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A MARKET EXPANSION RESEARCH FOR F&B DISTRIBUTION
AGENTS IN HO CHI MINH CITY, VIETNAM: IMPORTING VALIO
ODDLY GOOD® THROUGH BRAND IMAGE

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<p>Title A Market Expansion Research for F&B Distribution Agents in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam: Importing Valio Oddly Good® through Brand Image</p> <p>Commissioned by Karelia UAS</p>		
<p>Abstract</p> <p>In a highly competitive business environment, customers' evaluation of the brand image of the product (Valio Oddly Good®) is critical for food and beverages (F&B) firms' survival. While there are numerous studies on brand image, very few have investigated the relationship between brand image and consumers' purchase intentions at F&B agents in Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam. Therefore, this study aims to provide additional insight into the relationship between brand image and consumers' purchase intention by investigating the brand image dimensions in the F&B industry and to identify the extent each brand image attributes in relation to consumers' purchase intentions, as perceived by Vietnamese customers.</p> <p>A set of questionnaire examining the attributes of brand image and purchase intentions was developed. The data was collected through a survey completed by 269 respondents. Demographic analysis and reliability analysis were employed to analyze the data. F&B agent operators need to pay more attention to delivering consistent and dependable product packaging, promotion, and improve customer's knowledge of the new product (non-dairy drinks) on F&B market. Customers are also attracted to new products imported from Finland, providing media promotion, practicing accurate guest needs, and delivering great products.</p>		
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

1.1.1 Valio Ltd. Company and Valio Oddly Good®

Nowadays, living standards are rising, which is synonymous with a stable economy and impressive income per capita mostly in developed countries likewise in some other developing ones. This leads to conscious consuming behavior. Consumers prefer utilizing healthy and environmentally friendly necessities. Health, quality and convenience are prerequisites to engaging buyers in different conditions. In understanding the needs of consumers, Valio Ltd. Company manufacturers have launched a product line of Valio Oddly Good® at affordable prices. Valio, the most innovative dairy in the world, has introduced a new range of plant-based products: the spoonable Valio Oddlygood™ gurts and the Valio Oddlygood™ oat drink – both made from Finnish oats at Valio's Riihimäki and Turenki plants in Finland. The new gurts and the oat drink were made available in stores in Finland in February 2018 and in Sweden in spring 2018. Milk will continue to be the focus of Valio's operations also in the future, and the new product innovations complement their offerings.

Valio is a Finnish based leading dairy manufacturer offering the natural taste of the Nordic homeland to domestic and overseas markets. The company was established and has been located in Helsinki for more than 100 years (since 1905) by Finnish dairy farmers. It is one of the largest companies that powerfully affects the food exporting shares in Finland and makes up 25% of the country's total food exports. The company plays a major role in the mass-production of cheese, butter, yogurt, and milk, etc. to the consuming market. Valio possesses several local distributors in different countries, estimated in up to 60 countries, not including Vietnam. Vietnam could be a potential area for Valio's exporting if the company truly understands the Vietnamese food and beverage industry

market. Moreover, Valio Oddlygood products strongly present its specific feature of the best tasting plant-based products from Finnish oat besides the competitive advantage of dairy products characteristics. Valio's new plant-based products complement Valio's milk, fruit and berry-based product offerings. Valio Oddlygood™ gurts are a spoonable, yogurt-style snack made from Finnish oats. The Valio Oddlygood™ oat drink is also made from Finnish oats and can be enjoyed on its own or used in smoothies or for baking or cooking.

1.1.2 A View of F&B Distribution Agents from the World to Vietnam

The F&B (abbreviation for food and beverage) industry includes all companies involved in producing, processing, packaging, transporting, and distributing edible goods from the farm or factory to consumption such as restaurants, coffee shops, fast-food stores, pubs, other types of catering business, and so on. The F&B industry is one of the world's largest industries with regards to both revenue and employment.

The worldwide food and beverage market has seen development in the course of the most recent decade, and this is expected to proceed. The extent of correlation retail (garments, footwear, other accessory products) as a level of complete retail is diminishing and being somewhat supplanted by F&B, recreation and amusement contributions in shopping centers, out-of-town retail parks and the main retail thoroughfare. This is being driven by shifting customer shopping propensities, and the growth of retail sector which satisfies consumers' desires in experiencing simultaneously actual shopping activities with social or recreation engagement. This is being seen, not simply in the more full-grown retail recognition in the US and Europe, yet in addition in quickly developing arising markets in Asia Pacific, the Middle East and Africa. (Figure 1)

Therefore, new strip mall improvements, restorations and augmentations are progressively being intended to incorporate F&B and way of life territories, including independent food slows down and booths. Setting up and additionally growing the F&B impression in retail plots furnishes landowners with occasions to incre-

ment footfall, shopper staying time and, eventually, purchasing. This is especially significant considering the challenges looked at by retailers from the development in web-based merchandising lately in a few markets.

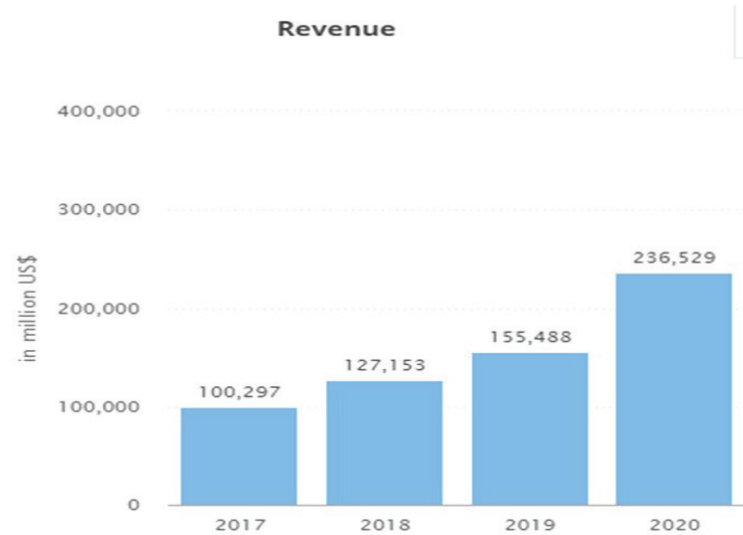


Figure 1. Revenue in the Food & Beverages Industry in 2020 (Source: Statista. Accessed on July 31, 2020)

There are many methods that F&B businesses use such as inviting to try a sample, get customers' opinions or inviting online references. Many businesses also spend a large amount of money to find a beautiful location for selling and easy to reach customers. Businesses that have new products such as foreign cuisines and importing food and beverages need to understand the desires of customers even more if they wish to know if the products are right for the target consumer that they are aiming for.

In short, the F&B market has few barriers to entry, but because of the large usage demand and fast elimination, it is still a challenge for businesses that want to conquer. There is a Chinese proverb saying that "He who sees through life and death will meet with most success", therefore, enterprises should investigate and understand about the market carefully before entering to reduce risks.

As of the end of 2017, Vietnam's population was estimated to consist of more than ninety-six million people, ranking 14th in the world with an average

population growth rate of 1.1% per year. As the economy operates steadily, the middle class expands. The food and beverage industry with a foundation will surely continue to maintain its performance and be a potential field for startups in the time to come. Moreover, the Vietnamese Government wants this sector to grow as sustainability as it can. The government has been aggressively pursuing free trade agreements with different countries and regional groups such as the ASEAN Free Trade Area, Japan-Viet Nam Economic Partnership Agreement, Chile-Viet Nam Free Trade Agreement and the Viet Nam-European Union Free Trade Agreement.

1.1.3 A View of F&B Distribution Agents in Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam

In recent years, the healthcare revolution has created many changes in consumers' eating trends. Generation Z and Millennials drink less alcohol with any high or even mild content, but are extremely fond of cocktails. Besides, non-alcoholic beer and soda are also increasingly popular in the market with many new innovations. Since then, it proves that consumers nowadays also seem to be turning their interest in beverages more beyond foodstuff. That is an important factor that F&B businesses need to pay attention to in order to develop their business.

The smartphone that everyone always carries with them has become a mobile laboratory with a variety of functions and applications for measuring and monitoring health. Therefore, businesses are now promoting the development of highly personalized nutrition programs and menus that cater to the individual preferences.

The trend of using substitute products such as meat and plant-based milk is increasingly popular in the F&B market. Consumers are now becoming more careful not only to take care of foods of plant origin, but also to discuss ingredients and processing technology. Food businesses need to be more agile about product improvement to become more environmentally friendly. Therefore, instead of simply introducing product information, manufacturers need to have communication activities to explain specifically about the production process so as to increase the connection and create confidence in customers. More and

more consumers are finding that plant-based foods are the best for their health and the environment. As a result, many retailers are pushing to offer vegetarian dishes, seed dairy products, or seed oils instead of animal-based ingredients. The introduction of a wide range of products such as soy milk, walnut milk, oat milk shows a clear impact on the dairy market of this trend.

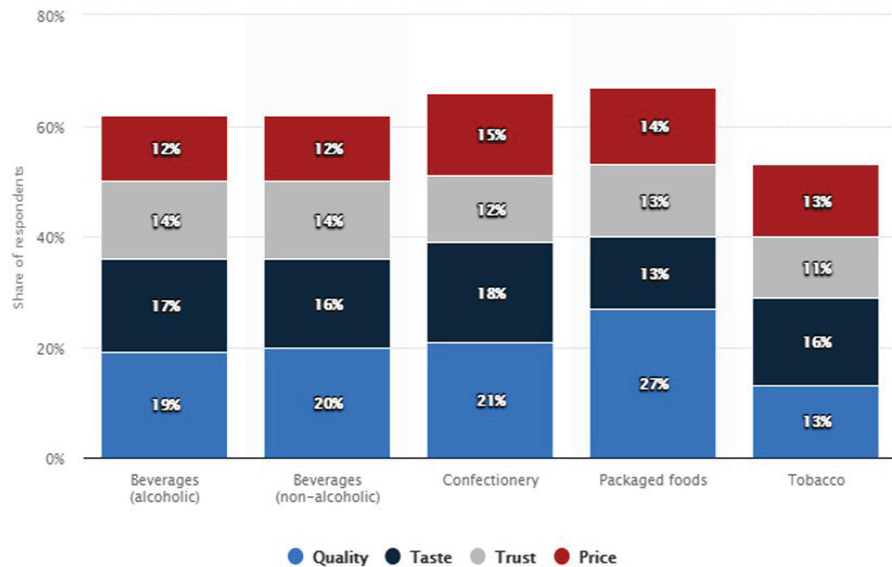


Figure 2. Buying behavior towards food and beverage categories in Vietnam as of the second half of 2019 (Source: Statista. Accessed on July 31, 2020).

1.2 Motivation of the thesis

For a developing country like Vietnam, the Food and Beverage industry is indispensable in the development of an integrated economy. Therefore, this industry is growing in Vietnam generally and Ho Chi Minh City in particular. As a result, F&B agents, convenience stores or mini stops appear more and more parallel to the coffee shops to fulfill the consumers' drinkable needs. Accompanied by the rapid development in the most modern city in Vietnam, without exception, many drink shops and mini stops are evidently sprouting up in Ho Chi Minh city. F&B agents with so many kinds of soft-drink, juice, milk, snacks, coffee powder, etc. supply the same goods portfolio that creates competition in the F&B industry in

Vietnam. F&B agent executives are always looking for ways to keep customers. Food and beverage businesses should always pursue the wishes and needs of their customers. The F&B industry in Vietnam generally is a highly competitive field with a very fast pace of being elimination of businesses once they cannot keep updating and catch the consumer trend from packaging to taste. Considerably, the company fame greatly influences customer behavior, whether it is a restaurant, convenience store, or F&B agent. That is why more and more brands intend to enter this field, as they understand well what the market requires and the importance of food and beverage to life despite many difficulties ahead. More and more Vietnamese strive towards healthy lives, they are seeking for kind of organic options for daily meals, so the research is performed in order to make a first step approaching customers with the appearance of new friendly-environmentally products from Finland. This research has contributed to determining the consumer demands through the products provided by F&B agents. Brand images (tangible) determines customer behavior (purchasing intention).

Firstly, this study investigates how brand image (established, market coverage, packaging) influences customer behavior. Secondly, this study investigates how a new brand like Valio Oddly Good® could effectively enter the Vietnamese F&B industry market, specifically in Ho Chi Minh city. Finally, this study investigates how a new brand, typically Valio Oddly Good®, influences consumer's purchasing intentions.

This study aims to examine the influence of the brand image on the purchasing intention of consumers when they buy healthy drinks at F&B agents (mini-stores/ convenience stores, supermarket, coffee shops). The research questions include:

- i. Does the information (images, nutrition) on packaging affect consumer's purchase intentions?

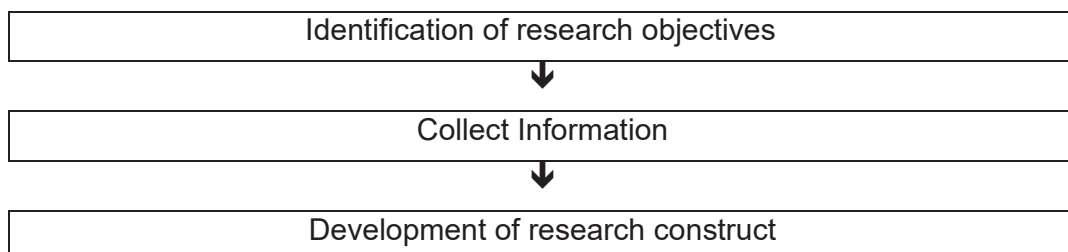
- ii. How can consumers' purchase intentions be gained?

1.3 Aims of the thesis

The main purpose of this study was to determine the factors that influence consumers' attitudes toward Valio Oddly Good®, which is a new product line in the Vietnamese F&B market. In particular, this study demonstrates a sense of brand images and what contributes to brand promotion. This will help F&B executives take full advantage of the potential of this brand image of healthy drinks to apply it in Vietnam. In addition, the relationship between brand image and purchasing intention is also determined. This additionally provides an overview of the global F&B industry, particularly in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Finally, these findings provide useful information that can be used to create strategic planning and decision-making accordingly.

1.4 Thesis structure

This study explores the way brand image influences consumer behavior and expand purchasing intention impacts. The contributions of this study may provide insights for F&B managements in enhancing their selling operation. This study is structured as follows: the first chapter introduces the research background, the motivation and the main purpose of the research. Chapter 2 provides an overview of a general literature review with the theoretical underpinning and the concept of Valio Oddly Good®'s brand image in the Vietnamese F&B market. Chapter 3 sheds light on the methodology used in this research. Chapter 4 explains the results of the data this study, findings and discussion after analysis. Chapter 5 consists of conclusions, providing managerial implications and contributions. To wrap up, remarks and possible future studies are included in the final chapter.



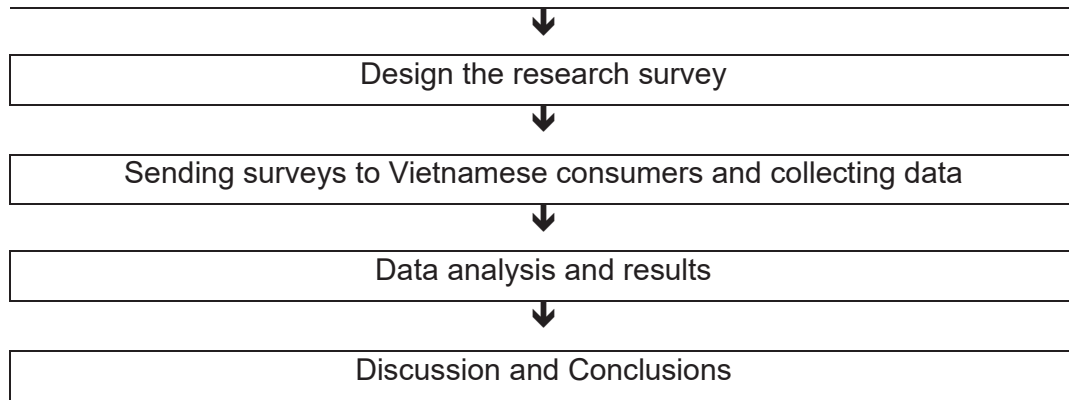


Figure 3. The overall research process.

2 BUSINESS ANALYSIS FOR VALIO ODDLY GOOD® IN THE VIETNAMESE MARKET (HO CHI MINH CITY)

2.1 Business Environment in Vietnam (PEST Analysis)

PEST analysis is a popular tool in business and market research aimed at sketching out the unexpected factors that have affected a business's operations further. It assists businesses to take into consideration their internal corporate environment, both the micro and macro environment, before conducting marketing strategies (Kenton 2020). These are made up of the following aspects.

2.1.1 Political Factors

Factors, which describe policies, legal provisions affecting business activities, and the purchasing power of customers (Professional Academy n.d.), are under prudent consideration by businesses in every case:

- ❖ The political stability of a country, avoiding violent situations.
- ❖ Policies, the legal system, and regulations regarding business activities such as taxation law, labor law, etc.
- ❖ Environmental and consumer protection legislation.

- ❖ Government tariffs directly influence the marketing and business activities of enterprises and the country's economy.
- ❖ The level of transparency of countries and businesses.
- ❖ A government's viewpoint in assessing and recognizing the culture and religion of a nation to firms' operations.
- ❖ The engagement of global organizations and international trade agreements solidly impacts procedures, trade barriers, and taxes of the enterprises.

Vietnam is one of five countries with socialist political institutions still now. The country is under the rule of a single party, the Communist Party of Vietnam, which holds political stability and supreme rule of the country. Regarding other multi-party countries, conflict issues between parties always occur, but this is opposite to Vietnam. Therefore, it can be said that this is the most politically stable country in the Southeast Asia Region.

Nevertheless, the drawback of a one-party country is that there will be limitations such as high corruption bureaucracy, low press freedom index, low media coverage, and freedom of speech controlled by the Vietnamese government. Access to the internet is unrestricted, although there are still some websites that are restricted or may be blocked if they have offensive, reactionary content that is detrimental to the Party and the Government.

According to the 2019 World Press Freedom Index – Reporters Without Borders (RSF) and the ranking of the world press freedom index, Vietnam claims a low position, ranking 176th out of 180 countries in 2019. These days, Vietnam possesses approximately 1,000 either printed or digital news agencies, more than 90 radio stations, nearly 200 television channels, and over 25,000 licensed journalists working for the local media department (Vietnam respects and protects press freedom 2018).

Corruption has known as an obstacle to doing business in Vietnam. In recent years, the Vietnamese government has taken measures to prevent bureaucracy

and corruption and maintained them at low levels; yet, the achieved result was not as expected since the rate was still high and quite serious.

According to Figure 4, there has been a downward trend in the corruption perceptions index from the position of 117th in the previous year to 96th out of 180 countries in 2019, simultaneously showing in Figure 5, it stayed at around 37 points out of 100 recorded by Transparency International - the leading global indicator of the public sector corruption, through Score of Corruption Index from 2010 to 2019 (Corruption Perceptions Index n.d.).

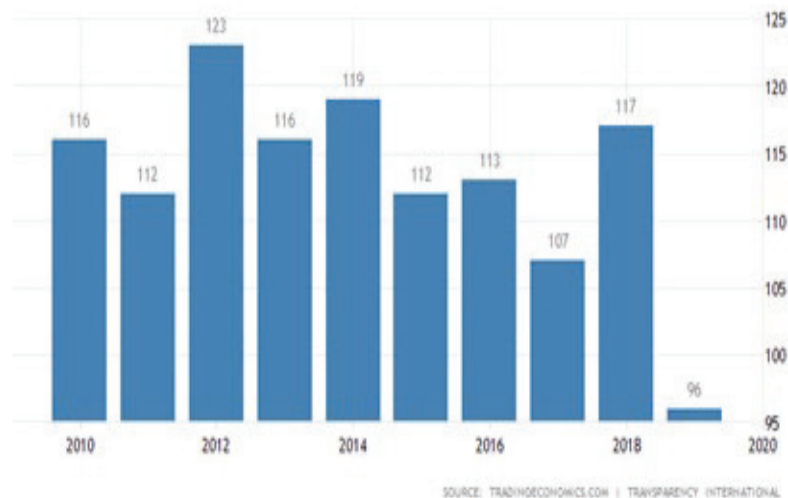


Figure 4. Ranking of Corruption Perception Index from 2010 to 2020 (Source: Vietnam Corruption Rank – Trading Economics. Accessed on July 31, 2020).

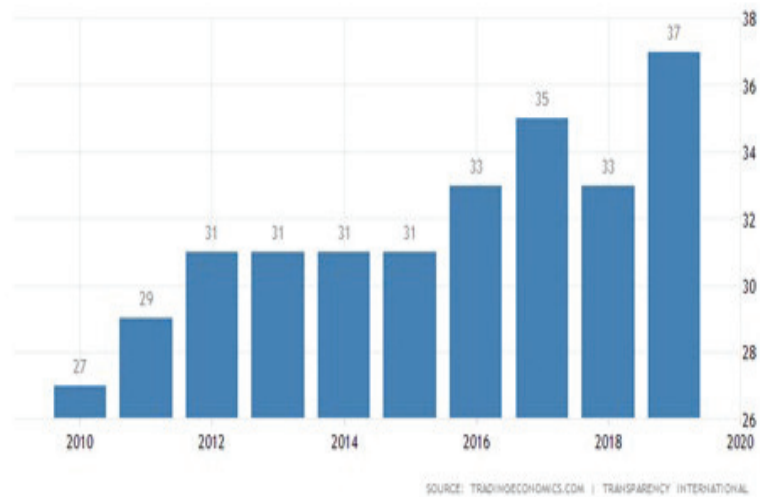


Figure 5. Score of Corruption Index from 2010 to 2019 (Source: Vietnam Corruption Index – Trading Economics. Accessed on July 31, 2020).

After the state reformation in 1986, Vietnam transformed into a market economy. The legal system, which fosters good conditions for Vietnamese customers and enterprises, is more complete and explicit for businesses in trading like commercial law, laws of labor, customs, import and export taxation, general taxation, also laws of social insurance and environment, consumer protection legislation, etc. (Vietnam's reforms paying off 2018).

Concerning bilateral cooperation, Vietnam has established diplomatic relations with more than 170 countries around the world. It has also expanded trade relations by exporting goods to more than 230 markets of countries and territories, even signing over 90 bilateral trade agreements, close to 60 investment incentives and protection agreements, 54 double taxation prevention agreements and many bilateral cultural cooperation agreements with countries and international organizations (Nguyen 2019).

Regarding multilateral and regional cooperation, Vietnam has had a positive relationship with outbound financial and monetary organizations such as the Asian Development Bank, World Monetary Fund, World Bank. The process of Vietnam's international economic integration has been leveraged and taken to a higher level by connecting with regional and international economic and trade

organizations and signing multilateral economic cooperation agreements. In July 1995, Vietnam joined the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and officially engaged in the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) on December 12, 1995 (Frost 1995, 8) (Vietnam in ASEAN: Toward Cooperation for Mutual Benefits 2012). These achievements have been appreciated as breakthrough in the process of the international economic integration of Vietnam.

Subsequently, Vietnam took part in the founding of the Asia - Europe Cooperation Forum (ASEM) in 1996 (Viet Nam, as a founding member of ASEM n.d.).

In 1998, Vietnam was admitted to the Asia - Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC) (Vietnam marks 20 years of APEC membership 2018).

European Union - Vietnam Free Trade Agreement (EVFTA) was signed on June 30, 2019, effective on August 1, 2020 (EVFTA coming into force, a new landmark in Vietnam-EU relations 2020).

Vietnam's international economic integration process made an important step when Vietnam officially became a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in January 2007 (Ho 2007).

Vietnam is a unified nation of many peoples, boasting freedom of religion and belief, living equality, solidarity, respect, and helping each other to construct and develop in the country. All acts of discrimination, division, conflict between ethnic groups and religions are strictly prohibited.

2.1.2 Economic Factors

To study economic factors is to determine and conclude the economic status of a nation in the immediate and long-term orientation, economic growth rate, and future development trends (Professional Academy n.d.). It is necessary to treat these following factors:

- ❖ Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Vietnam

- ❖ Exchange rate
- ❖ Interest rate
- ❖ Inflation rate
- ❖ Unemployment rate
- ❖ GDP per capita
- ❖ Wages

Vietnam is a country that presents a dynamic and developing market economy, with a relatively high growth rate. The government has made moves towards attracting and further promoting foreign investment in manufacturing and trading in Vietnam.

According to the VietnamNews electronic media, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) has dominated Vietnam to exceed 38 billion USD in 2019, marking a historical 10-year highest level and representing a year-on-year increase of 7.2%. More than 3,880 new projects were accepted to receive investment licenses during 2019, which made up 27.5% from 2018 and brought 16.75 billion USD in new capital, equivalent to 93.2% of FDI capital in 2018 (Việt Nam's FDI capital hits 10-year record 2019).

The number of employed persons in Vietnam rocketed from 54.56 million to 55.03 million in a period between the third and the fourth quarter of 2019, which is shown in Figure 6.

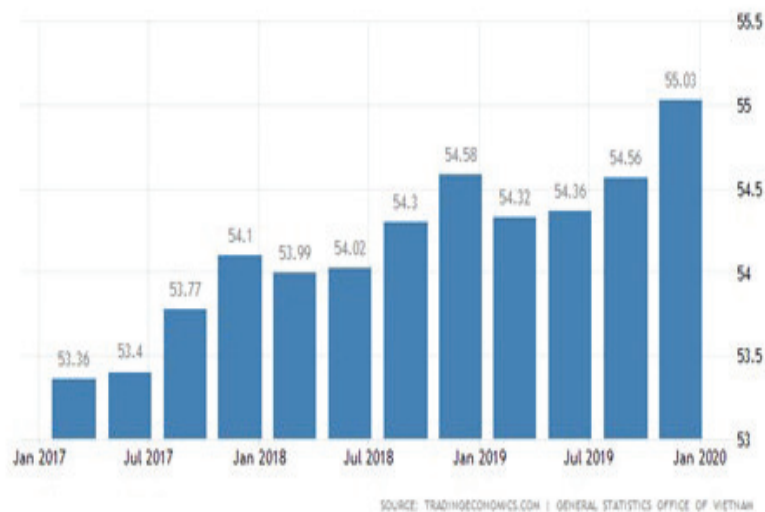


Figure 6. The number of employed persons in Vietnam during 2017-2020 (Source: Vietnam Employed Persons – Trading Economics. Accessed on July 31, 2020).

Furthermore, the unemployment rate in Vietnam is markedly at a low level. The touchpoint was around 2.17% in 2019, and this number is expected to remain stable in the following years. There was a significant decrease in the Vietnamese unemployment rate by close to 2.3% in 3 years from 2017, as presented in Figure 7.

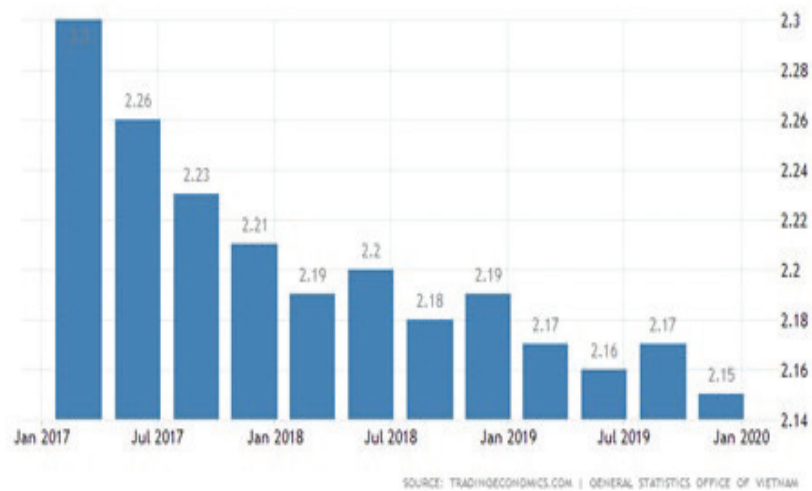


Figure 7. Unemployment Rate in Vietnam from Jan 2017 to Jan 2020 (Source: Vietnam Unemployment Rate – Trading Economics. Accessed on July 31, 2020).

The current average salary in the major cities of Vietnam is about 6 million to 8 million VND (Das 2018). This trend is expected to continually surge up to 20% in the coming years.

Vietnam has a diversity of energy fuel resources such as coal, natural gas, petroleum, hydropower, and also renewable energy sources such as solar energy, biomass energy, wind energy, etc. In 2019, the price of electricity, which excluded VAT tax, was 0.070 EUR per kWh and 0.12 EUR per kWh for households and businesses, respectively (Nguyen & Trinh 2019).

Income tax rates in Vietnam apply a fixed ratio, namely 20% for ordinary industries, except for oil and gas exploitation and rare resources with tax rates from 32% to 50% (Vietnam Pocket Tax Book 2019/ 2018, 19). Overall Vietnam's income tax rates are relatively similar to other Southeast Asian countries.

Furthermore, value-added tax (VAT) employs a 10% tax rate on all commercial transactions (Taxation & Customs n.d.). VAT in Vietnam is quite low compared to European countries, which are usually from 28% to 32%. This is such a rather prominent advantage for the same products, but those has a lower selling price in Vietnam than European nations in particular.

The inflation index is quite small. The annual inflation rate in Vietnam declined to 2.40% in May of 2020 from 2.93% in the previous month. This was the lowest inflation rate since November of 2019. The rate averaged approximately from 3.50 to 4% throughout the second half of 2015 to the first half of 2020. Then until 2020, it got an all-time high in the past five years of over 6% in January and minimally recorded 0 percent in September and October of 2015, as can be seen in Figure 5. The inflation rate in Vietnam is expected to be 0.10% by the end of the second quarter of 2020, according to Trading Economics global macro models and analytic expectations. The forthcoming estimated inflation rate will probably be standing at 3.40% in 2021. For the long-term, the rate is projected upward to a peak of 5% in 2021 and 4% in 2022.



Figure 8. Vietnam Inflation Rate between the 3rd quarter of 2015 and the 2nd quarter of 2020 (Source: Vietnam Inflation Rate – Trading Economics. Accessed on July 31, 2020).

The reference exchange rate at the State Bank of Vietnam from the operation center on 13 April 2020, stated the currency conversion between euro (EUR) and Vietnam Dong (VND) is approximately 26,147. The euro rate is anticipated to trade at nearly 28,100 VND at the end of the fourth quarter in 2020 likewise to maintain the same value during 2021 (Exchange rate 2020).

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita in Vietnam was last recorded at 1,964.50 USD (equal to 1,739 EUR) in 2018. GDP per capita in Vietnam is predicted to reach 2,185.00 (same as 1,933 EUR) by the end of 2020. For the long-term, the GDP is projected ascending to 2,295.30 USD (approximately 2,030 EUR) in 2021 and 2,405.50 in 2022. The GDP per capita in Vietnam is estimated at 16% of the world's average.

The GDP annual growth rate in Vietnam averaged 6.51% from 2010 to 2020. The GDP growth rate solely gained 3.82% year-on-year in the first quarter of 2020, which proves a downward trend (the number of 6.79%) compared to the previous period that Figure 9 illustrates well. This was the slowest GDP growth rate since the global economic crisis in 2008 and 2009. The causes were the Covid-19 epidemic and the current weaker global consumer demand. The government is aiming all efforts at the economic growth of 6.8% in 2020 but warned that it could be sluggish or almost be stagnant if the virus continually affects businesses until the end of this year.



Figure 9. GDP per capita in Vietnam in a period of 2010 – 2019 (Source: Vietnam GDP per capita – Trading Economics. Accessed on July 31, 2020).

The interest rate is controlled by the Vietnamese Government. In 2020, it is estimated to be at 6% for 12 months. The State Bank of Vietnam will proactively and flexibly implement the monetary policy solutions not only to control inflation, but also to stabilize the macroeconomy and likewise to ensure liquidity and also the operational safety of the credit institution system, and to support economic growth.

2.1.3 Socio-cultural Factors

The socio-cultural realm, including religion, ethnicity, habits and customs, beliefs, and attitudes related to lifestyle perceptions, impacts consumer behaviors and purchasing power over a product (Professional Academy n.d.). When investigating the socio-cultural issues that affect the final decision to manufacture or launch and trade a particular product, it is critical to well understand:

- ❖ Major religion and avoiding conflict between religions.
- ❖ Primary ethnic group and staying away from conflict between variable groups.
- ❖ Customer's points of view toward domestic goods and imported products from other countries.

- ❖ Working hours, idle period, recreational hobbies of consumers.
- ❖ Languages.
- ❖ Business culture.
- ❖ Cuisine culture.
- ❖ Habits in shopping.
- ❖ Habits in using idle time.
- ❖ Percentage of longevity.
- ❖ Sex ratio.
- ❖ Daily social manners and social taboos.

Vietnam's population accounts for more than 97 million people (Vietnam Population 2020 n.d.). The proportion of the young population is predominant, gathering in large urban areas and industrial zones, and today's standard of life is gradually improved due to the current steady increase in income per capita. Vietnam is a multi-ethnic nation of 54 groups. The Kinh majority accounts for 85.4% of the population. The remaining ethnic groups, for instance, semi-Chinese, Muong, Tay, Ede, etc. occupies 14.6%. Ethnic minorities mainly live in the mountains and highlands. Particularly for the semi-Chinese, they live in the same area with the Kinh people in urban and the plain zones. Ethnic groups live together in solidarity, helping each other, without discrimination and conflicts between groups (Vietnam: A Multi-Ethnic Country n.d.).

Every group has its language. In general, Vietnamese is the official national language for all majorities. The percentage of literate people aged from 12 to 60 is 97.65% (Education and Literacy - Vietnam 2020). Additionally, English is the second official language to be universalized in the education system at the secondary and tertiary levels. In large metropolitan areas, young people under 45 years old and most intellectual workers can use English fluently in communication (Marsh 2016).

Vietnam has 14 religions, the most popular of which are Buddhism and Roman Catholicism. The number of Buddhist believers is 9.6 million, holding 8.3% of the population, while Roman Catholicism is followed by 5.9 million people or 6.1%. The faithful of other religions make up a very small pieces of only about 2-3%.

On the other hand, there have been many people who are not of any religion (An Overview of Religions in Vietnam 2019).

Although there are quite a lot of religions in the same country and the gap ratio between religions is quite far, they all live freely, equally, and harmoniously, showing respect. There are no distinctions or conflicts occurring among the different religious believers in Vietnam (An Overview of Religions in Vietnam 2019).

The customs and traditions of various ethnic groups are completely different. The Kinh and semi-Chinese people are relatively similar in culture, so the semi-Chinese people play an important role in social life and economic development in Vietnam.

In recent years, the government has been paying special attention to health insurance policies for the citizens, namely that 90% of the population is entitled to health insurance, thereby improving their health and longevity. Eating out or having meals at home are always of some concern, and prominence is given to food safety, adequate nutrition, and vitamins.

The Vietnamese lifestyle is very relaxed and friendly. In social relationships, it is easier to get in touch with others when first meeting in public places such as parks, clubs, malls, or at schools and offices.

In culinary culture, Vietnamese people prefer going to flea markets or to supermarkets to buy food and enjoy themselves in restaurants even coffee shops in free time with friends and relatives.

In business culture, commercial communications are often chosen to meet at either coffee shops, tea shops, or restaurants (Why do many Vietnamese customers go to coffee shops nowadays? 2019).

Most young people have a habit of hanging out in coffee shops to chat with friends and colleagues after school and work, far from ordering coffee to drink, they

usually order juice, smoothie, or milk tea (Why do many Vietnamese customers go to coffee shops nowadays? 2019).

Since the economy has been shut down for a long time, most of the goods traded with China are on the border, but they are all poor quality. In order to lessen products with bad origins, the government has issued a domestic propaganda instruction "Vietnamese people utilize Vietnamese products as a patriot" and "Vietnamese products of high quality". However, in terms of actual consumption, the opinions of Vietnamese people always appreciate and trust the procurement of products originating from countries in the EU with developed economies, industries, and agriculture.

2.1.4 Technological Factors

Technological factors, which include the revolution and the progressive participation in business, have been significantly transmitted and operated by machines and digital platforms. Nowadays, technology plays an indispensable role in all economic and living activities (Professional Academy n.d.). Businesses need to consider some factors, for example:

- ❖ The latest tools to efficiently reach customers
- ❖ Technological techniques support to business affairs
- ❖ Telecommunication, Internet worldwide connection, social networks
- ❖ Newspapers, traditional and modern media channels
- ❖ Information technology applications along with smartphone utilization provide an easier way to perform different online transactions such as payments through internet banking, delivery, and advertising.

Along with the world in a revolution of the 4.0 industry, Vietnam sets up the national e-commerce development plan for the period of 2021 - 2025. It particularly aims to make an e-commerce platform become one of the pioneer areas in the digital era where advanced technologies of the 4.0 industrial revolution are applied widely to enhance the efficiency of the business cycle, to contribute to modernize the distribution system, additionally to improve the

competitiveness of enterprises, and to foster the development of the domestic and exporting markets (National master plan on e-commerce development 2020). This plan closely associates with strategies and policies to actively take part in the 4.0 industry, and the orientation of digital economy development and national digital transformation as well.

The Government, ministries, and localities have stepped up the solutions on building as many smart cities as possible towards a digital economy in Vietnam. This is providing public utilities and services in each field to either businesses or households, for example, public administrative services, health, education, transportation, social insurance, etc. This process also fiercely occurs among businesses to fit in the development of the 4.0 digital industry, typically the sequence of launching products. It is a favorable opportunity to expand the market for technology enterprises in deploying and mutually competing to provide services (Giang 2019).

About 30 years ago, pocket calculators were a very expensive and luxurious thing for most Vietnamese people, so they only did mental arithmetic instead. Turning back to the past 10 years, the first mobile phones showed up with a simple design and a successfully applied Internet connection, but people did not widely use them at that point. Nevertheless, with the advancement of information technology and improved living standards today, smartphones or pocket calculators have completely modified the traditional consumption habits of Vietnamese people. Customers can optimize their search engines through social media platforms, movies, or videos to view product information, prices, and reviews before making their purchases.

The current prevalence of Internet access is 48%, and 69% are individual mobile users aged over 15 years. In 2019, major telecom network providers such as Mobifone, Vinaphone, and Viettel have 5G networks nationwide (Nguyen Q. 2020).

Statistics show that there are 54 television stations in provinces and cities of Vietnam with hundreds of large or small news and entertainment channels.

Moreover, there are 70 international TV channels that have been licensed to broadcast in Vietnam.

In Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City, there are many freight forwarding companies to transport goods by truck with large quantities or the just using a motorbike for fast delivery through online applications.

The aviation system actively responds to the demands for flexible traveling with dense daily frequencies, accompanied by national airlines operation like Vietnam Airlines, VietJet Air, Bamboo Airways, and Pacific Airlines, which connects across the country from the North to the Center and the South and also to the Western regions of the country. Not only that, but it also well displays the role of transporting goods quickly and conveniently to customers.

In addition to road and air transport, rail and waterways are also of great interest in commercial alternatives.

2.2 Valio Oddly Good® in Ho Chi Minh city market competition followed by SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis gives enterprises an overall look at the stages of the study and a market analysis for all businesses in the first period of starting up a company, launching new products, or deliberating how to improve the current commerce situation with the judicious directions and solidly built development bases. It is a vital part that shapes appropriate strategies, projects preliminary plans with manufacturing and selling goods so as to obtain the targets also purposes of enterprises (SWOT Analysis n.d.). SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats, which:

Strengths and Weaknesses are internal elements of a business.

Opportunities and Threats are external elements of a business.

2.2.1 Competitors

There are no exact statistics on the number of healthy drink brands and shops in Vietnam. Particularly in Ho Chi Minh City, there are thousands of shops and brands labeled as "healthy"; however, these companies often make products with poor quality fruits and yoghurt imported from China such as oranges, apples, pears, grapes, berries, passion fruit, etc. The disadvantage of these juice products is firstly that the process of producing, packaging, and selecting ingredients has not yet satisfied the food safety and hygiene standards issued by the Ministry of Health of Vietnam. Moreover, the second drawback is the short shelf life - only a few hours of storage and not remaining well preserved in normal outdoor conditions of 25-35 degrees Celsius. For many consumers, healthy drink products are now less common in the market because they are afraid of the lack of food safety, typically comprising a high index of agricultural chemical residues that a product brings.

Valio Oddly Good® will indirectly compete against products made from berries in various forms such as snacks, cheese, syrup, yoghurt published on e-commerce websites from foreign countries to domestic such as Amazon, Lazada, Shopee, Tiki. Online ordering has not been widely popular among consumers in Vietnam due to trust levels: buyers do not know whether the actual received product is the same as what was being sold sale online. Reputable information about manufacturers also takes time, as does receiving final goods.

Valio Oddly Good® products intend to compete directly with the well-known products presently on the market of many domestic manufacturers and even global ones, such as Vfresh (a 100-percent-product of Vietnam Dairy Products Joint Stock Company - Vinamilk), Tropicana Twister (Suntory Pepsico), Minute Maid (Coca Cola), Tipco and Malee (products made in Thailand), Fontana (made in Cyprus), TH True juice (TH Food Joint Stock Company in Vietnam), Nutriboost (Nutifood Vietnam), Number1 Juice (Tan Hiep Phat Beverage Group - THP Corp. in Vietnam) and products of syrup, cheese, oat drinks, yoghurt imported from Japan and Korea. Outstandingly, yoghurt canned products branded Vinamilk are

most common and trustful in consumption, with 38% of yoghurt product consumption on the market. This proves that although there are many different brands, the greatest direct opponent for Valio is from Vinamilk.

As there is no orthodox European healthy oat drink wholesaler or retailer in Vietnam. Nearly all hand-carry traders are responsible for these affairs because their oversea relatives usually send the products as gifts or they travel abroad then buy and resell those with expensive price. So, in the case of this object, Valio solely needs to consider that there is this model existing in the Vietnamese market, and does not necessarily concentrate much on competing.

2.2.2 Business Culture in Vietnam

Due to the influence of a part of Chinese culture, Vietnamese business culture has many similarities and is distinguishable from Western countries. In commerce, relationships are usually established in the form of social diplomacy such as being introduced through friends, relatives, colleagues, and appointments to be met at restaurants, cafes, beer clubs. The interesting point is that Vietnamese people like drinking and drink a lot. In order to facilitate social relationships, commercial transactions, new product launches are easier to accept. Of course, many businesses need to pay these meeting costs as well as valuable gifts in the appointments or the first product introduction conferences (Pehme 2017).

2.2.3 SWOT Analysis for Valio Oddly Good® products

- **Strengths:**

As consumers pay more and more attention to health, oat drinks or yogurt adapt the needs of customers with natural organic characteristics containing vitamins, minerals, sour taste and beautiful colors, especially for repelling toxins in the body and preventing cancer. By and large, there are still not many shops selling

imported yogurt or oat drinks. Typically yogurt in Vietnam directly meets the absolute demand of consumers, so the demand for yogurt is growing fast and is likely to increase in the near future.

The advantage of being from a country with clean organic industry, modern processing technology along with the leading brand built in the dairy and fruit juice industry in Finland, Valio deserves market expansion and business development in other countries such as Vietnam, and the countries that have been developing in Asia along with the European area. Due to the belief and preference of Vietnamese people in products originating from European countries, Valio is expected to be likely to capture hearts and easily enter the market later.

The company's packaging is beautifully and harmoniously designed. It visibly shows the natural essence of the product that the brand wants to bring. The eight-layer packaging is certified to Tetra Pak's top food safety standards. Prices are also suitable for most middle-class people in Vietnam. The product is easy to carry, easy to store (at temperatures below thirty-five Celsius degrees when the lid is not open); additionally, it is taken directly without processing.

- **Weaknesses:**

The nutritional value is not universally acknowledged by Vietnamese consumers, so Valio's products are initially unfamiliar to them, and there will be certain difficulties in reaching target customers.

The information printed on the product packaging is in Finnish. Although there are Vietnamese labels on each package, the information will be difficult to convey the meaning of the product message to users. This is the biggest language barrier in consumption.

Product costs are still quite expensive compared to available domestic fruit juice brands such as Vfresh, TH True juice, Nutriboost, etc. on the market. They can only be sold to a limited number of customers with the middle-class or higher segment in urban areas.

Some handling works need to be outsourced by relevant service parties, such as importing goods, delivery, distribution, and market research and development.

- **Opportunities:**

This would be the first time that Finnish products have been introduced in the Vietnamese market. The consumers are very curious and interested in learning and trying the product so far. Therefore, they will buy a lot if there are various promotions attached. Moreover, consumers put their full confidence in natural and organic products originating from European countries. This proves that Valio's direct competition with the same range of products on the market is very low.

As an economically developing country, Vietnam proves that the income of its urban citizen is increasing compared to previous years. They are also more aware of health and willing to spend on healthy food and drinks or utensils for their well-being. During the complicated period of the Covid-19 pandemic in the world, Vietnam has been also affected a lot. The demand for vitamins supplemented products and enhanced resistance was gradually higher. Especially yogurt, cheese and oat drinks are selected more than other drinks. Remarkably, more and more foreigners including Finns working and living in Ho Chi Minh city usually choose products manufactured according to European standards for daily food consumption.

National banks provide commercial loans with stable interest rates which will tend to decline in the coming years as the economy develops. In addition to these opportunity factors, it is necessary to mention the low inflation rate which hits the monetary unit becomes valuable in trading. The foreign exchange rate converted from the euro to the Vietnamese Dong is beneficial for imports. When a few years ago (2018), 1 euro peaked approximately from 27,005 VND to 28,060 VND, but in recent years (2019-2020) 1 euro averaged between 25,977 VND and 26,526 VND, showing that Vietnam truly benefits quite well at the time of overseas purchase.

Beyond joining the World Trade Organization (WTO), Vietnam has just approved the signing of a Vietnam - European Free Trade Agreement effective from August 1, 2020, with many preferential import tax rates of 0 percent for goods from European countries, in this case fruit juice products.

- **Threats:**

Regarding Vietnamese people, organic products are gradually not too strange to them. They can recognize and classify them very well, but to change the taste habits of commonly used plant-based drinkables is tough. Time to adapt to the taste is needed, to even feel more the essence of the product, sometimes with the participation of nutritionists and even doctors to consult for consumers. Therefore, it can be said that Vietnam is one of the "fastidious" markets because it is impossible to alter consumption habits in a short period of time if the products are not able themselves alone grab first impressions from consumers.

Valio is a brand that will be completely novel and unfamiliar to consumers. Introducing and connecting products to consumers requires a big budget to advertise with a view of gaining purchasing trust from them. It takes several months or at least a year to change customer behaviors.

Indirect competition is thousands of carbonated beverages, fruit milk, herbal teas, and hundreds of homemade drink products. Not only that, but Valio also competes directly against famous and years-of-experience industrial drink brands with modern, closed production lines, accounting for large market shares, and supported by the government's policies to more domestically develop, for instance, Vfresh, Number1 Juice, TH True juice, Nutriboost. Many other rivals from Singapore, Thailand, Korea, and Japan, are also presented in the imported fruit juice market in Vietnam, forcing Valio to come up with solutions to this business issue. Despite joining in free trade in the world, the Vietnamese government retains some of its trade protective barriers to imported products.

Business culture in Vietnam is a part of the important barriers of all business relationships that are greatly different from what Valio has likely experienced with European partners. It is often formed through social relationships such as meetings, product premieres, and cross-communication through mutual friends.

3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Recalling Chapter 2, there are various discussions among this study about the impact of brand image (tangible), and attitudes of consumers on purchasing intention. In this chapter, the research methodology developed based on the concept of research model from previous chapters is presented. A survey questionnaire was designed to investigate the buying decisions of consumers in the context of the development of the food and beverage industry, particularly the food and beverage industry in Ho Chi Minh City. This includes explanations for each of the SPSS analytical methods utilized in this study.

3.1 Research and Questionnaire Design

The population of this research is comprised of individuals who patronized and used oat drinks, yogurt or cheese from the F&B agents (supermarket, mini-stops, drink bars, gyms) in Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam. A questionnaire with 13 questions was developed. The questionnaires were sent to 350 respondents, and out of the total, 269 responded. The SERVQUAL model was used to measure the relationship between brand image and customer purchasing intentions. The instrument design is based on the five dimensions of tangible (brand image) and purchasing intention. In order to make it suitable with this study, some modifications were made to the questionnaire. It was divided into two parts, including part A, about participants' background information with seven items such as gender, age, marital status, level of education, occupation, monthly income and buying healthy drinks (oat drinks, yogurt) frequency at the F&B agents. Part B refers to questions about both brand image, based on the five

dimensions of tangibles, and purchasing intention mentioned with the six main points respectively in total.

3.2 Measuring

Questionnaires were prepared and sent to respondents at the end of the summer of 2020 to find out about consumers' perceptions about the brand image in F&B agents and purchase intentions at F&B agents in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. To fortify the legitimacy of the factors, the received things must give theoretical records of the speculations that will be made in this examination. Subsequently, the things utilized in the overview survey are basically concentrated from past examinations to guarantee the things are beneficial. The questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part is the demographic questions. Respondents will be asked about gender, age, marital status, level of education, occupation, monthly income, and consumption frequency at the F&B agents.

The second part includes the main questions of the questionnaire survey, it covers the main focus of the investigation. All six questions were divided into two sections: brand image and purchase intention. For section A, brand image, the questions were divided into four questions. All variables for brand image (tangible) consisting of four standpoints were designed based on Akbaba, A. (2006) and Saez, A.C.A., Fuentes, M., Montes, L. and Javier, F. (2007).

Following the second part, the purchase intention of consumers included two items by Kivela et al. (1999). Specific statements were provided for each dimension. The second part of the questionnaire had six items in total, all of which were measured on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 to 5 with 1 for "strongly disagree", 2 for "disagree", 3 for "neutral", 4 for "agree" and 5 for "totally agree".

3.3 Data Collection and Sampling

The data was collected through interviews and survey questionnaires from July 6, 2020, to September 6, 2020. The population of the study was from a random sample of customers who had bought at the F&B agents during the previous 2 months. Given the size and huge popularity of these F&B agents and the fact that most agents follow the business model and, hence, have to adhere to similar conditions such as decorated shelves, packaging, promotion, etc., it is believed that the data collected from Ho Chi Minh locations of this large and very popular F&B agents would be reasonably representative of other locations in the country. With a particular ultimate objective to have the significant response rate and exactness for this audit, the total of studies was passed on the web and given by paper. This audit used the survey study to fulfill the investigation which drove to approach right target groups and to manage the checking system of expected results. Thus, the respondents need to survey the outline totally. Consequently, the information will not be lost when gathered from the participants. In total 350 questionnaire surveys were sent to consumers online, and 269 responses were obtained. There was no missing or incomplete data in the 269 that came back. The received questionnaires were inspected mindfully for exclusions and consistency. The data was then analyzed by applying Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) programming for Windows, rendition 22.0.

3.4 The Method of Statistical Analysis

3.4.1 Demographic Analysis

Demographics, the statistical characteristics of the human population, are used in many professions including but not limited to government, safety forces, realtors, appraisers, financial institutions, food service, non-profit agencies, and retailers. Government entities, for example, use demographics to analyze trends in population and age in order to plan for sales and programs to benefit businesses alike. Analyzing demographic patterns can help with deciding

whether the market is under or over-served identifying with so many issues such as the accessibility of concentrated retail benefits.

A complete demographic analysis involves the quantifying of data, analyzing trends of that data, identifying particular needs and then making projections. Therefore, the demographics found within this study will provide the base data necessary for Valio to quantify and analyze the trends in population, age, wages, education, monthly income, and so on. This information can then be used to pinpoint the needs of a certain population and make projections and decisions based on those needs. The demographic data contained herein was gathered from various sources, including consumers who had purchased at F&B agents.

3.4.2 Reliability and Validity

Reliability testing is a factual testing method for the viability of an exploration toolbox, utilized for an assortment of purposes: analyzing the reliability of questionnaires, testing the reliability of an observation, and reliability tests in empirical research. The essence of reliability here is that researchers get similar outcomes after different tests. In other words, reliability is the stability of results in a cycle of time (Robson 2010).

Validity refers to the degree of whether the research results can answer the research questions, and whether the appropriate techniques have been applied to conduct the research (Saunders et al. 2009, 156). Despite the fact that there were some unavoidable cases that the respondents did not follow until the finish of the review because of having no reasonable information to reply, a large portion of the respondents met the prerequisites, which was pertinent to the target of the examination as referenced. Besides, both the interview and online survey revealed no necessary disadvantages for the respondents. Hence, it very well may be reasoned that the outcomes could respond to the exploration questions, implying that the legitimacy of this study is ensured.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the outcomes from the analyzing data will be introduced. Demographic data will be mentioned in the first section. The outcomes of the reliability test of the evaluation items will be illustrated afterwards. At last, to close this part, a discussion of the results of the investigation will be introduced.

4.1 Data Analysis

4.1.1 Demographic Analysis

The survey of this study was distributed to Vietnamese consumers via online and collected within 30 days. The respondents were male and female who had purchased in the F&B agents within the previous two months. Therefore, the sample selecting of this study was reliable. The Vietnamese consumers' demographics information has gender, age, education, occupation, monthly income. In addition to personal background, how often the purchases occurred in the F&B agents (supermarket, convenience store) was also taken into consideration.

Table 1 shows the results for demographic information of gender. The number respondents of male and female are not the same.

Table 1. Gender's demographic

	Frequency	Percent
Female	197	73.23
Male	72	26.77
Total	269	100.0

Table 2 shows the major group of ages of the respondents were 18-36 years old which occupied of 68.8% with more than of total respondents. The result showed

that in restaurant industry today, the largest number of respondents belongs to generation Z in the case of the Vietnamese. Moreover, the results focus on two kinds of generation that has the stable income from core labor of Vietnamese society.

Table 2. Age demographics

	Frequency	Percent
Under 18	23	8.6
18-26	109	40.5
27-36	76	28.3
37-45	34	12.6
Above	27	10.0
Total	269	100.0

Table 3 illustrates the education of respondents by separating them into four main levels: graduated high school degree, bachelor's degree, master's degree, and doctor's degree. The results showed the fact that consumer with high knowledge would comprehend well the value of certain products and likewise their brand image and was willing to purchase in the F&B agents.

Table 3. Education demographic

	Frequency	Percent
Bachelor	87	32.4
Doctor	16	5.9
High school	116	43.1
Master	28	10.4
Other	22	8.2
Total	269	100.0

Table 4 provides the occupation classifications, which were mostly distributed among generation Z and those with stable work like office staff, students, housewives, and manual labor. The results indicated that the people who are usually buying in the F&B agents are principally officers and the others. They

were the generation Z, born in modern society with access to advanced industries. They have stable work and need to serve for their life and joys. Particularly, they usually purchase in the F&B agents.

Table 4. Occupation's demographic

	Frequency	Percent
Student	45	16.7
Housewife	32	11.9
Labor	17	6.3
Office staff	102	37.9
Other	73	27.2
Total	269	100.0

Table 5 described the monthly incomes of respondents. The monthly income classification was mostly distributed by small levels among under \$250 to above \$550.

Table 5. Monthly income demographic

	Frequency	Percent
Under \$250	76	28.3
\$250 - \$350	41	15.2
\$350 - \$450	97	36.1
\$450 - \$550	36	13.4
Above	19	7.1
Total	269	100.0

Table 6 reports on the data of how often consumers purchasing in the F&B agents indicating that the majority of respondents purchasing at the weekend in the F&B agents, followed by the alternate and once a month. The frequency of every day occupies the lowest number in total.

Table 6. Demographic of how often consumers purchase in the F&B agents

	Frequency	Percent
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Everyday	31	11.5
Weekend	116	43.1
Once a month	44	16.4
Alternate	78	29.0
Total	269	100.0

4.1.2 Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's alpha (α) value was utilized to test the reliability of scales with regards to a brand image to guarantee the reliability of scales, which were translated and then converted back into English. Table 7 presented the descriptive statistics, and the Cronbach's α coefficient of each variable and items of this study. Cronbach's α is a reliability coefficient that measures the relevant item reliability or the homogeneity between variables of the construct, Cronbach's α for the total 6 items in this study is 0.608. Cronbach's α is moderately high in reliability if Cronbach's α is greater than 0.7 (Nunnally & Bernstein 1994). Therefore, it means the measurement of this study is high reliability.

Table 7. Descriptive statistics and Cronbach's α coefficients

Items	Mean
Brand Image (4 items, Cronbach's α = 0.749)	4.254
Prefer non-dairy products (cheese, yoghurt)	
Prefer the drinks (oat drinks, yoghurt) made in Finland or Europe	
Attracted by products on shelves where visually appealing	
Attracted by colorful and beautiful packing.	
Purchasing Intention (2 items, Cronbach's α = 0.648)	4.201
In the future, I plan to purchase again Valio Oddly Good®	
In the future, Valio Oddly Good® will be my first choice	

4.2 Discussions

This study aimed to investigate the impact of a new brand image for Valio Oddly Good® on Vietnamese consumer purchasing in the F&B industry and the relationship between brand image and Vietnamese purchase intention. This section provides managerial implications based on the results of hypothesis testing. Therefore, it is important to have a deeper understanding of how customer attraction (as the intermediary) can be improved so that F&B agents would reach the most optimal selling benefits. This section also provides guidelines on how to improve each construct that enhances consumer attraction, as well as a set of guidelines on how to make improvements in each of the four dimensions of the brand image given their ranking. The results of the research support some meaningful suggestions meaningful to marketers.

“Does the information (images, nutrition,...) on packaging affect consumer's purchase intentions?”

To answer the first research question, this study confirmed that brand image attributes are tangible. Moreover, brand image attributes significantly affect Vietnamese consumer buying behavior in the F&B industry. In particular, the finding supports the hypothesis that the role of a brand image's dimensions had a positive and direct impact on consumers' purchase decisions. Because Vietnam is a developing country and consumers' incomes are just average, the living standard is getting higher and higher. Parallel to that, Vietnamese also do provide more attention to the form of products and product quality. Thus, the Vietnamese trends will prefer choosing the F&B products which are delicious, nutritious, and rich at affordable prices rather than choosing the F&B products with poor quality but cheaper. Moreover, this study also found that F&B managers fail to aim their customers in terms of determining what a non-dairy product is, due to most of the F&B agents' import products being dairy products. This means that when respondents have their buying behaviors in the F&B agents, they just consider the quality accompanied with good price, nutrition, and product origin, but do not

have a clear comprehension of what a non-dairy product is. In a competitive marketplace, the brand image of Valio Oddly Good® needs to be upgraded, professional, clearly identifiable as of non-dairy to grab consumer's attention at first sight.

The findings of this study will help the F&B agents' managers cognize the consumers' level of attraction rate. This study also highlights the strength and weaknesses that the F&B agents' operators need to maintain and improve their products offered. The results have also indicated that customers find the form of products and quality appealing. Therefore, F&B management needs to make sure these variables are well maintained and improved in order to increase customers' purchasing volumes. This study also found that F&B managers fail to aim their customers in terms of determining a non-dairy product. This shows that the F&B operators need to give more attention to delivering consistent and dependable knowledge of the customers about "non-dairy product".

“How can consumers' purchase intentions be gained?”

Through the research of the relationship between brand image and purchase intentions, the findings supported that the factor of brand image has a positive and direct effect on purchase intentions. When consumers are fascinated by the product that they have already purchased, they would have formed a trend of perception about the value of the product, for instance, non-dairy products and the subsequent impact on purchase intentions. Brand image is one of the most important factors in establishing the relationship between enterprises and customers.

These outcomes can be utilized as a part of progressing brand image creating proper values for the customers, promoting consumer purchase intention. It is hoped that this research would reveal insight on a better customer alignment culture in the F&B agents through Valio Oddly Good®'s non-dairy product in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Findings and Contributions

With the intensive growth of the F&B industry, such as convenience stores (mini-stops), supermarkets, and especially bars and coffee shops, dozens of new drinkable products are born every month in Vietnam. In the country, the F&B agents are standing before the competitive challenges and are an opportunity in which businesses could invest. Enterprises have been improving step by step to be successful with a business model of themselves and have made strides in expanding business in emerging and potential markets. Ho Chi Minh City is now a pioneer in the field of F&B in Vietnam, its own strengths as a Vietnamese modern and big city. Therefore, the managers have to understand the diversity of the market and the true needs of the Vietnamese consumers. In particular, the brand image factor will target them as well as towards ensuring the success of the business, along with consumer attraction and purchasing intentions. The relationship between these factors was analyzed and measured.

The results of the analyses have shown the influence of the four dimensions of the brand image on the purchase intentions of target consumers in the F&B agents when they have needs to buy some drinks. All these elements ensure a confident and significant influence on the brand image and their purchase intentions. The four dimensions of the brand image always come with the F&B operations. In addition, consumers find drinkable products with the healthy-good brand image appealing, and they will consider making the purchases of that product once again. Therefore, brand image has a positive impact on the purchasing intentions of Vietnamese consumers. The managers need to pay more attention to brand image factors along with making the business strategy help with the operation of the F&B agents increasingly strong and sustainable.

This study also has a contribution to F&B management in Vietnam, especially in Ho Chi Minh City. In the formulation of planning the promotion, this helps the F&B to upgrade Valio Oddly Good®'s image to achieve maximum profit by holding

consumers. The F&B agents need to focus more on the determination of non-dairy product factors and business diversification. These make sense in expanding the brand image and making the customers interested. Moreover, the F&B should have a business plan in each segment and each area in Vietnam.

The questionnaire is found in Appendix 1.

5.2 Limitations and Future Research

Consistent with past investigations, this study has shown that the variables have significant relationships with purchase intentions. Similarly, with all empirical studies, there are several limitations in this study. Firstly, it could not be generalized to the entire population of Vietnam because the study was conducted only in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Hence, in the future, it is suggested by the researcher to focus on other big cities like Ha Noi, Da Nang, Hue, Nha Trang, etc. Secondly, this study utilizes convenience sampling, in which it does not have specific respondents. Thus, in future studies, other sampling methods could be utilized to collect the data. In conclusion, this review is centered around the F&B agents in general and the researcher did not have a particular requirement with respect to whether the F&B agents are either healthy drink stores or any kind of typical stores (pub, gym center). Hence, in future studies, it is suggested that there is a focus on F&B in the typical category.

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The questionnaire used in the survey

(English version)

A STUDY OF IMPORTING VALIO ODDLY GOOD® THROUGH BRAND IMAGE LEADING TO CONSUMERS' PURCHASE INTENTION

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am researching my thesis in the Bachelor Degree of International Business for Karelia University of Applied Sciences, Finland. The questionnaire aims to research and gather data on customer behavior of using non-dairy products in the Vietnamese F&B market, as well as the purchasing intention of target customers if Valio Oddly Good® products are available on sale.

We would be grateful for your time to answer some questions. All information and your identifier are confidentiality kept and just used for research purposes. Finally, if you have any questions or any sharing, please leave your email address or contact me at tien.phan@edu.karelia.fi

Sincerely,

Tien Phan

[Survey starts]

Respondent's full name:

Address:.....

Phone number:

Email:

As a consumer, please kindly give the answer for the question below:

The most recent time, you had a drinkable purchase in F&B agents (mini-stops/ convenience stores, supermarket, drink/ coffee shops,...)

Less than 2 months (Continue with Part I of the questionnaire)

More than 2 months (Stop answering the following questions)

The questionnaire used in the survey**Part I: Participant Information:** Please check (✓) at the appropriate box

1. Gender:
 - Male
 - Female
2. Age:
 - Under 18
 - 18-26
 - 27-36
 - 37-45
 - Above
3. Education:
 - High School
 - Bachelor
 - Master
 - Doctor
 - Others
4. Occupation:
 - Student
 - Housewife
 - Office Staff
 - Labor
 - Others
5. Monthly Income:
 - Less than 5.000.000 VND
 - 5.000.000-7.000.000 VND
 - 7.000.000-9.000.000 VND
 - 9.000.000-11.000.000 VND
 - Above
6. How often do you purchase in F&B agents?

The questionnaire used in the survey

- Everyday
- Alternate
- Weekend
- Once a month

Part 2: The Survey

The questions will ask you to assess your attention and intention to purchase are influenced by brand image when you purchase in F&B agents. Please indicate your opinion with the following statements. If you choose '1' it means strongly disagree, '2' disagree, '3' neutral, '4' agree, '5' strongly agree. Please check (✓) in your level of agreement.

A. Brand Image

1. Prefer non-dairy products (cheese, yoghurt,...)
1 2 3 4 5
2. Prefer the drinks (oat drinks, yoghurt,...) made in Finland or Europe
1 2 3 4 5
3. Attracted by products on shelves where visually appealing.
1 2 3 4 5
4. Attracted by colorful and beautiful packing.
1 2 3 4 5

B. Purchase Intention

5. In the future, I plan to purchase again for Valio Oddly Good®
1 2 3 4 5
6. In the future, Valio Oddly Good® will be my first choice
1 2 3 4 5

The questionnaire used in the survey

(Vietnamese version)

CUỘC THĂM DÒ Ý KIẾN VỀ VIỆC NHẬP KHẨU SẢN PHẨM VALIO ODDLY GOOD® THÔNG QUA HÌNH ẢNH THƯƠNG HIỆU DẪN ĐẾN Ý ĐỊNH MUA CỦA NGƯỜI TIÊU DÙNG TẠI THÀNH PHỐ HỒ CHÍ MINH, VIỆT NAM

Thân chào anh/chị,

Tôi đang nghiên cứu luận văn của mình theo chương trình Bằng Cử nhân Kinh doanh Quốc tế của Đại học Khoa học Ứng dụng Karelia, Phần Lan. Bảng câu hỏi này nhằm mục đích nghiên cứu và thu thập dữ liệu về hành vi sử dụng của khách hàng đối với các sản phẩm không phải sữa trên thị trường F&B (thực phẩm và đồ uống) Việt Nam, cũng như ý định mua hàng của khách hàng mục tiêu nếu sản phẩm Valio Oddly Good® được bày bán trên thị trường.

Chúng tôi rất biết ơn anh/chị đã dành thời gian trả lời một số câu hỏi. Tất cả thông tin và nhận dạng của anh/chị được bảo mật và chỉ được sử dụng cho mục đích nghiên cứu. Cuối cùng, nếu anh/chị có thắc mắc hay bất cứ chia sẻ nào, hãy để lại địa chỉ email hoặc liên hệ với tôi qua địa chỉ tien.phan@edu.karelia.fi

Trân trọng,

Tien Phan

[Khảo sát bắt đầu]

Họ tên đáp viên:.....

Địa chỉ:.....

Số điện thoại:.....

Email:.....

Lần gần đây nhất, bạn mua hàng (đồ uống) trong các đại lý thực phẩm và đồ uống (siêu thị, cửa hàng tiện lợi, quán cà phê,...) là...

Từ 0-2 tháng (Tiếp tục với Phần 1 của bảng khảo sát)

Từ 2 tháng trở lên (Ngưng khảo sát)

The questionnaire used in the survey

Phần 1: Thông tin cá nhân: Vui lòng đánh dấu (✓) vào ô thích hợp

Xin quý vị cho biết một số thông tin cá nhân sau:

1. Giới tính: Nam Nữ
2. Độ tuổi:
 - Dưới 18 18-26 27-36
 - 37-45 Từ 45 trở lên
3. Trình độ học vấn:
 - Trung học phổ thông Đại học Thạc sĩ
 - Tiến sĩ Khác
4. Nghề nghiệp:
 - Học sinh – Sinh viên Nội trợ Nhân viên văn phòng
 - Công nhân Khác
5. Thu nhập hàng tháng:
 - Dưới 5.000.000 VND 5.000.000-7.000.000 VND
 - 7.000.000-9.000.000 VND
 - 9.000.000-11.000.000 VND Nhiều hơn
6. Anh/chị thường đến cửa hàng thực phẩm, đồ uống :
 - Mỗi ngày
 - Cuối tuần
 - Một lần một tháng
 - Không nhất định

Phần 2: Câu hỏi khảo sát

Các câu hỏi sẽ khảo sát ý kiến về sự thu hút bởi hình ảnh thương hiệu khi bạn chọn mua đồ uống tại các đại lý (siêu thị, cửa hàng tiện lợi, quán cà phê,...). Xin vui lòng đánh dấu (✓) tùy thuộc vào đánh giá của bạn theo thang đo từ 1 đến 5. Nếu bạn chọn “1” Hoàn toàn không đồng ý, “2” Không đồng ý, “3” Bình thường, “4” Đồng ý, “5” Hoàn toàn đồng ý. Vui lòng đánh dấu (✓) vào ô bạn chọn:

A. Hình ảnh thương hiệu

7. Các sản phẩm không làm từ sữa được yêu thích hơn (phô mai, yogurt,...)

The questionnaire used in the survey1 2 3 4 5

8. Các loại đồ uống (yến mạch, yogurt,...) sản xuất bởi Phần Lan hay Châu Âu được yêu thích hơn.

1 2 3 4 5

9. Thu hút bởi không gian kệ đặt sản phẩm bắt mắt

1 2 3 4 5

10. Thu hút bởi bao bì sản phẩm màu sắc và đẹp.

1 2 3 4 5 **B. Ý định trở lại**

11. Trong tương lai, bạn sẽ có kế hoạch để mua sản phẩm Valio Oddly Good®

1 2 3 4 5

12. Trong tương lai, Valio Oddly Good® sẽ là lựa chọn đầu tiên của bạn.

1 2 3 4 5