

A Study On Brand Loyalty of Mineral Water In Pakistan

(The Case of Nestle Pure Life)

Water...one of the basic needs of a society and an individual. It is used in just about everything and most especially for human consumption. Through the years, accessibility to water has slowly declined. Overpopulation, [climate change](#) and human mismanagement have contributed largely to the scarcity of access to this necessity (Wikipedia encyclopedia,2011). Water-borne diseases have often been the cause of deaths especially among children and according to a World Bank report, unsafe drinking water, inadequate sanitation and poor hygiene are the major causes of these water-borne diseases (Wikipedia encyclopedia,2011).

Water bottling companies have branded their products as a safer, cleaner, and healthier way to drink. [Nestle Pure Life](#) incorporated these ideals in its campaign in [Pakistan](#) where [water contamination](#) has reached to a level wherein families have resorted to using water filters at home and water delivery services. They also made use of dispensers (Wikipedia encyclopedia,2011). However, environmental and the accessibility concerns with Nestle Pure Life have come up. These problems made water a basic issue in [human rights](#) and the company's policies are put into question (Alliance Sud, 2005).

Pakistan is known for its [tumultuous history](#) and conflict with [India](#). It is saddled with issues of corruption, [militarism](#) and poverty (Wikipedia encyclopedia,2011). It has been regarded as low-income country by the World Bank. Its population is around 168 million in 2008 with 1.81 percent growth rate and one of the underdeveloped countries in the world (US Department of State, Diplomacy in Action, 2010).However, with the help of aggressive reforms, the International Monetary Fund and debt relief from the United States, Pakistan became one of the fastest growing economy in [South Asia](#) with poverty rate of 23 percent(Wikipedia encyclopedia,2011). But the United Nations listed Pakistan as 'worst performer in [South Asia](#)' when it comes to Human Development Index. Poverty in the country is also gender-related (Nils Roseman, pg6,2005). The water problem in Pakistan accounts for the fact that only three percent of its water resources are used for hygienic and drinking purposes. Water is mostly used for irrigation purposes. It is also estimated that with Pakistan's burgeoning population and thus, the greater need for water, one of three Pakistani faces water crisis (Nils Roseman,pg7,2005). The Pakistani government has said that diarrhoea is the cause of death among children and the Pakistan Council of Research and Water Resources assessed that forty percent of the illnesses affecting the country are water-related and the victims are mostly from the poor sector. However, despite this existing problem, the government seems to have given low priority relative to drinking and sanitation to which the poor have to resort to bottled water as the 'safe source' for this need (Nils Roseman,pg 10,2005).

Nestle is a known food and beverage company with several branches in the world and with a total global workforce of 27,600. It merged with Milkpak and was renamed

Nestle Milkpak Ltd. Between 1990 and 1998, branded lines were added which included Nestle Pure Life(Nils Roseman,pg 19,2005).Nestle Pure Life made a commitment with the United Nations Global Compact which the company sees as a means of 'forward-looking forum' for 'exchanging good practices' in order to attain success 'for a more prosperous and sustainable world.'(Nils Roseman,pg 19,2005). Nestle also stressed that they would adhere to their responsibility as the leader in the food and beverage industry in ensuring a sustainable water resources (Nils Roseman,pg 19, 2005).

Pakistan was chosen as a start up of Nestle in its global strategy in its bottled mineral water campaign worldwide. But bottled water can hardly be afforded by the Pakistanis and contributes to the decrease of the ground water, which is the main source of water in the country, which in turn, dries up the local water provisions, for the sake of profit. The company's business policies in Pakistan seemed to be in direct contrast to its own manifesto and non-adherence to' human rights and the principle of sustainable use (Alliance Sud,2005). The Pakistan Standard and Quality Control has notified the Nestle management in Pakistan about its unauthorized sale of its product and the Minister of Environment has said that bottled mineral water it seemed, is not as healthy drink as companies have made them to be (Nils Roseman,pg 24,2005).[\[1\]](#)

Nestle Pure Life had come up with an answer to the allegations and said that they were not depleting the water resources of the country and that they are strictly controlling their water consumption. They also said that they conduct frequent tests on their products to ensure their safety (Business and Human Rights Resource Center,2011).

Unless a compromise is made between the government and Nestle, this problem would persist for a while. The solution reached should benefit the people of Pakistan most of all.

[1] Nils Roseman.,2005.Drinking Water Crisis in Pakistan and the Issue of Bottled Water,[online]<<http://www.alliancesud.ch/en/policy/water/downloads/nestle-pakistan.pdf>

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