



Consumption Values and Usage of Carbonated Beverages in Kampala: Exploring the Mediating Role of Consumer Attitudes.

*Ahmad Walugembe¹,
Salma Ndagire² Rashid
Lubaale³*

^{1,2,3} Department of
Business Studies, Islamic
University In Uganda,
Kampala Campus-
Uganda

Email:

walumed82@gmail.com,
salmahndagire@gmail.com
and lubareriot@gmail.com.

Abstract: This study explores the mediation role of consumer attitude in the relationship between consumption values and product usage of carbonated drinks in Uganda. This paper intended to establish the relationship between consumption values and product usage, consumption values and consumer attitude, consumer attitude, and product usage, and determine the mediating role of consumer attitude between consumption values and product usage. A cross-sectional design and a quantitative approach focused on consumers in Kampala, the urban hub of carbonated drink consumption. A sample size of 384 respondents was selected. It was also established that consumer attitude significantly influences product usage, with a positive attitude leading to increased consumption. Consumer attitude partially mediated the relationship between consumption values and product usage. The results indicated a notable and positive connection between consumption values and product usage, along with a strong positive link between consumption values and consumer attitudes. This suggests that while consumption values directly impact product usage, the effect is amplified when mediated through a favorable consumer attitude. The study demonstrates that consumption values and consumer attitudes are pivotal in driving product usage. Companies in the carbonated beverage industry should prioritize strategies that foster positive consumer attitudes and align with consumers' core values to enhance product consumption.

Keywords: Consumption Values, Product Usage, Consumer Attitudes, Carbonated Beverages and Kampala

1. Background

Product usage is a key behavioral concept that provides critical insights into when, how, and for how long customers engage with a product. It informs companies about customer preferences, guiding them in targeting markets, designing new product lines, and ensuring products align with consumer needs (Sun, Bellezza, & Paharia, 2021). Understanding product usage is crucial for firms to plan and develop products that best suit their consumers (Pallant, Sands, & Karpen, 2020). By identifying how a product fits into consumers' preferences and lifestyles, companies can evaluate its success and impact on the market.

(Pallant, Sands, & Karpen, 2020). Historically, companies primarily relied on sales figures to measure product usage. However, as the consumer environment has evolved, companies now adopt more refined and precise methods to gather information on how end users interact with their products (Arunachalam, Bahadir, Bharadwaj, & Guesalaga, 2020). These product usage metrics, such as usage frequency, customer retention, and time spent using the product, have allowed companies to assess product performance and enhance user experience (Rane, Achari, & Choudhary, 2023).

In the carbonated beverage industry, once synonymous with refreshment and indulgence, there has been a shift driven by changing consumer preferences, particularly the demand for healthier options. Consumers now increasingly favor on-the-go drink solutions with low sugar content, a trend that has prompted carbonated beverage companies in Uganda to diversify their product offerings. These companies have responded by introducing fruit juices like Minute Maid and Oner, as well as sugar-free beverages such as Coca-Cola's Coke Zero (Khisa, 2018). Despite these efforts to broaden product lines and improve product usage, the carbonated beverage industry has faced significant challenges. For instance, Coca-Cola Uganda reported a dramatic 60% drop in product usage in 2020, with global revenues declining by 16% (Nsomba, 2021). This downturn, attributed to a reduction in per-capita soda consumption, forced the company to downsize its workforce by approximately 1,600 to 1,800 employees to reduce costs (Coca-Cola Annual Report, 2018). Pepsi faced a similar situation, with a 23.1% decline in product usage, resulting in a revenue drop from UGX 15.24 billion in 2017 to UGX 11.72 billion in 2018 (Pepsi Annual Report, 2018).

The decline in product usage in the carbonated beverage industry is largely attributed to shifting consumer consumption values. As consumers increasingly prioritize healthier options, their attitudes toward traditional carbonated beverages have deteriorated. This change in consumer behavior is partly driven by the rising prevalence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), which has led to a preference for non-carbonated products (Ahiabile, 2020). Consequently, companies whose products do not align with these changing values are experiencing declines in product usage (Vendrell-Herrero, Vaillant, Bustinza, & Lafuente, 2022). In response, companies must appeal to consumers' evolving desires to sustain and increase product usage. When a product aligns with consumers' values, it positively influences their attitudes toward that product, fostering long-term engagement (Srivastava, Dwivedi, Mangla, Dey, & Koufopoulos, 2024). However, despite the rapid growth and potential for carbonated beverages in Uganda, the overall level of consumption remains relatively low (Kayiwa, 2019). Soft drink consumption has also become a contentious public health issue, with many considering these beverages a major contributor to obesity, diabetes, and other health problems (Srivastava, et al., 2024). As a result, consumer values and attitudes toward soft drinks are rapidly changing, leading to a decline in the usage of carbonated beverages globally. Studies suggest that while some carbonated drinks were once thought to aid weight loss by altering metabolism, subsequent research has cast doubt on these claims (Buch-Andersen, et al., 2020). In Uganda, companies like Harris International, the manufacturer of Riham Soda, registered significant revenue declines, with sales falling from 200 million in 2021 to 180 million in 2022. Coca-Cola Uganda experienced a 60% drop in product usage and revenues fell to 9.7 billion globally (Kagoda, 2023). These trends raise critical questions about how carbonated beverage companies can improve product usage amidst changing consumer preferences. The research gap lies in investigating the interplay between consumption values, consumer attitudes, and product usage of carbonated beverages in Uganda. While several studies have highlighted the shift in consumer preferences towards healthier beverages, little research has explored how these consumption values and attitudes specifically mediate product usage in the Ugandan market. Addressing this gap, this study seeks to establish the relationship between consumption values, consumer attitudes, and product usage of carbonated beverages, with a focus on how consumer attitudes mediate this relationship. By exploring these relationships, the study strives to advance useful knowledge for the benefit of carbonated beverage companies regionally and worldwide.

2. Literature Review

The paper reviews the literature on the concepts of consumption values, consumer attitudes, and product usage in the context of Carbonated beverage firms in Uganda.

2.1 Consumption Values

Consumption values have been conceptualized as the perceived utility of a product or service based on a consumer's assessment of various factors, which influence their purchasing decisions (Amin, & Tarun, 2021). These values, which include functional, social, emotional, epistemic, and conditional dimensions, play a critical role in shaping consumers' product and brand preferences (Amin, & Tarun, 2021). Functional values relate to product performance, quality, and price, while social values consider societal perceptions. Emotional values focus on feelings associated with using products, especially environmentally friendly ones, and conditional values arise from specific purchasing contexts. Epistemic value involves the novelty and creativity of a product (Mwesiumo, & Abdalla, 2023). While consumption values universally affect consumer behavior, their interpretation varies across different cultures. These values influence purchase behavior, often mediated by consumer attitudes, and act as pre-purchase motivators, in contrast to post-purchase satisfaction.

2.2 Consumer Attitude

Consumer attitude has been described as the decision-making process and behaviors involved in acquiring, evaluating, using, and disposing of goods and services (Chetioui, Lebdaoui, & Chetioui, 2021). It encompasses not only the purchase but also post-purchase behaviors, considering both environmental and personal factors (Chetioui et al., 2021). Influenced by elements like perception, self-concept, social and cultural background, motivation, and personality, consumer attitudes shape preferences and actions. Consumers develop attitudes toward products, brands, and behaviors, which are influenced by access to objective information on competing brands, such as costs, features, and quality (Czinkota, Kaufmann, Basile, & Ferri, 2020). Consumer attitude is composed of three elements: affect (emotional response), behavior (intent to act), and cognition (beliefs about the product). These attitudes are general and apply beyond momentary events, impacting broader consumption behaviors. When combined with consumer values, attitudes play a significant role in shaping product usage decisions.

2.3 Product Usage

Product usage in the context of carbonated soft drinks refers to how consumers engage with these beverages, the frequency of consumption, and the value they derive from the product (Visram, et al., 2016). Recent literature emphasizes that users themselves create meanings around products through their experiences, which can differ significantly from the intentions of designers or marketers (Scarborough, et al., 2020). In the soft drink industry, understanding product usage is critical for managers to develop effective strategies (Visram, et al., 2016). Key indicators of product usage include the number of active consumers, the value the product provides, and how frequently it is consumed (Wang, Malthouse, & Krishnamurthi, 2015). High levels of usage are associated with a greater awareness of product attributes and stronger brand loyalty (Phong, Nga, Hanh, & Minh, 2020). However, barriers such as physical inaccessibility, stigmatization, or a lack of clarity in product features can limit consumer engagement. Therefore, understanding and enhancing product usage is crucial in maintaining relevance in a competitive market.

2.4 Consumption Values and Product Usage

The connection between consumption values and product usage is complex, influenced by the five dimensions of consumption value namely (functional, social, epistemic, conditional, and emotional) as proposed by Sheth, Newman, & Gross (1991). These dimensions have been widely applied to analyze and predict product usage across various industries. Functional value, which focuses on the utilitarian performance of a product, is often a key determinant in purchasing decisions, especially when consumers seek maximum benefits at minimal cost (Sheth et al., 1991b; Nowlis & Simonson, 2010). For instance,

Kim, & Jan, (2024) found that technical compatibility and functionality play significant roles in product adoption, highlighting how functional utility drives product usage.

Beyond functional attributes, social value also plays a role, as products can carry symbolic meanings tied to social status or group identity (Leigh & Gabel, 2011). This suggests that consumption is influenced by more than just utility, as consumers may buy products for social recognition or symbolic associations (Barata, & Duarte, 2023). Similarly, emotional value relates to the affective responses consumers have when using products. This dimension emphasizes the pleasure, excitement, or satisfaction derived from product usage, which has been linked to higher usage rates and positive product evaluations (Brown & Reingen, 2010).

Although these insights are valuable, there is still a lack of understanding regarding how different consumption values interact to impact product usage, particularly in specific contexts like the carbonated soft drink industry. Existing literature often generalizes product usage in terms of consumption utilities, without addressing the interplay between these value dimensions. Furthermore, most studies focus on individual dimensions of value rather than investigating how they collectively shape product usage patterns. The complexity of modern consumer preferences, such as the shift towards healthier options in beverages, further complicates this relationship, suggesting that new research should explore how evolving consumption values impact product usage in dynamic markets like Uganda's carbonated beverage sector. This research bridges that gap by examining how the various dimensions of consumption values influence product usage within this specific context.

2.4 Consumption Values and Consumer Attitudes

The study conceptualizes consumption values into five dimensions that contribute differently to consumer attitudes depending on specific contexts (Kim, & Jan, 2024). For example, purchasing gold coins for their utility as an inflation hedge is driven by functional value, while the same decision may also evoke emotional value in the form of security. Conversely, purchasing a gold bracelet may be driven primarily by social values, such as admiration from others. This illustrates that consumption values are context-specific, yet current research tends to overemphasize functional and emotional values while neglecting others like epistemic and conditional values. While it is well-established that functional value (utility, price, performance) significantly impacts consumer decision-making (Woo & Kim, 2019), research has largely overlooked the roles of epistemic and conditional values in specific contexts. The focus remains predominantly on utilitarian products, such as green products or durable goods, with little investigation into how consumers' curiosity (epistemic value) or specific situations (conditional value) influence their choices. For instance, innovative or emerging products, where novelty is a key factor, remain underexplored despite their growing presence in the market.

Furthermore, Consumer perceived value is understood as the consumer's overall evaluation of a product based on the trade-off between what they give (money, time, effort) and what they receive in terms of quality and satisfaction (Barata, & Duarte, 2023). This concept is subjective and influenced by varying contexts and product attributes (Sangroya & Kumar, 2017). Yet, research continues to emphasize functional value, especially in economic contexts without fully exploring how non-utilitarian values like emotional and social factors affect consumers' perceived value, particularly in luxury or hedonic products. Medeiros et al. (2016) discuss consumption values from both economic (price, utility) and psychological (emotions, cognition) perspectives, yet much of the literature tends to focus on the economic side. Emotional value, while briefly acknowledged, is insufficiently integrated with social and psychological motivations, such as how products enhance personal identity or reflect social status. This is particularly significant for green products, where consumers might be inclined to spend a premium due to their emotional attachment to sustainability (Rahnama & Rajabpour, 2017). However, these emotional motivations are rarely considered

in conjunction with social influences, leaving a gap in understanding how social value affects consumer attitudes.

Several green products highlight the dominance of functional value, emphasizing quality and price as key drivers of consumer decisions (Biswas, et. al., 2015). Consumers view green products as deserving higher prices due to their perceived benefits, such as high quality (Biswas & Roy, 2015). However, the emotional value attached to these products such as the satisfaction of supporting sustainable practices remains an underexplored area, particularly in contexts where the social and psychological motivations behind purchasing green products could influence long-term consumer loyalty. Literature suggests that the importance of consumption values varies greatly across different product categories, yet there is limited research that investigates how these variations manifest in different geographical, cultural, or socio-economic contexts. While price and quality are central to consumer attitudes in many Western markets, it is unclear whether the same values hold in non-Western or developing regions. Additionally, the interaction between functional, emotional, and social values in luxury or hedonic products is underexplored. Most studies focus on consumption values at a single point in time, which fails to capture how consumer attitudes and preferences evolve as they become more familiar with certain products. For instance, while functional value plays a significant role in the initial purchase of green electronics (Marakanon & Panjakajornsak, 2017), it remains unclear how other values such as emotional or social become more prominent as consumers develop long-term loyalty to the product.

2.5 Consumer Attitude and Product Usage

Beliefs greatly influence consumer perspectives, shaping their opinions about a product in either a positive or negative way. For instance, while some consumers may believe that tea is beneficial and helps relieve tension, others may argue that excessive tea consumption harms health (Khraim & Jordan, 2011). Human beliefs, however, are not static; they are often subjective and susceptible to change based on situational factors, thus creating a dynamic link between consumer attitudes and product usage. Consumers develop particular emotional responses toward products or brands, which may be rooted in certain beliefs or arise without a clear rationale (Kim, & Jan, 2024). An individual may feel uneasy about consuming a given product due to the high-fat content, reflecting the interplay between personal belief and product perception (Visram, et al, 2016). Behavioral intentions, which indicate consumers' plans regarding products, can result from beliefs or emotions, though not necessarily. An individual may dislike a restaurant but continue to visit it because it is a popular social spot among friends. However, the dynamic nature of beliefs, which can shift based on evolving experiences or new information, is underexplored. Most studies focus on static consumer attitudes, leaving a gap in understanding how changing beliefs over time influence continued or discontinued product usage.

Costa, et al., (2021) explored how consumer attitudes towards product use influence subsequent product usage patterns. Consumers oriented towards convenience are more likely to use certain products, while those with stronger social orientations tend to use less (Costa, et al., 2021). In addition, Positive attitudes and familiarity with technology have a significant correlation with product usage (Kasilingam, 2020). Furthermore, Le, & Wang, (2020) indicate that consumer intentions influence behavioral tendencies regarding internet services. Several other studies have been done to support this relationship including; Geebren, (2022) who explored behavioral aspects of online banking, including customer satisfaction, word of mouth, repurchase intentions, price sensitivity, complaint tendencies, and switching barriers and Fuadi, Bukhori, & Firdiyanti, (2022) who explored how attitudes and subjective norms influence consumer behavior.

3. Methodology

This study employed a cross-sectional research design to examine the connection between consumption values, consumer attitudes, and product usage in Uganda's carbonated beverage industry. This approach was appropriate as it enabled data collection from a diverse group of consumers at a single point in time,

providing insight into their present consumption values and product usage patterns. This design was particularly relevant given the aim of assessing how consumer attitudes mediate the relationship between consumption values and product usage, without the need for longitudinal tracking. By using this approach, the study efficiently captured variations in consumer perceptions and behaviors across different demographic groups, providing valuable insights into the usage of carbonated beverages. Furthermore, the design was cost-effective and time-efficient, making it appropriate for examining the mediating influence of attitudes on purchasing behavior. The study also adopted a quantitative approach to describe and draw inferences from the relationships of the variables. Quantitative research was utilized due to its conclusive nature, aiming to measure a problem and determine its prevalence by seeking results that can be generalized to a broader population.

3.1 Population and Sample

The study population followed the officially registered population of people in Kampala City because it hosts the largest city in the country, the capital, and accommodates people from all over the country. Results generated from Kampala can be easily generalized to the entire Country because of the diversity of the population. The 2014 Uganda Bureau of Statistics indicated that Kampala hosts 1,507,000 People whom the researchers assumed as potential users of Carbonated Beverages. A sample size of 384 respondents was selected from consumers as determined by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Simple random sampling was used to select the respondents by allocating equal chance to all elements in the population (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). A self-administered structured questionnaire was used to measure the perception of the respondents since they help in gathering data over a large sample and saves time. Detailed instructions on how to complete the questionnaire were given to the respondents (Amin, et, al, 2015) The questions in the questionnaire were close-ended and administered with the help of research assistants who were stationed at different supermarkets, and retail shops mainly for carbonated beverages. Questions were rated using a 5-point Likert Scale of strongly agree (5), agree (4), uncertain (3), disagree (2) strongly disagree (1). The questionnaire was divided into sections to address specifically all the variables in the model.

3.2 Measurement of variables

To measure the study variables, questionnaire items for consumption values, consumer attitude, and product usage were adopted and modified from previous studies as shown in table 1 below:

Table 1: Measurements of the Research Variables

Variable	Author	Measures
Consumption Values	Sheth et al., (1991b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional values • Emotional Values • Conditional Values • Social Values • Epistemic values
Consumer Attitude	Czinkota, & Ronkainen, (2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cognitive association • Affective association • Behavioral intensions
Product Usage	Brandes & Erloff, (2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usage variety • Frequency of consumption

Source: Secondary Data

3.3 Reliability and Validity

The reliability of the instrument was assessed using the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. Since the coefficient exceeded 0.70, the instrument was deemed reliable. (Amin, 2005) as per the results presented in table 2. To measure validity, experts in the areas of consumer behavior were used. The questionnaire was given to a number of experts to evaluate the relevance of each item in the instrument to the objectives and how well scores on one measure predict scores on another measure of interest. The focus was mainly on content validity to ensure that the content of the questionnaire was appropriate and relevant to the study purpose. The results of the CVI are indicated in Table two.

Table 2: Reliability and Validity Test Results.

Variable	Anchor	Cronbach Alpha Value	Content Validity Index
Consumption Values	5 Point	.752	.723
Consumer attitude	5 Point	.775	.767
Product Usage	5 Point	.897	.821

3.4 Data Processing

The data was coded, cleaned, edited, and analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Scientists) version 25. Descriptive statistics, including frequency counts and percentages, were generated, along with inferential analyses such as the Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple regression.

3.5 Ethical Consideration

The study carefully addressed ethical considerations by obtaining permission from respondents before engaging them in data collection. Verbal consent was secured from all participants before distributing the questionnaires, with a clear explanation of the study's purpose and objectives. To ensure privacy and confidentiality, the researcher safeguarded respondents' information and clarified the importance of the data was provided, along with potential dissemination channels. Anonymity was upheld by designing a tool that did not request personal details.

4. Results of the Study

The study targeted a sample of 384 beverage customers. Out of these, 300 responded representing 77.4% response rate. This response was appropriate as supported by Fincham (2008), who argues that a response rates of 50% and above is enough to represent the population. The summary of findings is presented below;

Table 3: Sample Characteristics

Category	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	148	49.3
	Female	152	50.7
Total		300	100.0
Age	18 - 25 years	38	12.7
	26 - 30 years	63	21.0
	31 - 35 years	90	30.0
	36 - 40 years	76	25.3
	Above 40 years	33	11.0
Total		300	100.0

Education Level	Certificate	92	30.7
	Degree	141	47.0
	Postgraduate	67	22.3
Total		300	100.0

Results presented in table 3 indicated that female respondents were the majority (50.7%) compared to male respondents (49.3%). This could largely suggest that most consumers of carbonated beverages are female. Results also indicated that the majority of respondents were between the ages of 31 and 35, (30%), followed by respondents between 36 and 40, (25.3%), respondents between 18 and 25, accounted for (12.7%) respondents between 26 and 30 (21%), and respondents over 40 accounted for (11%). As a result, the majority of respondents were mature enough to provide valid responses.

4.1 Correlation Results

The main objective of this research was to investigate how consumption values and consumer attitudes influence the usage of carbonated beverages. To achieve this, a Pearson correlation matrix was used to test the relationship that exists between the independent variables (consumption values, consumer attitude) against the dependent variable (product usage) the results of the study are shown in the table below;

Table 4: Correlation results

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Consumption Values (1)	1													
Functional Values (2)	.769**	1												
Emotional Values (3)	.762**	.621**	1											
Conditional Values (4)	.768**	.501**	.462**	1										
Social Values (5)	.676**	.357**	.331**	.427**	1									
Epistemic Values (6)	.681**	.314**	.336**	.450**	.388**	1								
Consumer Attitude (7)	.636**	.484**	.501**	.516**	.379**	.444**	1							
cognitive association (8)	.427**	.299**	.303**	.384**	.242**	.337**	.854**	1						
Affective association (9)	.588**	.446**	.500**	.446**	.366**	.388**	.715**	.347**	1					
Behavior (10)	.557**	.477**	.465**	.413**	.339**	.339**	.730**	.365**	.549**	1				
Product Usage (11)	.712**	.419**	.455**	.492**	.431**	.444**	.695**	.395**	.540**	.540**	1			
Usage Variety (12)	.673**	.319**	.341**	.376**	.338**	.358**	.473**	.314**	.406**	.849**	.793**	1		
Frequency of Use (13)	.616**	.230**	.356**	.364**	.240**	.331**	.348**	.261**	.319**	.659**	.631**	.666**	1	
Value Delivered (14)	.544**	.353**	.305**	.340**	.349**	.282**	.462**	.282**	.443**	.942**	.743**	.743**	.861**	1

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

Results in table 4, revealed that there was a strong significant positive relationship between consumption values and product usage ($\beta = .712^{**}$ P-value<0.01). This implies that an enhancement in consumption values by one unit will lead to an improvement in product usage. The results in Table 9 further reveal that there exists a significant and positive relationship between consumption values and consumer attitude ($\beta = .636^{**}$, P<.01). The findings indicate that consumption values can significantly improve consumer attitude. Organizations that invest more in aligning their product features to match the consumption values of consumers are more likely to see an improved attitude towards their product by the consumers. Results

indicate a significant and positive relationship between consumer attitude and product usage ($\beta = .695^{**}$, $p < .01$). The findings show that when a consumer's attitude is positive towards a product, companies can expect improved product usage.

4.2 Regression Model Analysis

The results in Table 5 below show the prediction model which was presented to examine the level to which consumer values and consumer attitudes can account for variances usage of carbonated beverages

Table 5: Regression Model Analysis

Coefficients ^a					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	12.079	1.831		6.596	.000
1 Consumption Values	.232	.033	.391	6.963	.000
Consumer Attitude	.307	.050	.346	6.170	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Product Usage

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.667 ^a	.445	.441	4.93424

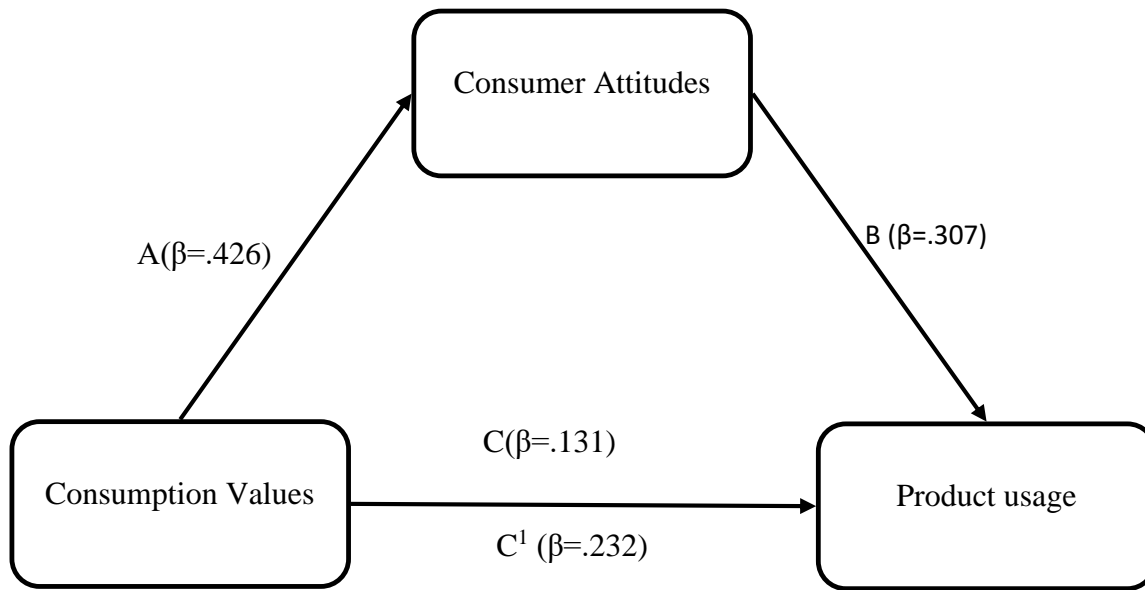
a. Predictors: (Constant), Consumer Attitude, Consumption Values

From the model, it is clear that Consumption values and consumer attitudes can account for a variance of 44.1% in product usage (Adjusted R Squared value = .441), implying that other factors contribute 55.9%. The best predictor of product usage was consumer attitude ($r = .307$, Sig. $< .01$) followed by consumption value ($r = .232$, Sig. $< .01$) and all values were significant. The regression model was well specified (F Statistic= 118.6, $p < .01$), meaning that both of the independent variables consumption values and consumer attitudes were significant predictors of product usage.

4.3 Mediating Role of Consumer Attitude between Consumer Values and Product Usage

Using a bootstrap method, mediation effects were assessed, and the significance level of these effects was determined. The results are conveyed in figure 1.

Figure 1: mediating role of consumer attitude between consumer values and product usage



Source: Primary Data

Type of mediation = partial ($\beta = .131$, Bootstrap Z-value = 5.60, $P = .000$), Direct effect = .232, Indirect effect = .131.

For this objective, the purpose was to establish the mediating role of consumer attitude in the relationship between consumption values and product usage among consumers of carbonated beverages. When the mediator was introduced and following the bootstrap procedure, the results indicated that both the direct and indirect paths were significant. This implies that consumer attitude plays a partial mediating role in the relationship between consumption values and product usage ($\beta = .131$, $p = .000$, $Z = 5.60$). It equally means that consumption value relates to product usage, but it can also go through consumer attitude to influence product usage.

5. Discussion of findings

5.1 Consumption Values and Product Usage

The study findings indicate a strong and significant relationship between consumption values and product usage. Essentially, the satisfaction a consumer derives from a product directly influences how often they use it. For instance, consider a consumer seeking an energy boost who purchases a carbonated beverage. If the beverage effectively energizes and refreshes them, they are likely to return to it whenever they face similar needs. This positive experience can gradually lead to brand loyalty, as the consumer consistently associates the product with a reliable solution to their energy demands. Therefore, higher satisfaction tied to specific consumption values, such as functional benefits, tends to drive repeat usage and customer retention. Moreover, as consumption values improve, product usage increases, a point supported by Kim, & Jan, (2024) who identified five consumption value dimensions including; functional, social, emotional, epistemic, and conditional that reliably predict product usage. For example, a consumer may also choose a product due to its social value, such as a brand that enhances their social standing or helps them fit into a specific peer group. According to Barata, & Duarte, (2023), product usage is often influenced by the product's association with certain social groups. This suggests that the more aligned a product is with the consumer's personal or social values, the more likely they are to use it frequently, reinforcing the positive link between consumption values and product usage.

The study findings further established a positive and significant relation between consumption values and product usage. This implies that the level of satisfaction a consumer derives from a carbonated beverage will determine how frequently they use the product for example if a consumer is looking for an energy boost in the middle of the day when they purchase a carbonated beverage and it makes them feel energized and refreshed, they are more likely to lean towards using that same product to satisfy the same condition when the need arises and this can easily lead them to convert to loyal customers. The results imply that when the users' consumption value improves towards a product it leads to an increase in product usage. These findings are in line with (Tanrikulu, 2021), who stated that the five original consumption value dimensions have been identified as a reliable construct in predicting product usage.

5.2 Consumption Values and Consumer Attitude

The findings reveal a strong positive relationship between consumption values and consumer attitudes, indicating that consumers' attitudes toward products are shaped by how well those products satisfy their specific needs. For instance, if a consumer is craving something sweet, they will likely choose a carbonated beverage that aligns with the value they seek, such as taste or convenience. If the product successfully satisfies that craving and meets their expectations, it fosters a positive attitude toward the beverage. This positive attitude may result in repeated purchases or even brand loyalty. On the other hand, if the product fails to satisfy their craving, their attitude toward it will worsen, leading them to explore other options. This demonstrates that consumption values whether related to taste, energy, or refreshment play a significant role in shaping consumer attitudes toward a product.

Moreover, these findings are supported by Woo and Kim (2019), who assert that consumption values like performance, reliability, price, and quality influence consumers' attitudes. For example, a consumer might choose a durable smartphone based on its functional value if they prioritize performance and reliability. If the phone consistently performs well, this creates a positive attitude toward the brand, reinforcing their decision. Similarly, in the case of green products, consumers who are willing to pay premium prices for eco-friendly goods expect not only environmental benefits but also high quality. If the product delivers on both, their attitude toward green products and the brand becomes more favorable. Tseng and Hung (2013) further support this by emphasizing that functional value is key in shaping consumption attitudes, highlighting that consumers form attitudes based on how well products fulfill their utilitarian needs. Thus, consumption values are crucial in shaping consumer attitudes and purchase behavior.

5.3 Consumer Attitude and Product Usage.

The findings reveal a strong, positive relationship between consumer attitude and product usage, suggesting that when consumers have a favorable attitude toward a product, they are more likely to purchase and use it frequently. For instance, if a consumer has previously had a satisfying experience with a particular brand, they will naturally lean toward purchasing it again, confident that it will meet their expectations. Endorsements from peers or positive word-of-mouth also reinforce this attitude, contributing to increased product usage. This highlights the role of familiarity and satisfaction in building positive consumer attitudes that translate into repeated purchases. A consumer who consistently enjoys a product will likely develop brand loyalty, leading to higher consumption rates. This aligns with Khraim and Jordan (2011), who emphasized that consumer attitudes can significantly influence purchasing behavior.

Considering a wider social context, consumer attitudes are influenced not only by personal experiences but also by societal trends and external factors (Costa, et al., (2021). This implied that a consumer's orientation toward convenience can drive higher product usage. For example, consumers with busy lifestyles may gravitate towards ready-to-drink beverages because they view them as convenient, leading to frequent usage. However, consumers who are more socially conscious or health-oriented may avoid certain products, such as sugary carbonated drinks, because their attitudes are shaped by health or environmental concerns. Moreover, familiarity with and positive attitudes toward technology may also influence product usage,

particularly in tech-driven sectors like food delivery apps or smart home appliances (Chetioui, et al., 2021). As people grow more comfortable with these technologies, their usage increases. This emphasizes the complex ways that consumer attitudes, shaped by both personal satisfaction and social factors, drive product usage across different industries.

5.4 Mediating Role of Consumer Attitude between Consumer Values and Product Usage

For this objective, the purpose was to establish the mediating role of consumer attitude in the relationship between consumption values and product usage among consumers of carbonated beverages. When the mediator was introduced and following the bootstrap procedure, the results indicated that both the direct and indirect paths were significant. This implies that a consumer may forego consumption of one beverage over another because of a difference in product features for example, on a hot day, a consumer may want a cold carbonated beverage but have a preference towards the ones that have zero sugar content in them for health considerations, this means they will have a positive attitude towards using the product that matches the exact value they seek at the time consequently building a preference to that product and leading to increased product usage in the long run. This is in line with the consistency theory, which suggests that individuals prefer their thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, and intentions to be in harmony. In support of this, Demir, Rjoub, & Yesiltas (2021), argues that these aspects should align with how individuals perceive themselves and influence their subsequent behaviors.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusion

The study's findings highlight a strong, significant relationship between consumption values, consumer attitudes, and product usage, particularly in the context of carbonated beverages. To drive higher product usage, companies must prioritize fostering positive consumer attitudes and aligning their products with the consumption values of their target market.

The regression analysis further confirms that both consumption values and consumer attitudes significantly influence product usage. However, it was also revealed that additional factors beyond these two variables contribute to product usage, indicating a more complex decision-making process for consumers.

Moreover, the study found that consumer attitude plays a partial mediating role between consumption values and product usage. This suggests that while consumption values have a direct impact on product usage, they also work in conjunction with consumer attitudes to shape purchasing behavior. Therefore, producers of carbonated beverages must consider both factors as critical to their strategy, as neither can be overlooked for sustained success.

6.2 Recommendations

Marketers of carbonated beverages must align their strategies with the consumption values of their target audience to drive product usage. Understanding these values enables marketers to promote healthier options, sustainability initiatives, and social causes that resonate with consumers. Enhancing consumer attitudes is an important strategy that may be achieved through relatable messaging and influencer collaborations. Marketers should therefore use all the possible means to understand and stimulate consumer attitudes towards usage of their products and services.

For consumers, making informed choices is essential when selecting carbonated beverages. By evaluating how these products align with their consumption values, whether related to health or sustainability, consumers can prioritize brands that reflect their preferences. Balancing enjoyment with health considerations is equally important, as consumers are always mindful of their values and the impact of frequent consumption on their well-being. Additionally, consumers can advocate for positive change by

using their purchasing power to demand healthier and more sustainable products by advancing their consumption values and attitudes to manufacturers of carbonated beverages.

6.3 Policy Implications

Policymakers have a pivotal role in addressing the public health concerns linked to carbonated beverage consumption, particularly in light of rising issues like sugar intake and obesity. One of the most effective ways to do this is through the implementation of regulations that mandate clear and transparent labelling. By requiring companies to disclose detailed information about the ingredients, sugar content, and potential health risks associated with their products, policymakers can empower consumers to make well-informed decisions. Transparency in labeling would not only help consumers align their choices with their health goals but also foster greater accountability within the beverage industry.

Furthermore, stricter regulations on sugar content are essential for combating the increasing prevalence of obesity and related diseases. Policymakers can introduce sugar tax initiatives or set limits on the amount of sugar allowed in carbonated beverages. These measures would not only deter excessive sugar consumption but also encourage companies to reformulate their products to make them healthier, potentially leading to a reduction in the consumption of high-sugar beverages. Such policies would directly contribute to improving public health outcomes by addressing the root cause of many chronic health conditions.

In addition to sugar content regulations, enforcing guidelines on advertising strategies targeting vulnerable populations, particularly children, is crucial. Policymakers can regulate how carbonated beverages are marketed, especially by restricting advertisements aimed at children or misleading claims about health benefits. Introducing bans on promotional content during times when children are most likely to be exposed, such as on children's television programming or social media platforms, would help curb the influence of advertising on their consumption habits. Moreover, these policies could include guidelines that require more responsible marketing practices, encouraging companies to promote healthier alternatives and accurate information.

To ensure the effective enforcement of these regulations, the government should also strengthen monitoring and compliance mechanisms. This includes establishing a regulatory body tasked with overseeing the beverage industry, conducting regular audits, and imposing penalties for non-compliance. Public awareness campaigns could complement these regulatory measures by educating the public on the dangers of excessive sugar consumption and promoting healthier choices. In tandem with these actions, policymakers should work closely with local and international health organizations to establish a comprehensive, evidence-based approach to regulating the carbonated beverage industry in Uganda.

6.4 Limitations of the study

This study utilized a cross-sectional survey design to collect quantitative data, which inherently limits the findings to a snapshot at a single point in time. This means the study cannot capture any potential changes, shifts, or trends in consumer behavior that may occur over a longer period. To overcome this limitation, future research could adopt a longitudinal design to track variations in consumer behavior over time. Additionally, integrating qualitative methods in future studies could offer more in-depth insights, enriching the quantitative data through methodological triangulation and providing a more well-rounded understanding of consumer attitudes and behaviors.

The study's focus on urban consumers of carbonated beverages also presents a limitation. Since it only sampled urban populations, the findings may not be applicable to rural areas, where consumer preferences and behaviors might differ due to socio-economic, cultural, and environmental factors. For a broader and more comprehensive understanding of consumer behavior, future research should include rural consumers to capture differences across various geographic locations.

Another limitation of this study stems from the use of a standardized questionnaire. While this method was intended to gather consistent responses, it also restricted the ability to capture nuanced insights beyond the pre-determined questions. Despite the efforts to make the questionnaire as comprehensive as possible, the fixed format may have limited respondents' ability to share additional thoughts or elaborate on their perspectives. Additionally, some participants were reluctant to fully disclose personal or sensitive information due to privacy concerns. To address this, the purpose of the study was clearly communicated to participants, and confidentiality was assured with supporting documentation.

Lastly, the study faced time and financial constraints, which impacted the scope and depth of the research. To manage these limitations, the researchers utilized the most practical and efficient data collection methods available within the available budget and timeframe.

7. References

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