researcher expectation. If the respondents are reluctant, data shortage will be the limitation of this research. Regarding the scope, the research focuses only on selected supermarkets found in the city of Addis Ababa.

1.5 Limitations of the study

Since the source of data for the study were customers of Aqua Addis bottled water at supermarkets, response rate may not be up to the level of researcher expectation. Moreover, since this study was conducted on one case organization (Aqua Addis Bottled Water Company), it would be difficult to generalize the findings to other bottled water companies.

Respondent's bias and subjectivity can also be considered as a limitation. Moreover, unwillingness of consumers to participate in the study and negligence of some respondents to respond to the questionnaire appropriately might affect the validity of the study findings. Thus, further and more comprehensive study is required to understand fully on this area of research

1.6 Organization of the study

This research has five chapters. The first chapter deals with background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study, definition of key terms and organization of the study. The second chapter reviews related literature written before, which reviews theoretical and empirical literature on the key variables of the study.

This chapter sought to find possible answers to the research objectives by exploring literature by previous authors and scholars who have made their contributions on Factors affecting customer loyalty: The third chapter discusses the research methodology. It includes research approach and design; methods of data collection determining the target population sample size and sampling techniques; reliability and validity of data collection instruments; data analysis methods and ethical considerations. The fourth chapter is about data presentation, analysis and discussion of the findings In the fifth and the end chapter, the research findings summarized appropriately. These includes summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

1.7 Definition of key terms

Bottled water: - According to Quality and Standard Authority of Ethiopia (QSAE), industrially processed and bottled water can be classified into two major groups: bottled drinking water (ES 597:2001) and mineral water (ES 621:2001). The former is further classified into carbonated “sparkling” natural water and non-carbonated “still” natural water. If water has been made after possible treatment, effervescent by addition of carbon dioxide then it is called carbonated natural water. Non-carbonated water is by nature and after possible treatment does not contain free CO₂, in excess of the amount necessary to keep dissolved the hydrogen carbonates salts that are present in the water.

Customer loyalty: - is a form of repeat purchasing behavior reflecting a conscious decision to continue buying the same brand, for brand loyalty to exist, a pattern of repeat purchase must be accompanied by an underlying positive attitude towards the brand (Solomon et al., 2006).

Perceived Price:- According to Zeithaml (1988), from the customer view, "price is what is given up or Sacrificed to Obtain a product or service" Bei and Chiao (2001) indicated that "the price is defined as what is given up or sacrificed to acquire a service or product", while Kotler and Armstrong (2012) suggested that "Price is the amount of money charged for a product or a service; the sum of the values that customers exchange for the benefits of having or using a product or service "

Product Quality:- Product quality is the characteristic of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied customer needs (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012).

Customer satisfaction:- Customer satisfaction is defined as an overall evaluation based on the total purchase and consumption experience with the good or service over time (Fornell, Johnson, Anderson, Cha & Bryant 1996). With marketing, customer satisfaction also comes along with it which means it ascertains the expectation of the customer on how the goods and services are being facilitated by the companies. Actionable information on how to make customers further satisfied is therefore, a crucial outcome (Oliver 1999.)

CHAPTER TWO

2. Review of Related Literature

This chapter reviews theories and empirical studies related to customer loyalty and its determining factors and build the theoretical foundation of the research by reviewing the extant literature. Finally, after critical review the conceptual framework of the study is drawn.

2.1. Theoretical review

Literature review is a written summary of journals, essays, and other materials that describe the past; this chapter serves as the foundation for the research. The study's goal was to determine what factors affecting customer loyalty the case of aqua Addis bottled water company.. In order to produce research focused on the research purpose and questions, the researcher conducted a conceptual overview of the study, a theoretical framework, and empirical studies. Within the framework of the conceptual structure, this chapter entailed reviewing numerous research and literatures related to the subject being investigated.

2.2.. Basic terms and terminologies

Customer loyalty:-According to Dowling, et al. (2017), customer loyalty can be said to have happened if individuals utilize a specific shop or get one specific item, as opposed to utilising different shops or purchase items made by different organizations. Customers show customer loyalty when they reliably buy a specific item or brand over a broadened time frame. According to Dowling, et al. (2017), each business organization's achievement relies upon the fulfillment of the customers.

Oliver (1999,33) defines loyalty as "a deeply held commitment to rebuild and re-patronize a preferred product or service in the future despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behaviors. "Customer loyalty is viewed as the strength of the relationship between an individual's relative attitude and re-patronage. Although customer satisfaction is a crucial part of a business, satisfaction alone cannot take a business to a top level. Customer satisfaction produces a positive financial result, especially in regular purchases. Today's unforgiving market where creating and maintaining customer loyalty is more complex than it used to be in the past years. This is because of technological breakthrough and widespread of the internet uses. Loyalty building requires the company to focus the value of its product and services and to show that it is interested to fulfill the desire or build the relationship with customers (Griffin 2002).

Customer satisfaction: -Kotler and Keller (2012) said that "satisfaction is a person's feelings of pleasure or disappointment that result from comparing a product's perceived performance (or outcome) to expectations". Customer satisfaction is measured by using the customer expectations with the performance of the goods or services that can meet the needs and desires of the customers. A satisfied customer means that there are similarities between the performance of the goods and services with the hope of the customers, where it will encourage them to re-purchase the products. At the same time, a disappointed customer would persuade the other customers to not re-purchase and as a result, they will move to another brand competitor. Kotler and Armstrong (2012) defined that "customer satisfaction is the extent to the which a product's perceived performance matches a buyer's expectations." Customer satisfaction consists of several indicators, namely loyalty, satisfaction; repurchase interest, small desire to make a complaint, the willingness to recommend the product, and the reputation of the company (Kotler and Keller, 2012; Nguyen and LeBlanc, 1998).

Several authors have found a positive correlation between customer satisfaction and loyalty (Anderson & Sullivan, 1993; Bearden & Teel, 1980; Bolton & Drew, 1991; Fornell, 1992). Customers may be loyal because of high switching barriers or lack of real alternatives. Customers may also be loyal due to their satisfaction and thus want to continue the relationship. History has proven that most barriers to exit are limited with regard to durability; companies tend to consider customer satisfaction the only viable strategy in order to keep existing customers. Based on Coyne (1989), there are two critical thresholds affecting the link between satisfaction and loyalty. On the high side, when satisfaction reaches a certain level, loyalty increases dramatically; at the same time, when satisfaction declined to a certain point, loyalty dropped equally dramatically (Oliva, Oliver & MacMillan, 1992).

Managers of the company should realize that having satisfied customers is not good enough they must have extremely satisfied customers. Moreover, a small increase in customer satisfaction can results boosted customer loyalty dramatically. (K. Lenin John, pp:116). Loyalty has been widely researched in the domain of marketing. It has been found by researchers that a satisfied customer tends to be loyal. That customer remains loyal to an organization as long as she or he feels that the organization gives him or her better services or products as compared to another organization. In the business context, loyalty is the customer's commitment to do business with a particular organization which effects in repeat purchases of goods and services of that organization. It also results in recommending the goods and services to friends and associates (McIlroy, Barnett, 2000).

The key to the successful adoption of relationship marketing lies in the building of client loyalty in dynamic business environments (Morris et al., 1999). In the words of Shoemaker and Lewis (1999) “. . .loyalty occurs when the customer feels so strongly that you can best meet his or her relevant needs that your competition is virtually excluded from the consideration set and the customer buys almost exclusively from you - referring to you as ‘their restaurant’ or ‘their hotel’.”Oliver (1999) however contradicts this definition on the grounds of being incomplete and failing to provide a unitary definition and that it relies on only three phases of cognition, affect and behavioral intention. He emphasizes on situational influences and adds action as a fourth phase. This phase is characterized by commitment, preference and consistency while recognizing and interacting with the dynamic nature of the marketing environment.

2.2.1. Theoretical Review

2.2.1.1.The concept of customer loyalty

Examining the historical course of the studies with the subject of loyalty it is found that the researches that try to define what loyalty is have significant space. The most basic problem encountered in those studies is the failure to achieve a shared definition of loyalty because although customer loyalty may be a key variable that explains keeping the customer at hand (Wong and Zhou, 2006; Pritchard and Howard, 1997), it has been discussed in time whether loyalty is an attitude or combination of attitude and behavior. According to the approach based on behavior, loyalty is the behavioral reaction based on prejudice as the function of psychological processes by the decision maker in the existence of one or more alternative in time (Jacoby and Keyner, 1973). Behavioral approach explained loyalty basing on the criteria including the share in consumption, consumption probability, probability to consume the product again, repeated consumption behavior, multidirectional consumption behaviors (Kumar and Shah, 2008).

According to the second approach dealt as the combination of attitude and behavior brand loyalty “is a form of repeat purchasing behavior reflecting a conscious decision to continue buying the same brand, for brand loyalty to exist, a pattern of repeat purchase must be accompanied by an underlying positive attitude towards the brand (Solomon et al., 2006). This approach does not include only the past purchasing behaviors and tendencies but also customer attitude and value systems (Sudharshan, 1995). Consequently, according to this approach which was accepted in time, the Customer realizes loyalty in time through repeated consumption of any good or service when the Customer has positive attitude toward the good/service or company providing the good/service (Wong and Zhou, 2006). Moreover, according to Tjiptono (2012), customer loyalty is the customer’s commitment to a brand, based on the very positive attitude and reflected in the consistent repeat purchase

2.3. Types of customer loyalty

All the customers are not same and they do not have same buying habits. The buying habits of customers may determine according to their financial condition, family situation, life style, geographic location and also the relationship with the suppliers and its products. The relationship with the retailer can be influenced by general needs of customers for the retailer's products and services, friends and relatives opinions about the products and suppliers.

Basically, four types of customer loyalty exist in the market. They are; No loyalty, Inertia loyalty,

Laten loyalty and Premium loyalty (Griffin 2002, 22-34).

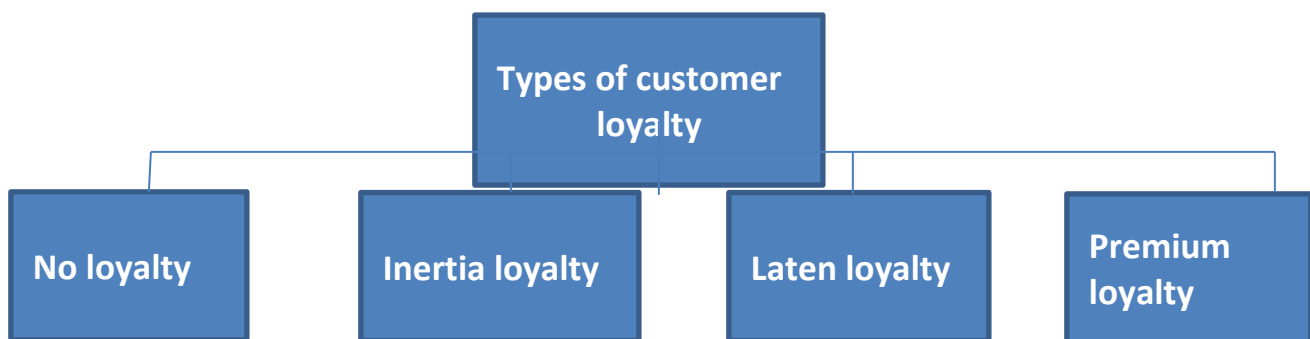


Figure 1. Types of customer loyalty (Griffin 2002, 22)

a. No customer loyalty

The customers who are not loyal with one product or service and the company then they are referred to as no loyalty customer. These customers have weak behavioral and attitude towards a specific vendor. They cannot stay in certain products or services because of various reasons like; habit of testing variety, concerned more on the price rather than quality and so on. They can go anywhere to fulfill their needs and desires. Therefore, they only add certain amount of money to the business so the businesses avoid targeting those customers because they will never be loyal customers.

b. Inertia customer loyalty

Low level of attachment but high repeat purchase of products or services produces inertia loyalty. Then on attitudinal and situational factors affect more for buying. In this type of loyalty, customers buy products or services out of their habits. They only have certain degree of satisfaction with the products and services even they are repeat consumers. This type of loyalty is mostly seen in frequently bought products and services. By actively courting the customers and providing the products or services in

differentiation form compared to other competitor's products can change this type of customers into a higher form of loyal customers.

c. Latent customer loyalty

The customers with high and positive attitude towards a specific supplier but a low repeat purchases are referred as latent loyalty customers. The customers with latent loyalty have a positive attitude towards a specific vendor or products (Harvey 2017). The situational effects such as affordability, narrow distribution channels, inconvenient store location or hours and lack of continuous availability determine the repeat purchases rather than their attitudinal influences. If a company gets success to remove these situational problems can definitely achieve benefits from the customers.

This is the most leverageable loyalty among the four types of customer loyalty.

d. Premium customer loyalty

The customer's with high level of attachment and repeat products and services are known as premium loyalty customers. This type of loyalty is preferred for all customers of every business. These customers are also known as vocal advocates for the products and services. They are the frequent purchasers of products or services and always refer others (their family, friends and relatives) to use it.

2.3.1. Theories of customer loyalty

Judith W Kincaid, (2013) states that customer loyalty is a behavior, built on positive experiences and values. This behavior is buying our product, even though it may not be the most rational decision. Then Hertati & Sumantri (2016) stated that customer loyalty is a behavior that is built through positive experiences and values. This behavior is buying a company's product, even though this does not appear to be a rational decision. Loyal customers are important assets for the company, this can be seen from the characteristics they have. Hermawan Kartajaya (2013) and Griffin (2010) state that loyal customers have characteristics which are also dimensions of loyalty as follows: (1) Make repeated purchases regularly. Customers who are loyal to the products or services they buy will repeat these purchases more than twice at the same company regularly; (2) Buying interline products and services. Furthermore, these loyal customers will expand their loyalty to other products or services made by the same manufacturer. In the end, they are loyal customers to the company forever; (3) Referring to others. Loyal customers will show an attitude of rejection of other products or services because they have trusted and feel part of the company; and (4) Shows immunity to pull from competitors. Loyal customers will not be interested in promotions or offers from other companies.

2.3.2. Levels of customer loyalty

Most scientists agree that customer loyalty is important. Customer loyalty is defined as; "a customer

which over time engage one company to satisfy entirely, or a significant part, of their needs by using the company's products or services" (Blomqvist et al, 2000 page 103). Customer loyalty means that the customer is loyal to the company and only turns to a competitor in exceptional cases. For example, when customers are loyal to a specific hotel chain but the hotel chain does not have a hotel in the area where customers are. Customer loyalty is not a permanent thing. If the customer value decreases to such a level that it becomes obvious to customers that offers from competitors are better, customers will engage in the others instead. Customer loyalty is more important for certain companies.

2.4.The benefits of customer loyalty

Customer loyalty is critical to the conduct of business in today's competitive market. Creating loyal customers is at the heart of every business (Kotler and Keller, 2006). The benefit of customer loyalty to provider of either service or products include lower customer price sensitivity, reduced expenditure on attracting new customers, improved organizational profitability (J Rowley, 2005) and also Loyal customers helping to ensure the company's business success, also enable it to maintain costs lower than those associated with attracting new customers. Consistently assuring high level of customer loyalty not only creates tremendous competitive advantage but also boost employee morale and productivity (Lam et al. 2004). The importance of loyalty is higher in service organizations, so that service organizations should take extra effort to attain higher level of customer loyalty (Ahmed and Abdulrab , 2017). Developing customer loyalty is central particularly in the service sectors because it generate positive word-of-mouth. it is an important factor of market share and profitability. Hence, customer loyalty has a powerful impact on firm's performance and is considered by many companies as an important source of competitive advantage.

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2.4.1. Customer loyalty strategies/programs

Customer loyalty programs help to build personal and emotional relationship between the company and the customers by showing the customers that the company truly values them. It also provide the company the

data on your customers such as their behaviors, needs and other activities so that the company can be able to provide better products and services according to their customers' need (LoyaltyLion 2014).

Ludin & Cheng (2014) describe customer loyalty as a continuous relationship between the customer and the brand. It can be seen as resistance to switch brands in spite of any situation or problem encountered during the business process. Additionally, they describe customer loyalty as repeated purchases of a product from the same brand.

Loyalty programs are a marketing strategy focused on offering benefits to achieve loyal customer retention. These programs are also called frequent purchase programs or reward programs because benefits depend on purchasing frequency (Gómez, Arranz, Cillán & 2006). Meyer-Waarden (2008) states previously used definition of loyalty programs as an integrated system of marketing actions that aims at making customers more loyal by developing a personalized relationship with them. Developing approach treats customer loyalty program as a tool for relationship management.

This tool gives an opportunity to create personalized communication. Companies record information by loyalty cards and possess instruments of dissemination and individualization of marketing mix (Meyer Waarden, 2008). It enables managers to hold customers data and create customer databases. Gómez, Arranz & Cillán (2006) emphasize that customer loyalty program have to build behavioral and affective loyalty. According to behavioral approach, loyalty program play an important role in the purchase frequency. Participants in this program make a higher number of visits to the retailer than non-participants.

2.4.2. Factors affecting customer loyalty

As Kotler et al. (2017) noted, even highly loyal customers can be of different types at one extreme, quietly satisfied, and at the other extreme, ones that cannot wait to tell everybody. Loyalty consists of attitudinal and behavioral components. Attitudinal loyalty means that a customer is willing to purchase the particular product at any reasonable price. Behavioral loyalty means re-purchasing. Some factors that affect customer loyalty are Customer Satisfaction, Product quality, perceived price, product availability and uniqueness. Each of these factors affects customer loyalty in the following ways.

2011.)

2.4.3. Customer Satisfaction

The term "customer satisfaction" refers to a long-term evaluation of a sequence of purchases and consumption of goods or services (Morgeson et al., 2020). According to Kotler (2009: 138), customer satisfaction is the someone's feeling of being contented or disappointed that rises after comparing the expectation with the reality. Consumers' expectations about the quality of a company's products and services may be influenced by its amount of client loyalty. However, the organization must be able to instill client trust so that consumer feedback may be acknowledged more swiftly. This is how a client centered product development process is put into action (Vavra,

2012). Customer satisfaction is strongly impacted by the quality of the service, the quality of the product, and the total value for money (Vavra, 2012). Over the years, a few high-ranking executives have recognized the significance of customer satisfaction and its impact on a company's bottom line (Vavra, 2012).

Customers' satisfaction with a product or service may have a substantial influence on the brand's long-term success. In a highly competitive market, product manufacturers must develop a long-term, sustainable competitive advantage (Sreejesh and Roy, 2015). According to studies, clients differentiate organizations depending on the relationship they have established with them in terms of long-term marketing tactics (Veloutsou, 2015). As a result, scientists are now examining the nature of shifting brand affiliations. Furthermore, businesses must recognize that different price points elicit varied reactions from customers. Huber et al., 2014 conducted an analysis on the link between customer approval of cost and willingness to purchase. Customers may become more loyal to a brand as a result of this price tolerance (Heider and Moeller, 2012; Benoit et al., 2016).

The extant literature in marketing mentions customer satisfaction as a key antecedent to loyalty and repurchase behavior. The general and more accepted view among the marketing scholars and practitioners alike is that customer satisfaction positively impacts purchase intentions as well as behavior. However, it has been found that customer satisfaction, in no way, can guarantee customer loyalty. Therefore, much research has been done in this area and with interesting results. Chandrasekaran et al (2007) mention that in a study for the U.S. Office of Consumer Affairs (Technical Assistance Research Program 1986) it is found that in households that face Service problems, only 54% would maintain brand loyalty even after satisfactory resolution of the problems. They conclude that strongly held satisfaction will only lead to loyalty. In addition, prior relational experience with the service provider would also translate into loyalty.

The impact of the satisfaction in loyalty has been the most popular subject in study of the marketing theory. Therefore, several studies have proved that satisfaction and loyalty have the direct connection between one another. As satisfied customers are loyal and dissatisfied customers are a vendor (Heskett 2011.)

2.5. Product quality

Product quality is the ability of a product to perform its functions; it includes the product's overall durability, reliability, precision, ease of operation and repair, and other valued attributes Kotler and (Armstrong, 2012: 283). According to Dapkevicius and Melnikas (2009), perceived quality has a significant relationship with customer satisfaction. A customer based on quality can judge a product as superior or inferior. Kotler, et al., (2009), argues that perceived quality acts as an intermediary between extrinsic cue and customer perceived value. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2007), customers do have the inherent ability to segment products based on quality. Significantly, products with high quality perceptions have higher satisfaction rates compared to products with poor quality. According to Anderson and Mittal (2000), perceived quality can easily be construed to mean overall assessment of product's ability to satisfy a customer's needed. The connection between perceived quality and customer satisfaction has been determined in previous research. McCullough et al., (2000), argues that the relationship between product qualities is not only significant, but also strong and positive.

Nonetheless, other researchers' have indicated contradicting finding especially in the breweries industry concerning the positive association between the perceived quality and customer satisfaction. There has been no agreement as to whether there exists a relationship between apparent quality and contentment on purchase intentions (Oliver, 2007). According to Tslotsou (2005), some researchers have argued that there is no connection between the two (quality and customer satisfaction). Others researchers have contended that perceived quality is not necessarily an individual matter as companies may have a lot of influence over perceived quality. Cengiz (2010) explains further that perceived quality is the extent of compliance rate between the customer's perceived performance and customer expectations. When the former meets or surpasses the latter then the customer derives a feeling of satisfaction but when it fails to meet the latter, then the customers overall assessment of the experience is dissatisfaction. According to Oliver (2007), therefore, it corrects to say that perceived quality is a subjective concept that is based on a post-use evaluation of the performance of the product against expectation

2.5.1. Perceived Price

prices can be defined as the nominal value charged to the customer to acquire products and to be benefited from the ownership or use of products(Kotler and Armstrong, 1996).

The influence of the price factor on the customer's choice of bottled water brand is the key rational factor influencing the brand choice and building trust in customers through fair pricing has a positive long-term effect. In fact, for some customers, the price is the main factor when choosing the bottled water brand. For most, however, there is a direct trade-off between price and quality. According to Mullarkey (2001), if the brand is of sufficient quality, customers will pay a higher price, some customers' sense value if the price is low, whereas others perceive value if there is a balance between quality and price. Moreover, According to Du Plessis & Rousseau, (2007); Monroe, (2012) consumers evaluate the price with the expected value from the product to enhance the intention to purchasing decision process (Du Plessis & Rousseau, 2007; Monroe,

2012). The level of the perceived price is varying between customers because it based on social and economic factors (Maxwell, 1995).

8.1.1. Brand Availability

Consistency of supply and availability at convenient locations are vital for preference a brand. According to Lin and Chang (2003), convenience of a brand has a significant impact on consumer's brand preference. In other words, easy access to brands is vital when buying any product. Certainly, distribution channels and location are important to brand Accessibility. Moreover, DeChernatory & McDonald (2003) states that consumers are not motivated to search out low involvement brands, manufacturers should ensure wide availability. Any out of stock situations would probably result in consumers switching to an alternative brand.

Within the context of consumer decision making, especially when evaluating potential alternative brands during the pre-purchase stages, the evoked set refers to the specific brands a consumer considers when making a purchase within a specific product category (Lin and Chang, 2003).

Furthermore, once consumers are inside a store, little evaluation is made of competing brands, therefore locating a brand at eye level or very close to the checkout counter is an important facilitator of brand selection (DeChernatory & McDonald, 2003). Products that are convenient to buy in a variety of stores increase the chance of consumers finding and buying them. When consumers are seeking low-involvement product they are unlikely to engage in extensive search, therefore readily availability is important (peter and Donnelly, 2007).

8.2.Theoretical foundation of the study

Customer loyalty has been a major focus of strategic marketing planning (Kotler, 1984) and offers an important basis for developing a sustainable competitive advantage – an advantage that can be realized through marketing efforts (Dick and Basu, 1994). They report that academic research on loyalty has largely focused on measurement issues (e.g., Kahn *et al.*, 1986) and correlates of loyalty with consumer characteristics in a segmentation context (e.g., Frank, 1967).

The theory of reasoned action

The theory of reasoned action was developed to explain how a consumer leads to a certain buying behavior (Fishbein, 1980). The theory of reasoned action asserts that attitude toward buying and subjective norm are the antecedents of performed behavior. The two antecedents (attitude and subjective norm) influence the purchase behavior additively, although a conceptual argument was developed earlier leading to an interaction as well as direct effects (Ryan and Bonfield, 1975). They

report that operational measures of the constructs have been shown to have separate effects on the purchase behavior. If the additively of attitude and subjective norm assumption can be supported, beta weight analysis has implications for marketing strategies as a means of ascertaining whether brand or product purchase intentions are primarily under attitudinal or social influence control. The theory of reasoned action is different from the traditional attitude theories in that it introduces normative influences into the overall model and a causal relationship between the two antecedents and intention. In addition, the incorporation of normative influences explains the inconsistency between attitude and intention, and behavior.

8.2.1. Review of empirical studies

Various empirical research using different methodologies and approaches have been conducted both locally and abroad to investigate brand loyalty In the bottled water industry. Empirical evidence across the globe in this area has been investigated and similarities in findings, contradiction in findings of different scholars and gaps on the subject area is discussed below.

8.2.2. Local studies

These studies frequently examined the question of what factors affect customer loyalty. among the researchers who did a scientific study on this topic were in Ethiopia Hawi teshome (2021) conducted a study on the factors affecting customer loyalty in the brewery industry in the case of meta abo brewery, in sebeta town in view of the four customer loyalty dimensions,(Product quality,Advertisme nt,Group influence and Consumer's situational variation) and how these dimensions are influencing customer loyalty in Addis Ababa market. The researcher took sample size 384 respondents selected and analyzed on the bottled water brands towards; the findings of the study reveal that, out of the proposed four factors, only one factor namely product quality has a statistically significant positive effect on customer loyalty. However, this study couldn't find a statistically significant effect of advertising influence and consumer's situational variation on customer loyalty.

Kidist Bilata(2018) had studied on factors affecting customer loyalty in the case of east Africa bottling S.C at four dimension(Trust, Relationship, Satisfaction and compliant handling) the researcher took a sample of 410 respondents. The researcher found that trust, customer relationship, compliant handling and satisfaction significantly influenced loyalty of customers toward coca cola products.

8.2.3. Abroad Studies

Akhter,et Al (2011) conducted a research on factors influencing customer loyalty by using Customer satisfaction, customer relationship, image of the product, trustworthiness as a determinant variable around the globe in general and in Pakistan in particular and they founds positive relationship among customer satisfaction, customer relationship, image of the product, trustworthiness and customer loyalty. Ahmed, And Abdulrab (2017) exploring the influence of factors on customer loyalty by using customer satisfaction, service quality, trust, perceived value, perceived enjoyment, and technology leads as variables in service sector and they founds that customer satisfaction, service quality, trust, perceived value, perceived enjoyment, and technology have more significant as well as positive Influence on the customer loyalty.

Studies also conducted in banks on factors affecting customer loyalty to see which variable have effect on customer loyalty in different area, Phong (2017) investigate customer loyalty factors in Vietnam Retail Banking Industry by using customer satisfaction, switching cost and trust and found Strong and positive relationship between customer loyalty and its determinants customer satisfaction, switching cost and trust.

Muhammad et al. (2015) used trust, customer satisfaction and service quality to measure Factors affecting Customer Loyalty in Banking Sector in Bahawalpur (Pakistan), they founds Trust, customer satisfaction and service quality has significant effect on customer loyalty. Maroofi (2013) found Trust, habit and reputation have a remarkable effect on customer loyalty on their study on Factors Affecting Customer Loyalty of Using Internet Banking in Iran. Akhter,et Al. (2011) conducted a research around the globe in general and in Pakistan in particular on factors which influence customer loyalty by using Customer satisfaction, customer relationship, image of the product, trustworthiness and they founds 14 that positive relationship among customer satisfaction, customer relationship, image of the product, trustworthiness and customer loyalty. Chunnoo, and Chen (2019) use Service quality, corporate image, trust and switching cost to measure Customer Loyalty determinants on Foreign Banks in Malaysia and found service quality, corporate image and switching costs, are the main factors most likely to influence customer loyalty of foreign banking customers. in Sub-Saharan African banking industry Magasi (2016) conducted research to measure Determinants of customer loyalty by using perceived quality, customer satisfaction switching cost, trust and commitment as a variable and he found perceived quality, customer satisfaction and trust are the major determinants of customer loyalty

The study of brand loyalty has been for at least half a century in the world. As early as 1923, the concept of customer loyalty was put forward for the first time. After that, the academic community has conducted more widely and deeply research on it. Dick and Basu (1994) pointed out that brand loyalty

involves both behavioral loyalty and attitude loyalty. It is a long-term commitment of customers to make repeated purchases for a certain product. The definition, measurement, classification, strategy and influencing factors of brand loyalty are reviewed by Soon and Sangkil (1999). It is pointed out that brand loyalty is a long-term and lasting relationship between brand and customer. The research of brand loyalty should focus on the driving factors of brand loyalty at different levels.

Elena and others (2001) found that brand satisfaction can play a role in brand loyalty only through brand trust and brand satisfaction. In 2005, a positive correlation was found between brand trust and brand loyalty, and brand trust played a role in brand equity through brand loyalty. Nigel (2006) reviewed the research on brand satisfaction and brand loyalty, and analyzed the relationship between brand satisfaction and brand loyalty from the aspects of attitude, behavior and other aspects of brand loyalty. It showed that brand satisfaction was positively related to brand loyalty, and satisfaction has a direct impact on loyalty.

Stephen (2007) studied the influence of brand image on brand loyalty and satisfaction, and pointed out the four elements that constitute the brand image: product appearance, functionality, practicality and sociality. Gholamreza (2011) believes that brand loyalty is directly related to brand image and corporate image, as well as the quality of business services, the confidence of the enterprise and its employees. In general, in the development of current brand loyalty research, most researchers identify and adopt a combination

8.3. Research/ knowledge gap

Even though several studies have been conducted in relation to customer loyalty, both locally and abroad There are inefficient studies conducted on what specific factors are more important on customer loyalty on bottled water sector. Previous studies in Ethiopia more focuses on what factors of intrinsic and extrinsic cues do leads to purchase intention of bottled water and the branding practice of some bottling companies. Other researches focused on trying to determine why people bought bottled water and their purchase intention to buy one brand of bottled water over another, branding practice on package waters and influence of bottled water packaging. Within this context, the main goal of the study is to advance the current knowledge of the factors that underlie bottled water consumption in Addis Ababa, including the preference for specific bottled water (AQUADDIS).

Most of the researches conducted previously on the case of bottled Water Companies are on Service quality and customer satisfaction and this study will try to evaluate and analyze the major determinants of customer loyalty on Aqua Addis bottled Water Company.

8.4. Research hypotheses

Based on the above-related empirical literatures the following research hypotheses are formulated to be tested.

H1: Customer satisfaction positively and significantly affects customer loyalty

H2: Product quality has a positive and significant influence on customer loyalty in the case of aqua Addis bottled water consumers in the city of Addis Ababa.

H3: Perceived price has a negative and significant influence on customer loyalty in the case of aqua Addis bottled water consumers in the city of Addis Ababa.

H4: Brand availability has a positive and significant influence on customer loyalty in the case of aqua Addis bottled water consumers in the city of Addis Ababa

8.4.1. Conceptual Framework

In the empirical part of the literature the student researcher has clearly identified the major gaps in the finding of researches which is conducted in this thematic area. Thus by taking the theoretical factors which influence consumer behavior in line with the factors which is identified by different researchers and by adding important missing variables which were not incorporated in previous researches the following conceptual model is constructed for the research. In this study, the determinants of customer loyalty are product quality, product price, product availability and customer satisfaction. In order to explain how the aforementioned factors affect customer loyalty, the student researcher has used the theory of reasoned action.

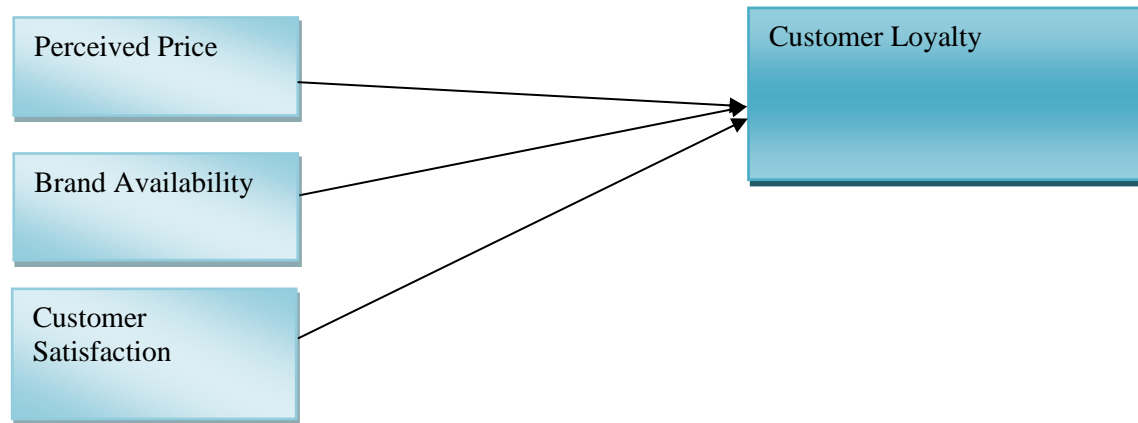
8.4.2. Conceptual framework of the study

Independent Variable

Dependent Variable

Product Quality





Source: own from literature review,2023

CHAPTER THREE

3.1.Research Methodology

This section deals with the research methodology and discusses the research approach and design;

population, sample size, sampling technique; sources of data; data collection instruments; reliability and validity of data collection instruments; data analysis method and ethical considerations.

3.2. Research Approach and Design

In this study, the researcher used both quantitative and qualitative research mixed approach methods.) The logic for mixing both qualitative and quantitative data is because it is recommended neither method is completely sufficient by them to capture magnitude of the problems. When both quantitative and qualitative methods in combination are used, they complement each other and allow for more complete analysis (Tashakkori&Teddlie,2003).Moreover, the researcher applies a combination of descriptive (to describe the level of customer loyalty) and explanatory research design to explain the cause-and-effect relationship between the determining factors and customer loyalty.

3.3. Data sources

Data was gathered from primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected from customers through close ended questionnaire. Moreover, secondary data were gathered from books, journal articles, masters or doctoral theses, statistical reports, etc.

3.4. Population, sample size and sampling technique

3.5. Population

The target population of this study constitutes Aqua Addis bottled water consumers in Addis Ababa. For this study the population is infinite, or it is difficult to determine the total number of Aqua Addis bottled water customers.

Although describing the exact number of the population is difficult to specify the scope, for convenience customers of 12 selected supermarkets found in the city of Addis Ababa based on the proximity to where they're based. Thus, the population is infinite.

3.6. Sample size

Because of the infinite nature of the population a formula propounded by Cochran (1963) was used to determine the size as follows.

$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2}$$

Where:

n_0 = sample size,

Z = value of the normal curve that cuts off an area α at the tails ($1 - \alpha$ equals the desired confidence level, e.g., 95%),

e = the desired level of precision,

p = the estimated proportion of an attribute that is present in the population, and

$q = 1 - p$.

Therefore, the customer's sample size for the study at 95% confidence level and 1% precision is denoted by; $Z = 1.96$, $p = (0.5 \text{ maximum variability assumed})$ since actual variability in the proportion is not known), $q = 0.5$. $e = (0.05)^2$.

Therefore, the sample size for the customers become

$$n = (1.96)^2(0.5)(0.5) = 384$$

For data gathering purpose questionnaire is more convenient for this study. Questionnaire is one the main instrument which is used to gather relevant information from respondents in a written form. In this study the respondents will be the customers of selected supermarkets in Addis Ababa. It is convenient to secure reliable and adequate factual information opinions and attitudes in structural framework from a large number of respondents at a low unit cost (Seyoum and Ayalew, 1989). Thus, this study will employ questionnaire, which is composed of both close and open-ended questions. Variables in the research questionnaire were a hybrid of mostly self-prepared and adapted from different researchers.

3.6.1. Sampling Technique

In this study, it is difficult to determine the total number of Aquadis bottled water customers. Thus, the researcher applied non probabilistic sampling method using convenient sampling technique. Convenience sampling is defined as a method adopted by researchers where they collect market research data from a conveniently available pool of respondents. It is the most commonly used sampling technique as it's incredibly prompt, uncomplicated, and economical. In many cases, members are readily approachable to be a part of the sample. Thus, the sample element is selected based on convenience to be a respondent and proximity to the researcher

3.1. Reliability and validity of data collection instruments

Validity

Validity is concerned with whether the findings are really about what they appear to be about (Sounders et. al., 2003). Validity is defined as the extent to which data collection method or methods accurately

measure what they were intended to measure (Sounders et. al., 2003). Numbers of different steps was taken to ensure the validity of the study: data were collected from trusted sources from respondents and survey was based on literature reviews and reference frames to validate the results. To assure quality of the data a structured standard questionnaire was used, and Pretest was carried out on 20 individuals (5% of sample size) on similar subjects, which were not included in the study. Modifications and adjustments were made on questions and their responses based on lessons from the pretest.

Table 1: Validity

Variable	No of item	Cronbach's Alpha value
Price	4	6.33
Availability	4	0.601
Product quality	3	0.893
Satisfaction	4	0.699
Loyalty	6	0.721

Source: Own survey, 2022

3.2.1. Reliability

There are several different reliability coefficients. One of the most commonly used is called Cronbach's Alpha. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient normally ranges between 0 and 1. The closer the coefficient is to 1, the greater is the internal consistency of the items (variables) in scale. And this study used the Cronbach alpha to check for quality assurance. As can be seen from table 1, to measure independent and dependent variables, the researcher adopted reliable measurement scales developed by prior scholars. The minimum reliability coefficients for the Likert scales used to measure each of the variables exceed 0.70. The Cronbach's alpha values shown in table below were found to be above the lower limit. Thus, the reliability of each item is in the acceptable range.

Table 2: The reliability of data collection instruments

Variables	N of items	Cronbach alpha	Name of the scholar/s who developed the scale, year)
Customer Satisfaction	5	0.910	Customer satisfaction questionnaires (Adopted from Hayes 2008.)

Product Quality	5	.883	Sunkamol Khongsawatvorakul(2017)
Perceived price	4	0.790	Kotler et al. (2005)
Brand Availability	4	.773	Kotler et al. (2005)
Customer loyalty	6	.736	Sunkamol Khongsawatvorakul(2017)

Ethical Consideration

To ensure the study was ethical, the required precautions were taken. The purpose the of information Being collected from respondents was explained to them beforehand. All the data provide via questioner will only be utilized for academic research purposes and will remain private. Additionally, they are given the assurance that a research Study will remain anonymous. Their privacy and identity will remain private, as promised.

3.7.Method of Data Analysis

Pertinent data for the study will be gathered via structured questionnaire. Data analysis that will deploy in this research will be descriptive analysis and multiple linear regression analysis. Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation) will be used to assess the level of customer loyalty and, inferential statistics (Pearson correlation and multiple linear regression analysis) will be employed to investigate the cause-and-effect relationship between variables.

3.8.Model Specification

The equation of regressions on this study is generally built based two sets of variables, namely dependent variable (Customer Loyalty) and independent variables (Customer satisfaction, Perceived price, Product quality, and Brand availability). The basic objective of using regression equation on this study was to make the study more effective at describing, understanding and predicting the stated variables.

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon$$

Where: Y is the outcome or dependent variable Customer Loyalty

X₁ = Customer Satisfaction

X₂ = Perceived Price

X₃ = Product Quality

X₄ = Brand Availability

B₀, β₁, β₂, β₃, β₄, are the coefficients associated with each independent variable which measures the change in the mean value of Y, per unit change in their respective independent variables.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the results of study are, examined, interpreted and presented in detail. This chapter begins by presenting the reliability and validity test, response rate, demographic information of the respondents, followed by a descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analysis. The analysis section is organized as per specific objectives.

4.2 Response Rate

A total of 384 questionnaires were distributed to the final consumers Aqua Addis bottled water who are found in Addis Ababa. From 384 questionnaires a total 356 (93%) were returned, whereas the rest 28 (3. %) were not returned therefore, 356 (93%) questionnaire was valid for analysis, Besides, the data extracted were coded and entered to Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics(correlation and regression analysis) as discussed below. The subsequent chapter presents the data along with its statistical analysis. The findings are then presented and analyzed with regard to research objectives.

4.3. Demographic Characteristics of survey respondents

This section provides a profile of respondents who involved in the study and it denotes basic characteristics. The information generated to address the stated research objectives is solicited from respondents with diverse demographic characteristics. This part of the questionnaire requested a limited amount of information related to personal and professional characteristics of respondents. Accordingly, the demographic variables about the respondents were summarized and described in the next table. These variables include: sex, age, educational status, & monthly income of the respondents included in this study.

As we can see from the table 4.1 below out of the total respondents, 138 (38.8%) are female while the rest 218 (61.2%) are male respondents which shows more or less proportionate representation of gender in the sample used. Regarding the age of respondent's majority of the respondents 144 (40.4%) are between the ages of 26-35 followed by the group within the age group of 18-25, 83 (23.3%) this shows majority of the respondents are middle aged. The rest of the respondents consists, 65 (18.3 %) with the age of 36-44, 64 (18.0%) are above the age of 45.

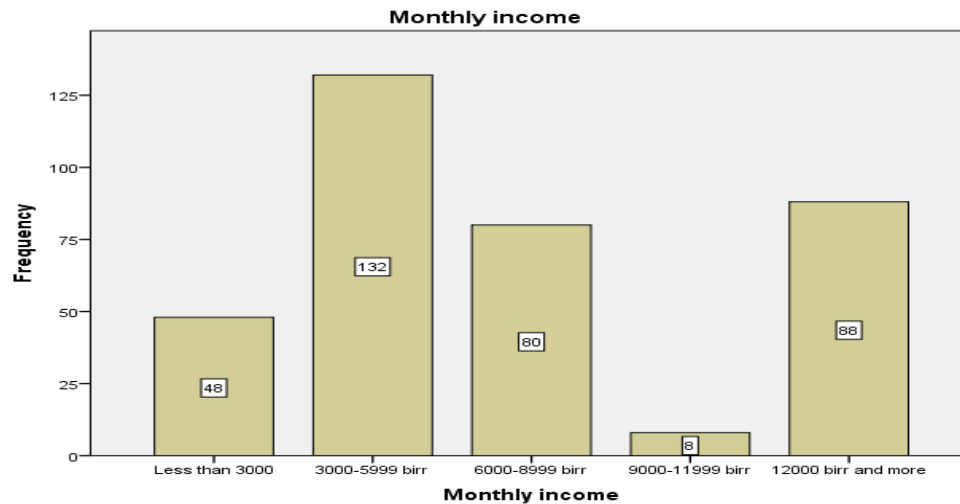
From the table above (4.1) we can see that majority of respondents have first degree representing 153 (43.0%) of total respondents followed by Masters and above holders 92 (25.8%) and Diploma holders represent 70 (19.7%) this shows that majority of the respondents are well educated. the remaining respondents 41 (11.5%) attended secondary school.

Table 3: demographic characteristics of the respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage %
Gender		
Male	218	61.2
Female	138	38.8
Total	356	100%
Age		
18-25 years	83	23.3
26-35 years	144	40.4
36-44 years	65	18.3
45 and above years	64	18.0
Total	356	100%
Educational qualification		
9-12	41	11.5
Diploma	70	19.7
First Degree	153	43.0
Masters and above	92	25.8
Total	356	100%

Source: Own survey, 2022

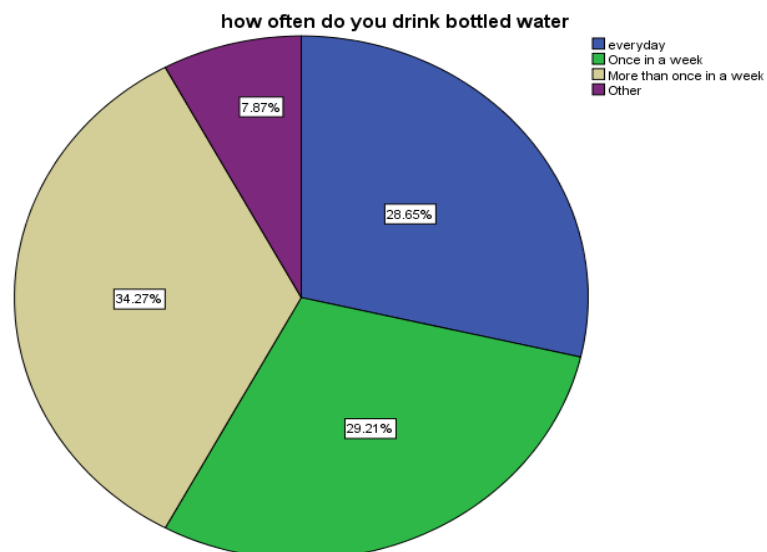
Figure 2. Monthly incomes of the respondents



Source: Own survey, 2022

Regarding the income level of respondents, the majority of 132(37.1) of the respondents have a monthly income between 3000 and 5999 ETB followed by 88(24.7) who earn a monthly income of 12000 and above. 80(22.5) of respondents earn between 6000-8999 followed by 48(13.5) who earn monthly income less than 3000 while the rest 8(2.2) have monthly income of between 9000- 11999 ETB.

Figure 3. Frequency of bottled water consumption



Source: Own survey, 2022

Frequency of bottled water consumption

As can be seen from Figure 4, the largest group of respondents who frequently consumed bottled water more than once in a week constitutes 34.27% of survey respondents. The second group was a group of respondents who frequently consumed bottled water once in a week constitutes 29.21% of respondents. The third group was the groups of respondents who frequently consumed everyday constitute 28.65% of respondents. The fourth group was the group of respondents who replies other constitutes (7.87%) This shows that a growing number of people are increasing their bottled water consumption.

Table 4: Familiarity of respondents with Aqua Addis bottled water

How familiar are you with aqua Addis spring bottled water	Frequency	Percent
use it only sometimes	273	76.7
I am aware but have never used it	5	1.4
use it on a regular basis	78	21.9
Total	356	100.0

Source: Own survey, 2022

As indicated in table 4, the familiarity of the respondent with Aqua Addis bottled water 273 (76.7%) of the respondents use aqua Addis bottled water only sometimes which is the largest group of respondents, and 78 (21.9%) of the respondents use it on a regular basis, the least 5(1.4%) of respondents answered that they are aware of aqua Addis bottled water but never used it. We can understand from this result that most bottled water consumers in Addis Ababa are aware of Aqua Addis bottled water.

4.2.Descriptive statistics for determinants of customer loyalty

Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) was used in order to assess the perception of customers towards the determinants of customer loyalty (product, price, product availability and customer satisfaction).

In this section of the analysis, the customer's response were used to assess their perception level on determinants of customer loyalty in Aqua Addis bottling water. From the collected data, mean scores and standard deviations were calculated for all Five-Point Likert Scale items. Then descriptive statistics, mean and standard deviation were employed to examine the level of customer loyalty in Aqua Addis bottled water.. In this study, the mean values were interpreted based on the criteria adopted from Al-Sayaad et al. (2006).

Table 5: Criteria to interpret mean values

Mean	Response
------	----------

From 1.00 to less than 1.80	Strongly Disagree
From 1.80 to less than 2.60	Disagree
From 2.60 to less than 3.40	Neutral
From 3.40 to less than 4.20	Agree
From 4.20 to less than 5.00	Strongly Agree

Source: Al-Sayaad et al. (2006)

3.1.Descriptive statistics for Product Price

Table 6: Mean and Standard Deviation Results of product Price

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I buy Aqua-Addis bottled water because the price is affordable for me	356	3.72	1.036
I prefer a bottled water brand that is reasonably priced	356	4.06	.810
Low price is one of my priorities when making a buying decision	356	3.71	1.255
I am willing to pay a higher price for my preferred brand of bottled water	356	3.26	1.416
Grand Mean	3.6875		

Source: Own survey, 20222

Price plays a fundamental role in influencing consumers ‘perception of products, increasing demand, attracting customers, and promoting brand loyalty, among other things. With this respect, respondents are asked with four items using five point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree). The mean score of the item construct ranges between 4.06 and 3.26 and the standard deviation ranged between 1.036 and 0.810 which show small level of variation in the responses. The statement which respondents agree with most was “I prefer a bottled water brand that is reasonably priced” (M=4.06 and SD= 0.810) other respondents (M= 3.26 and SD= 1.416) differently agreed on the issue that they are willing to pay higher price for bottled water of their choice. The statement indicating it the least level of agreement. While the other respondents (M= 3.71 and SD= 1.255) agreed with saying that “Low price is one of my priorities when making a buying decision”. The two items that are affordable price (M= 3.72 and SD= 1.036). And reasonably priced (M= 4.06 and SD= 0.810).contribute more to the overall average.

As the grand mean (**3.6875**) shows that overall respondents were agreed that price has undeniable role in making consumers of the product loyal or not. This finding demonstrates how customers of aqua Addis bottled water is impacted by pricing differences across different bottled water brands. Consumers may want to know how much different brands of bottled water cost before choosing a bottled water brand this result implies price play a greater role in customer loyalty.

3.2. Descriptive statistics for product Availability

Table 7: Mean and Standard Deviation Results of Availability

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I prefer a brand of bottled water, which is widely available	356	4.04	.892
I buy any kind of bottled water I found in my surrounding	356	3.76	1.029
I buy the first brand of bottled water I recognize in a store display	356	3.73	1.103
If Aqua-Addis bottled water is not available in the store, I will buy any kind of bottled water brand.	356	4.02	.875
Grand Mean	3.8875		

Source: Own survey, 2022

Product availability is a vital determinant in brand performance, and distribution power is unquestionably a crucial element that influences brand preference and, eventually, brand loyalty. A product's ease of access has a significant impact on consumer purchasing decisions.

In this respect Table 4.1 Availability was assessed by four measurement items. According to the mean score of the items that describes the effect of availability on Aqua Addis bottling water consumers loyalty on analysis, it was revealed that the majority of the respondents with mean value of 4.04 and standard deviation 0.892 agreed by saying that "I prefer a brand of bottled water which is widely available" and with the mean value of 4.02 and with standard deviation 0.875 agreed that by saying "If Aqua-Addis bottled water is not available in the store, I will buy any kind of bottled water brand". The remaining two dimensions scored with mean score ranging from 3.73 to 3.76 respectively. This response indicates that brand availability has effect on customer loyalty.

And also availability has been shown to have relatively higher grand mean score (**3.8875**) this shows that consumers have a strong bond with the brand that was probably accessible to them. Indicating that the wider availability of aqua Addis bottled water brand has greater significance influence on customer's loyalty that the other factors under consideration.

3.2.1. Descriptive statistics for Product quality

Table 8: Mean and Standard Deviation Results for Product quality

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I choose to drink Aqua Addis bottled water because I believe it has high quality	356	3.73	.818
I drink Aqua Addis bottled water because I enjoy its taste	356	3.78	.842
I prefer Aqua Addis because it has good content and is better for health.	356	3.84	.839
I buy Aqua addis bottled water because i consider it has consistent quality	356	3.67	.672
Grand Mean	3.755		

Source: Own survey, 2022

According to Aaker (1996), Perceived Quality is the customer's judgment about a product's overall Excellence or superiority that is different from objective quality. Perceived quality is hence formed to judge the overall quality of a product. Hence, five items related to perceived quality were placed for the respondents and the result of the analysis is shown in the table above. In regard to this four items were presented to respondents. Accordingly, the mean score of the item construct ranges between 3.67 and 3.84 and the standard deviation ranged between 0.818 and 0.839 which show low level of variation in the responses. The statement which respondents agree with most was "I prefer Aqua Addis because it has good content and is better for health". (M=3.84 and SD= 0.839). the second response "I drink Aqua Addis bottled water because I enjoy its taste" (M= 3.78 and SD= 0.842).the rest two items which are "I choose to drink Aqua Addis bottled water because I believe it has high quality" (M= 3.73 and SD= 0.818) and "I buy Aqua Addis bottled water because i consider it has consistent quality" (M= 3.67 and SD= 0.672) shows that most of the respondents were agreed positively to the product quality of aqua Addis bottled water.

The grand mean for the perception of Product quality is (**3.755**) indicating that most of respondents were substantially agree towards the statements specified in the study. This suggests that one of the important considerations in customer loyalty of aqua Addis bottled water brands was product quality.

3.2.1. Descriptive statistics for customer Satisfaction

Table 9: Mean and Standard Deviation Results of customer Satisfaction

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am satisfied with the decision to choose Aqua-adis bottled water.	356	3.62	.666
Aqua-adis bottled water leaves me a pleasant impression	356	3.60	.649
Aqua-addis bottled water fully met my needs.	356	3.70	.621
I am more likely to repurchase Aqua-adis bottled water	356	3.70	.629
Grand Mean		3.655	

Source: Own survey, 2022

Satisfaction is a combination of consumers' evaluation before buying product and their response about the service or the product after they buy the product (Adjei and Denanyoh, 2014).

In order to determine the level of satisfaction that customers have for aqua Addis bottled water, the respondents were asked to answer four items, whether they are satisfied with the decision to choose aqua Addis bottled water and they respond their level of agreements with ($M = 3.62$ and $SD = 0.666$) and for the item "Aqua-Addis bottled water leaves me a pleasant impression" they respond the level of their agreements with ($M = 3.60$ and $SD = 0.649$) the third item was "Aqua-addis bottled water fully met my needs" the respondents agreed with ($M = 3.70$ and $SD = 0.621$) The remaining one item was "I am more likely to repurchase Aqua-Addis bottled water" they respond with ($M = 3.70$ and $SD = 0.629$) "This shows that the majority of the respondents are satisfied with aqua Addis bottled water.

The grand mean for the satisfaction is (**3.655**) this demonstrating that the majority of respondents agree with the study's specific statements. Therefore, we can conclude that there is a link between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Both concepts must be incorporated together to achieve the desired goals of the company which are market share and profitability.

3.2.1. Customer Loyalty

Table 10: Mean and Standard Deviation Results of Customer loyalty

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I feel I am loyal to Aqua Addis bottled water	351	2.88	1.162
I would buy Aqua Addis bottled water rather than any other brands available	356	3.63	.823
I am willing to recommend others to buy Aqua Addis bottled water	356	3.61	.664

When I drink bottled water next time, I will buy the same brand of as the last time	356	3.49	.841
Whenever I need to drink bottled water, I always drink Aqua Addis brand every time	356	3.30	1.041
I am likely to purchase Aqua Addis bottled water in the future	356	3.79	.685
Grand Mean	3.45		

Source: Own survey, 2022

As shown in Table 4 above customer loyalty was assessed by six measurement items. According to the mean score of items that describes customer loyalty (which is the dependent variable for this study) on analysis, from these six items that measures customer loyalty in this study, the item “I feel I am loyal to Aqua Addis bottled water” has the least mean value ($M = 2.88$ and $SD = 1.162$) which indicate the respondents Neutral. The remaining five items that presented to respondents, the answers show that the customer of aqua Addis bottled water are agreed with all items, which is “I am likely to purchase Aqua Addis bottled water in the future” ($M = 3.79$ and $SD = 0.685$), “I am willing to recommend others to buy Aqua Addis bottled water” ($M = 3.61$ and $SD = 0.664$), “When I drink bottled water next time, I will buy the same brand of as the last time” ($M = 3.49$ and $SD = 0.841$), “Whenever I need to drink bottled water, I always drink Aqua Addis brand every time” ($M = 3.30$ and $SD = 1.041$) Respectively.

The grand mean for customer loyalty is **3.45** this indicates that most of the customers of aqua Addis bottled water are loyal to the brand.

4.1. Inferential Analysis

4.2.4.3.1 Pearson Correlation

4.3. Inferential Analysis

Here below the study were intended to examine the cause-and-effect relationship between price, Availability, product quality and satisfaction on consumer’s loyalty.

4.2.1. Pearson Correlation

To determine the existence and level of association, the study used bivariate correlation from which Pearson’s correlation coefficient is considered. Pearson’s correlation coefficient falls between -1.0 and +1.0, indicates the strength and direction of association between the two variables (Field, 2005). The Pearson’s correlation coefficient (r) was used to conduct the correlation analysis to find the level and direction of the relationships between the dependent and independent variables. It was also used to rank the variables that have the strongest associations with customer loyalty. Correlations of 0.30 are

regarded to mention worthy (Cohen, 1988). High correlation coefficients illustrate higher level of association between the variables i.e. dependent and independent. According to Cohen (1988), the value of Pearson's correlation is divided into three areas. A correlation coefficient between 0.10 and 0.29 will indicate a weak correlation, a correlation coefficient between 0.30 and 0.49 will indicate a medium correlation, and a correlation coefficient between 0.50 and 1.0 will indicate a strong correlation.

The bivariate correlation of a two-tailed test confirms the presence of statistically significant difference at probability level $p < 0.05$ i.e., assuming 95% confidence interval on statistical analysis.

Table 11: Pearson Correlation

Correlations						
		Dependent	Price	Availability	Quality	Satisfaction
Dependent	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
Price	Pearson Correlation	-.021	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.691				
Availability	Pearson Correlation	.717**	.160*	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.002			
Quality	Pearson Correlation	.593**	.153*	.819**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.004	.000		
Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.716**	.099	.903**	.802**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.061	.000	.000	

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

Source: Own survey, 20222

The correlation matrix between different factors was shown in the above Table. By looking at the correlation matrix between the factors it can be understood that product availability was, the most correlated element with Consumer loyalty. From the finding of the study out of the four independent

variables price found to be statistically insignificant with consumer loyalty but the other variables have different level of association with the dependent variable. This matrix does not show the causation of the variables rather showing the magnitude of their association.

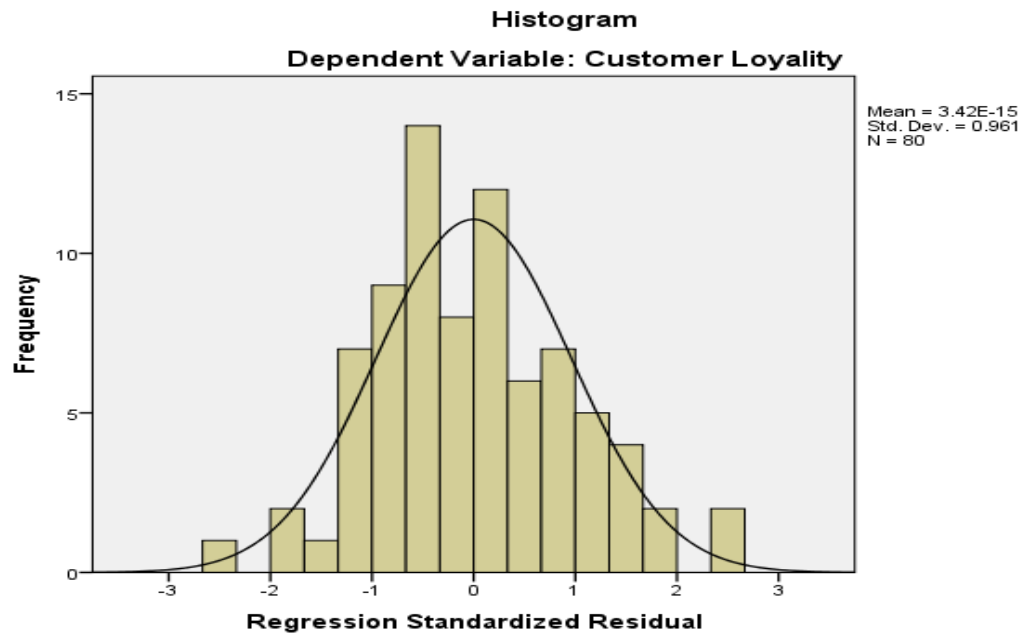
From the Pearson correlation result Consumer loyalty and availability ($r = .717$ and $p = 0.00$). This result shows consumer loyalty and availability of the product has a positive and statistically significant relationship since the p value is less than 0.05. Consumer Loyalty and product quality ($R = .593$ and $P = 0.00$) also have positive association with one another. This result clearly shows that consumer loyalty and product quality have a significant and positive impact on making the consumers more productive. From the Pearson correlation result consumer loyalty and satisfaction ($r = .716$ and $p = 0.00$). This result shows consumer loyalty and satisfaction has a positive and statistically significant relationship since the p value is less than 0.05.

4.2.2. Multiple Regression Analysis

Before running a multiple regression, it's better to check the assumptions, there are several assumptions that we need to check if our data meet the assumptions.

Assumption 1: Normality Assumption

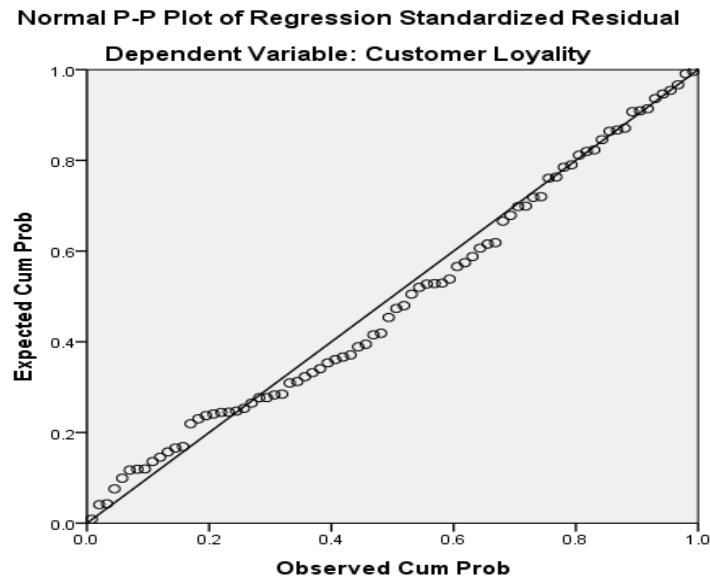
Figure 5. Normality



Skewness and kurtosis used to evaluate whether the variables are normally distributed. Skewness is a measure of degree of asymmetry or departure from symmetry of a distribution, while kurtosis is a measure of the extent to which observations cluster around the central point (peakedness). The skewness and the kurtosis of the variables for the sample are within the range for normality (-1.0 to +1.0). So the data set has been normally distributed and appropriate for further data analysis.

Assumption 2: Linearity assumption

Figure 4. Linearity



The first assumption of multiple regressions is that the relationship between the independent and dependent variable can be characterized by a straight line. As the graph below shown in this paper assumption of linearity is met.

Assumption 3: Multicollinearity

Table 12: Multicollinearity

Coefficients			
Model		Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
1	Price	.959	1.043
	Product Availability	.357	6.369
	Product Quality	.306	3.267
	Satisfaction	.371	5.862
a. Dependent Variable: Customer Loyalty			

We can also test this assumption by looking at the Coefficients table. This allows us to more formally check that our predictors (or IVs) are not too highly correlated. We can use VIF and Tolerance statistics to assess this assumption. For the assumption to be met VIF scores to be well below 10, and tolerance

scores to be above 0.2; so, we can say that multi collinearity issues has not been an issue.

Skewness and kurtosis used to evaluate whether the variables are normally distributed. Skewness is a measure of degree of asymmetry or departure from symmetry of a distribution, while kurtosis is a measure of the extent to which observations cluster around the central point (peakedness). The skewness and the kurtosis of the variables for the sample are within the range for normality (-1.0 to +1.0). So the data set has been normally distributed and appropriate for further data analysis.

1. Assumption 4: Homoscedasticity assumption

Figure 5. Heteroscedastic



As the predicted values increase (along the X-axis), the variation in the residuals should be roughly similar. In this specific case the assumption is met, the scatter plot is in a random array of dots. So, the assumption of *homoscedasticity* has been met.

Table 13: Model summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.745 ^a	.555	.549	.47301

a. Predictors: (Constant), Satisfaction, Perceived Price, product quality, Availability

R^2 = the amount of variance in the dependent variable that is accounted for or explained by the independent variable. The Adjusted R^2 of 0.549 means that Price, product availability, product quality and satisfaction accounts for 54.9 % of the variance in Consumer loyalty to Aqua Addis bottled water.

Table 14: Analysis of variance

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	97.751	4	24.438	109.223	.000 ^b
	Residual	78.534	351	.224		
	Total	176.285	355			
a. Dependent Variable: Dependent						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Customer Satisfaction, Price, Product quality, Availability						

ANOVA tells us whether the model, overall, is acceptable from a statistical perspective i.e. whether the independent variables are in a significantly good degree of prediction of the outcome variable (Hair et al., 2004). As the results of ANOVA test this revealed that the combined independent variables have a statistically significant effect on consumer loyalty. This can be explained by F values (109.223) and high p values (.000) which are statistically significant at 99% confidence interval.

Table 15: Coefficients of the regression analysis

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.985	.143		6.884	.000
	Price	-.369	.110	-.122	-3.355	.001
	Availability	.393	.078	.452	5.023	.000
	Quality	-.033	.049	-.043	-.671	.502
	Satisfaction	.275	.067	.355	4.112	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Customer Loyalty						

This part of the output was concerned with the measurements of the model. In multiple regressions, the model takes the type of an equation that contains a coefficient (**B**) for each independent variable. The first part of Table 4.6 shows the estimates for the **B** values and these values indicate the individual contribution of each predictor to the regression model. The **B** value tells regarding the link between customer loyalty and each predictor. If the value was positive, the researcher would tell that there was a positive relationship between the predictors and the outcome whereas a negative coefficient represents a negative relationship.

Based on the p value from the listed explanatory variables (Price, availability and satisfaction) had statistically significant effects on consumer's loyalty. But Quality of the product was found to be statistically insignificant since the p value is greater than 0.05. ($\beta = -.033$, & $p > 0.05$).

The results of multiple regressions, as presented in the above table revealed that price had a Negative and significant effect on consumers loyalty toward Aqua Addis Bottled water ($\beta = -.369$, & $p < 0.05$). Other things remaining constant, a one-birr increment on the price of aqua Addis, it would decrease consumers loyalty by -0.369 Unit. The finding shows that there is an indirect relationship between Price and consumer loyalty. Consumers tend to be loyal when the price of the product meets their expectations.

The findings of this study also found that there is a positive relationship between product availability and consumer loyalty as mentioned on table above. ($\beta = .393$, & $p < 0.05$). Based on the regression analysis result one percent increase in product availability would result in a 39% increase in consumer

loyalty intention and other variables remain constant. This result implies that availability of the product is one of the determining factors to earn a long-term relationship with their customers and to make the consumers repeatedly purchase Aqua Addis Bottled water.

As the result shows that Satisfaction found to be statistically significant and positive effect on consumer loyalty ($\beta = .275$, & $p < 0.05$). Since the p value is .000 and the beta coefficient is .275. This result clearly indicated that a unit increase in consumer satisfaction would result in 27.5 percent increase in consumer loyalty toward Aqua Addis bottled water. This implies that making the consumer satisfied in their products will enables the organization to make the consumer loyal in the long-term objectives and loyal clients will spend more money in their products. They will speak of you to their friends and family.

4.2.3. Discussion of Regression Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

The ultimate objective of the research is to examine determinants of customer loyalty, in the case of aqua Addis bottled water. The regression result shows that there is a strong positive and negative impact of factors that affect customer loyalty. The study's hypothesis testing was made based on coefficients (β) and probability values (P). The values of the unstandardized beta coefficients (β) indicate the effects of each independent variable on the dependent variable. Furthermore, the values of the unstandardized beta coefficients in the Beta column of table 4.12 above indicate which independent variable makes the strongest contribution in explaining the dependent variable (customer loyalty) when the variance explained by all other independent variables in the model is controlled. Hence using those coefficient results, the proposed hypotheses for this study were tested as follows.

H1: Customer satisfaction positively and significantly affects customer loyalty

Multiple regressions were performed using SPSS to test the hypothesis. The results show the overall fitness of the model described in the preceding paragraphs as well as the importance of each independent variable in affecting the dependent variable. The regression analysis revealed that customer loyalty is positively and statistically significantly impacted by customer satisfaction ($\beta = 0.275$, $p = 0.000$). Customer loyalty will increase by 27.5% on average if the predictor variable (customer satisfaction) goes up by one unit. As a result, the study does not disprove the research hypothesis. Therefore, H1 is accepted.

Several studies have proved that satisfaction and loyalty have the direct connection between one another. As satisfied customers are loyal and dissatisfied customers are a vendor (Heskett 2011.)

H2: perceived price has a negative and significant influence on customer loyalty

In this hypothesis testing provided that the coefficient of Perceived price was calculated to be $-.369$, This indicates that keeping other factors constant, a unit increasing in Price causes a 36.9% decrement in customer loyalty of bottled water. There was indirect relationship between Price (whose t-statistic value was found to be -3.355 at p-value of 0.001) and Customer Loyalty of Aqua Addis bottled water. Therefore, H2 is accepted. According to Du Plessis & Rousseau, (2007); Monroe, (2012) consumers evaluate the price with the expected value from the product

H3: Product quality positively and significantly affects customer loyalty

Presented on the table above, the study indicates Product quality has a positive and standardized coefficient Beta (β) value of ($\beta = -.033$) which shows a significant effect on the overall Customer Loyalty; However, the statistically significant marker (p) of $.502$ is above the acceptable threshold of ($p < .05$). Hence, the hypothesis is rejected as it is statistically insignificant. Product quality has no impact on customer loyalty of aqua Addis bottled water brand.

H4: Brand Availability positively and significantly affects customer loyalty

According to the findings of multiple regressions presented in table 4.12, taking brand availability into account had a statistically significant effect on Customer loyalty ($=0.393$ and $p = 0.000$). This implies that if our predictor variable (Brand Availability) increased by one unit, on-average Customer Loyalty would improve by 39.3%. Thus, the researcher failed to reject the research hypothesis. This research supported DeChernatory & McDonald (2003) states that consumers are not motivated to search out low involvement brands, manufacturers should ensure wide availability.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This chapter presents the Summary, conclusions and recommendation derived from the data analysis carried out in the previous section.

5.1. Summary of major finding

The main objective of the study was to investigate factors affecting customer loyalty the case of Aqua Addis bottling water in Addis Ababa. Accordingly, the following are major findings of the study.

In terms of demographics characteristics between the two gender categories, there is a difference in the consumption of bottled water: of the respondents, 38.8% were female while 61.2% were mostly men. In this case, Males are more likely than females to drink bottled water. Regarding of age the use of bottled water is concentrated among young people between the ages of 26 and 35 and 18 and 25 years, according to the second parameter of the demographic profile of respondents to this survey, who are closely followed by adults aged 36 to 44 years. Finally, a smaller proportion of the population was over 45 years old.

Regarding, education level of the participants larger numbers of respondents have University graduate or more.

This study also tried to assess the consumption rate of the respondents. The results showed that the majority of the respondents consumed bottled more than once in a week. Next to more than once in a week consumption of bottled water, once in a week bottled water consumer comes to second, the third group of respondents is who consume bottled water every day.

In addition to this the study tried to assess about the familiarity of the respondents with aqua Addis bottled water.

In addition to this, the study tried to assess the familiarity of the respondents with Aqua Addis bottled water. The majority of the respondents use Aqua Addis bottled water only sometimes. The other respondents who consume Aqua Addis bottled water on a regular basis. The last and smallest group of respondents. Responded by saying they are aware of it but have never used it. As a result, the student researcher can conclude that the majority of respondents are familiar with Aqua Addis bottled water.

The results of descriptive analysis indicate that four components of factors affecting customer loyalty of aqua Addis bottled water,(product quality, price, satisfaction and availability) are well correlated with loyalty of Aqua Addis bottling water customers. Correlation coefficient shows that there is strong relationship with two of the independent variables which is availability and satisfaction with dependent

variable (customer loyalty) i.e. 0.717 and 0.716 respectively. The correlation between the rest of two independent variables (: price, and product quality) variable and dependent variable (customer loyalty) i.e. 0.593 and -0.021 respectively.

The result of multiple regression analysis between dependent variable (customer loyalty) and independent variables (price, satisfaction, availability and product quality)

among the four independent variables the multiple regression analysis revealed that Availability, price, and satisfaction were a significant predictor of consumers of Aqua Addis bottling water loyalty.

The result of the regression analysis shows that there is a positive and significant relationship between independent variables and customer loyalty. The adjusted R Square ($R^2 = 0.549$) shows the explanatory power of all independent variables involved in the study. Hence availability, price, satisfaction and product quality jointly determine (explain) 54.9% of the variance in customer loyalty.

Among variables those have a significance relationship with Aqua Addis bottling water consumer loyalty (price, availability satisfaction and product quality). Customer satisfaction and brand availability has most significant relationship with customer loyalty of aqua Addis bottled water. With the product quality was found to be the list insignificance variable that influences ($\beta = -0.033$ $p = 0.502$) the Aqua Addis bottling water customer loyalty. This indicates that except for product quality all independent variables have an impact on customer loyalty of aqua Addis bottled water. However, this study couldn't find a statistically significant effect of product quality on customer loyalty.

5.2. Conclusion

According to chapter four analyses, Aqua Addis bottling water consumers have given their response about factors that affect customer loyalty on Aqua Addis bottling water. As seen on chapter four data results and discussion, it can be concluded that the objectives of the research have been completely met.

The findings lead to a conclusion there was a significant relationship between availability and customer loyalty. Since these factor is found to be the most important factor which determines customer loyalty

The researcher suggests that manufacturers of bottled water should take into account their distribution networks in order to guarantee level of product availability that can able to satisfy given market demand throughout the country, provide product easily available/accessible at right time and place, and ensure consistent supply of their product. These factors are found to be the most important factors that determine customer loyalty. In conclusion, conceptually, it is also thought that the most crucial element in convenient good distribution is the manufacturer's ability to develop effective distribution strategies for their goods.

The findings lead to a conclusion there was a significant relationship between price and customer loyalty. It was concluded that price is a critical factor as it is one of the major attribute of a product that consumers look at Aqua Addis bottling water loyalty decision.

Water is generally considered a basic or necessary good, and an increase or decrease will not necessarily affect the demand for it. But, bottled water is different in respect to its value. Value in terms: of convenience, physical, time, safety and energy costs. This is why management is advised to structure their prices in a way that is/and perceived as affordable and fair. Prices for bottled water should be adjustable as finding shows that customers are more likely to choose affordable, reasonable, even lower for their preferred brands, to satisfy their drinking water needs. Thus management of aqua Addis bottled water are advised to take in to consideration the above factors while they set price.

The study concluded that there was a significant relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty therefore, aqua Addis bottled Water Company should identify the way to satisfy their customers' needs and also it's advisable to know what customers of aqua Addis will expect from the product. The findings in this study indicated that customer satisfaction directly influenced the level of customer loyalty. The positive relationship identified between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty may be interpreted as satisfied customers having positive behavioral intentions to revisit or continue using the same bottled water brand. This means that satisfied customers are likely to engage in positive word-of- mouth and to continue engaging with the same brand which helps the bottled water company reduce attrition and costs for acquiring new customers. The impact of the satisfaction in loyalty has been the most popular subject in study of the marketing theory. According to (Heskett 2011.) proved that satisfaction and loyalty have the direct connection between one another. As satisfied customers are loyal and dissatisfied customers are a vendor this link is very strong, and it shows that if the aqua Addis bottled Water Company's management want to make their customers loyal, they should have some unique strategies to satisfy their customers.

5.3. Recommendations

Based on the major findings of the study and the conclusions drawn above, the following recommendations are made.

- The results of this study showed a strong link between customer satisfaction and loyalty which implies that if aqua Addis bottled water marketers want to increase customer loyalty, they should formulate and implement some unique strategies to satisfy their customers.
- Finding shows that perceived Price has a negative effect on customer loyalty, this implies customers are more likely to choose affordable, reasonable, economical brands even if it is not their preferred brands, Thus management is advised to take in to consideration the above factors while they set price for their product.
- Since availability is found to be the most important factor which determines customers loyalty, the researcher recommends that manufacturers of aqua Addis bottled water should consider their distribution networks; to guarantee level of product availability that can able to satisfy given market demand throughout the city, provide product easily available at right time and place, ensure consistent supply of their product.

The results suggest that Aqua Addis bottled water should improve its product features in terms of pricing, customer satisfaction, and availability in order to compete successfully in the market given the fierce competition in Ethiopia's bottled water sector.

Additionally, it is suggested that the study the companies always keep in mind that customers are price sensitive, and as pricing reflects value, businesses should set reasonable prices for their goods. If there is no improvement in the advantages or worth of the products, prices shouldn't be raised because buyers would switch brands. To draw clients and encourage them to buy the aqua Addis bottling water product, it is advised to occasionally utilize price promotion techniques, such as price reductions and bonus packs.

In addition to this, it is advised that aqua Addis bottling water broaden its distribution plan in order to make its product widely accessible to clients and foster customer loyalty.

In conclusion, the manufacturer's company must prioritize and take into account these three major elements. However, as other factors also have a substantial positive relationship with customer loyalty, they should also be taken into account.

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Appendix 1
Questionnaire
St. Mary's University
Graduate program

MA PROGRAM IN MARKETING MANAGEMENT

This questionnaire is prepared by a graduate student at St. Mary's University in the field of Marketing Management. This study is undertaken to investigate underlying factors affecting customer's loyalty among consumers of Aqua Addis Bottled water plc. in Addis Ababa.

Your kind cooperation will help in getting reliable data and 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. I want to assure that the information you provide will be used only for the purpose of the study and will be kept confidential. Kindly try to answer all stated questions. Thank you well in advance for sparing 20 minutes from your precious time to participate in this study.

Thank you for your co-operation!

Part I: General information

Direction: Please select the appropriate response category by encircling the number for each question.

1. Age: A) 18-25 B) 26- 35 C) 36-44 D) 45 and above

2. Sex: A) Female B) Male

3. Highest educational level obtained: A, Grade 8 and below B, Grade 9-12

C, Diploma D, First Degree E, Masters and above

4. Monthly income (in birr) A) Less than 3000 B) 3000-5999

C) 6000-8999 D) 9000-11999

E) 12,000 and more

5. How often do you drink bottled water?

_____ { v } _____

A) Everyday

B) Once in a week

C) More than once in a week

D) Other (please specify)

13. How familiar are you with aqua Addis spring bottled water?

A) Never heard of it

B) Use it only sometime

C) I am aware but have never used it

D) Use it on a regular basis

Part II: Underlying factors of customer loyalty

Direction: Please indicate your degree of agreement/disagreement with the following statements by encircling the appropriate number (1-Strongly disagree; 2-Disagree; 3-Neutral; 4-Agree; and 5-Strongly agree)

		1	2	3	4	5
Price						
1	I buy Aqua-Addis bottled water because the price is affordable for me					
2	I prefer a bottled water brand that is reasonably priced					
3	Low price is one of my priorities when making a buying decision					
4	I am willing to pay a higher price for my preferred brand of bottled water					
Availability						
1	I prefer a brand of bottled water, which is widely available					
2	I buy any kind of bottled water I found in my surrounding					
3	I buy the first brand of bottled water I recognize in a store display					
4	If Aqua-Addis bottled water is not available in the store, I will buy any kind of bottled water brand.					
product Quality						
1	I choose to drink Aqua Addis bottled water because I believe it has high quality					
2	I drink Aqua Addis bottled water because I enjoy its taste					
3	I prefer Aqua Addis because it has good content and is better for health.					
4	I buy Aqua Addis bottled water because I consider it has consistent quality					
Satisfaction						

1	I am satisfied with the decision to choose Aqua-addis bottled water.					
2	Aqua-addis bottled water leaves me a pleasant impression.					
3	Aqua-addis bottled water fully met my needs.					
4	I am more likely to repurchase Aqua-addis bottled water.					
Customer Loyalty						
1	I feel I am loyal to Aqua Addis bottled water.					
2	I would buy Aqua Addis bottled water rather than any other brands available.					
3	I am willing to recommend others to buy Aqua Addis bottled water.					
4	When I drink bottled water next time, I will buy the same brand of as the last time.					
5	Whenever I need to drink bottled water, I always drink Aqua Addis brand every time.					
6	I am likely to purchase Aqua Addis bottled water in the future.					

መጠይቅ

ቅድስት ማርያም ዩኒቨርሲቲ

የድህረ ምረቃ ፕሮግራም በማርኬቲንግ አስተዳደር

ይህ መጠይቅ የተዘጋጀው በማርኬቲንግ ማኔጅመንት ዘርፍ በቅድስት ማርያም ዩኒቨርሲቲ በተመረቀ ተማሪ ነው። ይህ ፕሮግራም የተካሄደው በአኳ አዲስ የታሸገ ውሃ ኃ.የተ.የግ.ማ. ፡፡ የእርስዎ ትብብር አስተማማኝ መረጃ ለማግኘት ይረዳል እና የጥናቱ ውጤት ገበያተኞች አሁን ያለውን አቅርቦት ለማሻሻል እና ደንበኞችን በተሻለ መንገድ ሊያረካ የሚችል የተሻለ የግብይት ስትራቴጂ ለማዘጋጀት ይረዳል። ያቀረቡት መረጃ ለጥናቱ ዓላማ ብቻ እንደሚውል እና በሚስጥር እንደሚጠበቅ ማረጋገጥ እፈልጋለሁ። ሁሉንም የተገለጹትን ጥያቄዎች ለመመለስ በደግሞ ይሞክሩ። በዚህ ፕሮግራም ውስጥ ለመሳተፍ ከውድ ጊዜዎ 20 ደቂቃዎችን ስለቆጠቡ አስቀድሜ አመሰግናለሁ።

ክፍል አንድ፡ አጠቃላይ መረጃ

እባክዎ ለእያንዳንዱ ጥያቄ ቁጥሩን በመክበብ ተገቢውን የምላሽ ምድብ ይምረጡ።

- ዕድሜ ሀ) 18-25 ለ) 26-35 ሐ) 36-44 መ) 45 እና ከዚያ በላይ
- ፆታ፡ ሀ) ሴት ለ) ወንድ
- የትምህርት ደረጃ፡- ሀ) 8ኛ ክፍል እና በታች ለ) ከ9-12ኛ ክፍል ሐ) ዲፕሎማ መ) የመጀመሪያ ዲግሪ ሰ) ማስተርስ እና ከዚያ በላይ
- ወርሃዊ ገቢ (በብር) ሀ) ከ3000 ለ) 3000-5999 ሐ) 6000-8999 መ) 9000-11999 ሰ) 12,000 እና ከዚያ በላይ
- የታሸገ ውሃ ምን ያህል ጊዜ ይጠጣሉ? ሀ) በየቀኑ ለ) በሳምንት አንድ ጊዜ ሐ) በሳምንት ከአንድ ጊዜ በላይ መ) ሌላ (እባክዎ ይግለጹ)
- የታሸገ ውሃ በሚያስቡበት ጊዜ ወደ አእምሮዎ የሚመጣው የመጀመሪያው የምርት ስም ምንድነው? ሀ) አኳ-አዲስ ለ) አዎ ሐ) አፍሪካ መ) ዕለታዊ ሰ) ወርቅ

ክፍል II፡ የደንበኛ ታማኝነት ምክንያቶች

አቅጣጫ፡ እባክትን ተገቢውን ቁጥር በመክበብ ከሚከተሉት መግለጫዎች ጋር ያለዎትን ስምምነት/አለመግባባት ያመልክቱ (1- በጣም አልሰማማም፣ 2-አልሰማማም፣ 3-ገለልተኛ፣ 4-እስማማለሁ፣ እና 5-በጣም እስማማለሁ)

		1	2	3	4	5
ዋጋ						
1	ለኔ በተመጣጣኝ ዋጋ እገዛለሁ።					
2	በተመጣጣኝ ዋጋ የታሸገ የውሃ ብራንድ እመርጣለሁ					
3	ዝቅተኛ ዋጋ የገዢ ውሳኔ በምስጥበት ጊዜ ቅድሚያ ከሚሰጣቸው ነገሮች አንዱ ነው።					
4	ለመረጥኩት የታሸገ ውሃ ከፍተኛ ዋጋ ለመክፈል ፈቃደኛ ነኝ					
ተገኝነት						

1	በብዛት የሚገኝ የታሸገ ውሃ ብራንድ እመርጣለሁ።					
2	በአካባቢዬ ያገኘሁትን ማንኛውንም የታሸገ ውሃ እገዛለሁ።					
3	በመደብር ማሳያ ውስጥ የማውቀውን የመጀመሪያውን የታሸገ ውሃ እገዛለሁ።					
4	የምመርጠው የምርት ስም በመደብሩ ውስጥ ከሌለ፣ ማንኛውንም ዓይነት የታሸገ ውሃ ምርት ስም እገዛለሁ።					

የተገነዘበ የምርት ጥራት

1	አኳ አዲስ የታሸገ ውሃ ለመጠጣት እመርጣለሁ ምክንያቱም ከፍተኛ ጥራት አለው ብዬ ስለማምን ነው።					
2	አኳ አዲስ የታሸገ ውሃ የምጠጣው በጣዕሙ ስለምደሰት ነው።					
3	አኳ አዲስን እመርጣለሁ ምክንያቱም ጥሩ ይዘት ስላለው ለጤና የተሻለ ነው።					
4	አኳ አዲስን የምጠጣው ጥሩ ይዘት ስላለው ለጤና የተሻለ ነው።					

እርካታ

1	የአኳ አዲስ የውሃ ምርት ከአኗኗር ዘይቤ ጋር ይስማማል።					
2	አኳ አዲስ የታሸገ ውሃ በመምረጥ ትክክለኛውን ምርጫ አድርጌያለሁ፣ እና በእሱ ደስተኛ ነኝ።					
3	ይህ የታሸገ ውሃ ደስ የሚል ስሜት ይፈጥርልኛል።					
4	አኳ-አዲስ የታሸገ ውሃ ፍላጎቴን ሙሉ በሙሉ አሟልቷል።					
5	አኳ-አዲስ የታሸገ ውሃ እንደገና እገዛለሁ።					

ታማኝነት

1	ለአኳ አዲስ የታሸገ ውሃ ታማኝ እንደሆንኩ ይስማማል።					
2	ከሌሎች ብራንዶች ይልቅ አኳ አዲስ የታሸገ ውሃ እገዛለሁ።					
3	አኳ አዲስ የታሸገ ውሃ እንዲገዙ ሌሎችን ለመምከር ፈቃደኛ ነኝ።					
4	በሚቀጥለው ጊዜ የታሸገ ውሃ ስጠጣ፣ ከመጨረሻው ጊዜ					

	ጋር ተመሳሳይ የሆነ የምርት ስም እገዛለሁ።					
5	የታሸገ ውሃ መጠጣት በሚያስፈልገኝ ጊዜ ሁሉ ሁል ጊዜ አኳ አዲስ ብራንድ እጠጣለሁ።					
6	ወደፊት አኳ አዲስ የታሸገ ውሃ መግዛት እችላለሁ።					