

Application of Conceptual Profiling to Antacid Tablet and Chewable Product Category

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Introduction

Traditional category appraisal or Preference Mapping methods focus on the way that sensory attributes of products drive liking within a product category. The "Conceptual Profiling" method recently developed by Thomson and co-workers (Thomson, 2010; Thomson, Crocker, & Marketo, 2010; Thomson and Crocker, 2014, Crocker & Thomson, 2014) identified a new way of investigating product performance by adding conceptualization of functional, emotional and abstract constructs to the evaluation. In addition, this method also provides a measure of consonance to understand how well a product's conceptual profile supports the conceptual message of the brand. To date, published work has focused on the food and beverage categories. This presentation describes extension of the method to a new category; OTC healthcare products.

Objectives

To deliver a landscape understanding of the US Antacid Tablet and Chewable Product category to guide product development & drive competitive advantage by:

- 1) extending knowledge beyond sensory characteristics
- 2) leveraging functional and emotional product equities

Materials and Methods

24 antacid products (GSK and key competitors in the US market) represented four popular flavors (mint, cherry, strawberry and orange) and five formats (tablets, smoothies, freshers, hard shells and soft chews). A trained panel of 12 assessors used Consensus Profiling to rate the sensory characteristics of each product. n=134 category users sampled from 4 cities in the US assessed all products, during 4 sessions in a Central Location Test. The Bullseye method (Thomson & Crocker, 2014) generated conceptual profiles for each product and GSK's antacid brand based on emotional, abstract and functional lexicons derived from prior qualitative focus groups. An index of brand-product consonance was derived using the degree of correlation between the conceptual profiles of a particular product and the profile of GSK's brand.

Emotional, Abstract and Functional Lexicons:

Emotional and Abstract	Functional
1. Comforting	1. Has a lot of variety
2. Confident	2. Works fast to relieve
3. Empowering	3. Good for on-the-go
4. Joyful	4. Is healthy
5. Motivating	5. Is a good source of calcium
6. Old Fashioned	6. Is good for kids
7. Dependable	7. Is good for adults
8. Refreshing	8. Is safe to use
9. Relieving	9. Is a good value
10. Traditional	10. Effectively relieves heartburn
11. Trustworthy	11. Helps me manage my GI health
12. Playful	12. Convenient relief
13. Modern	13. Strong and effective
14. Pleasant	

Figure 1: Study procedure

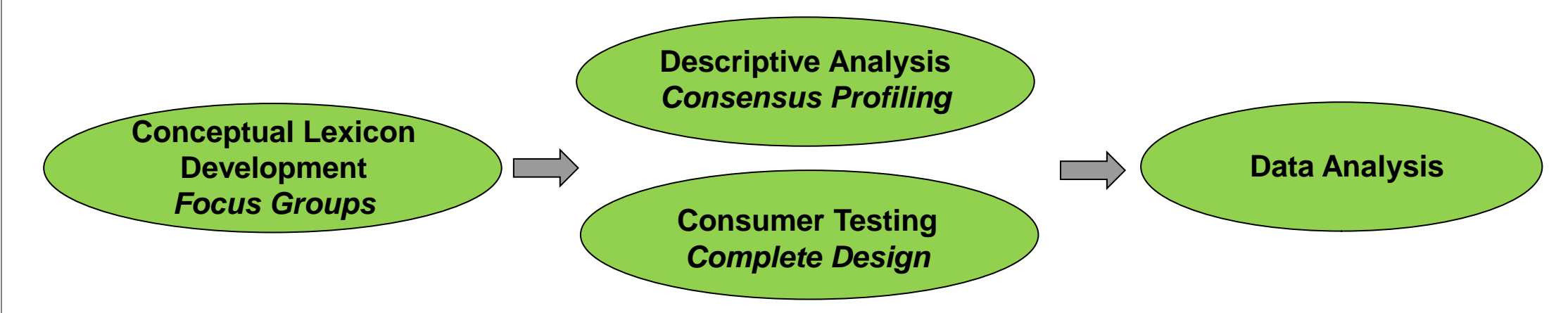


Figure 2: Liking by flavor

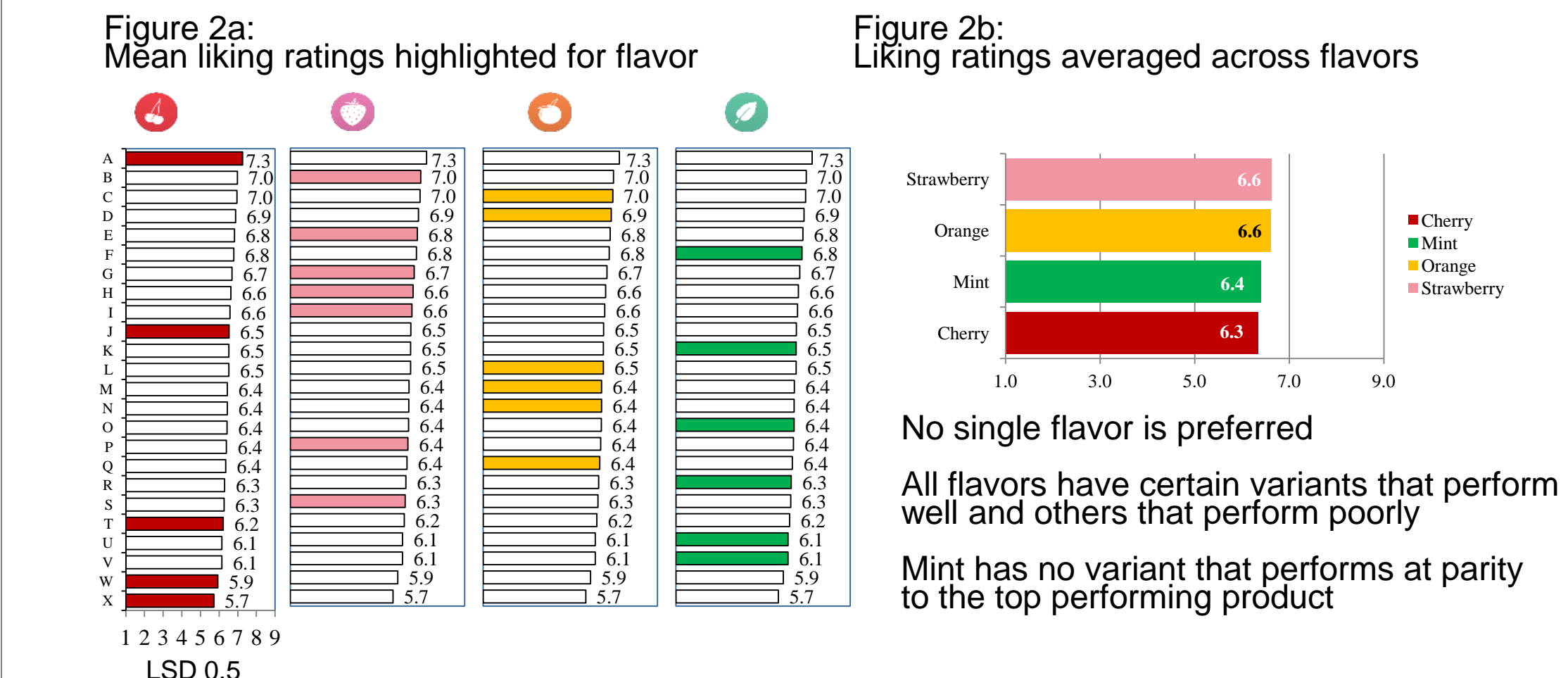


Figure 3: Liking by format

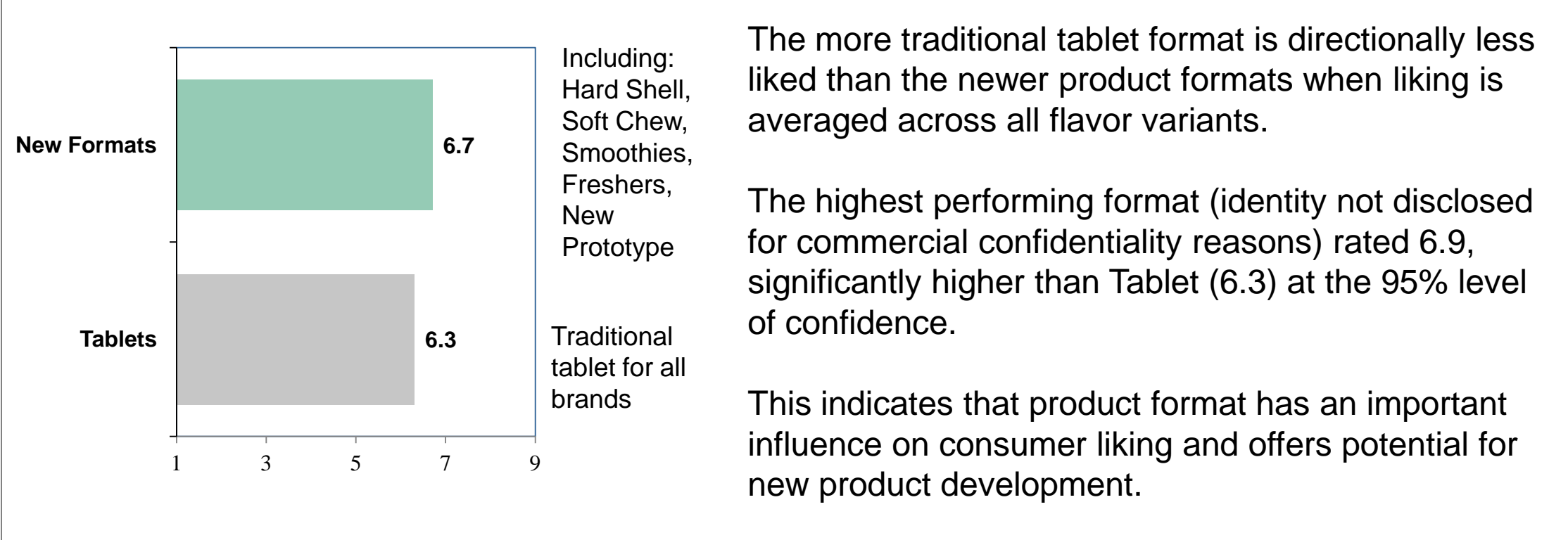


Figure 4: Key sensory differences across format

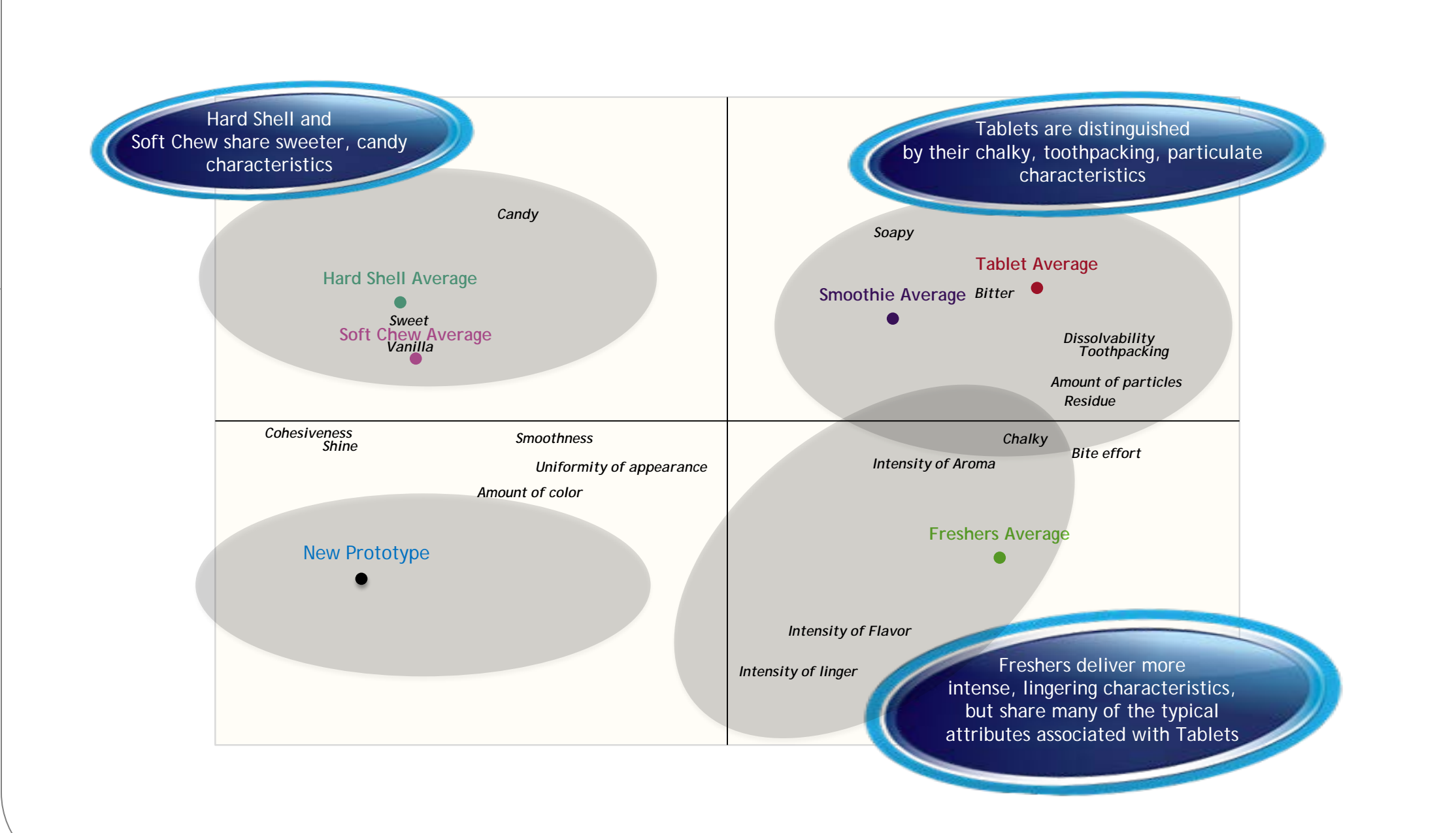


Figure 5: All formats support the functional message of GSK's brand

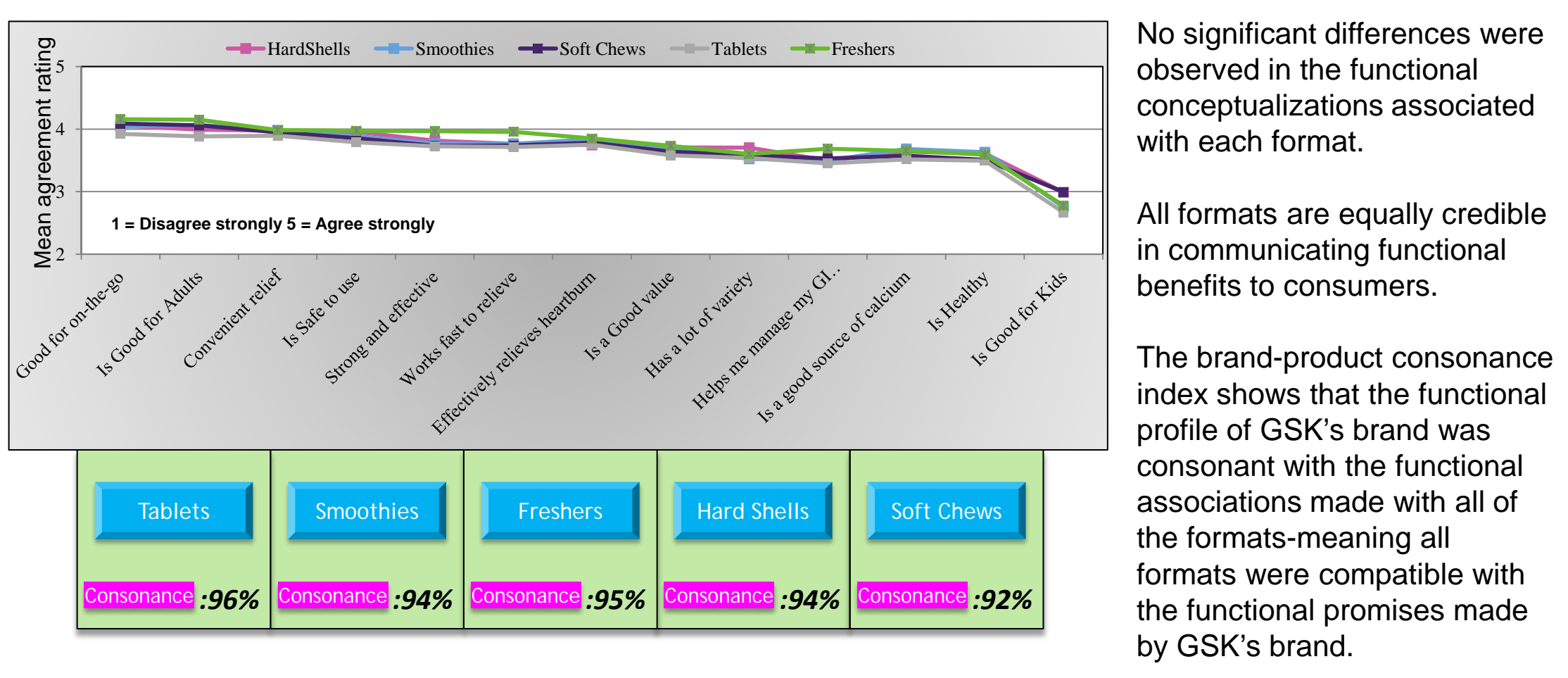
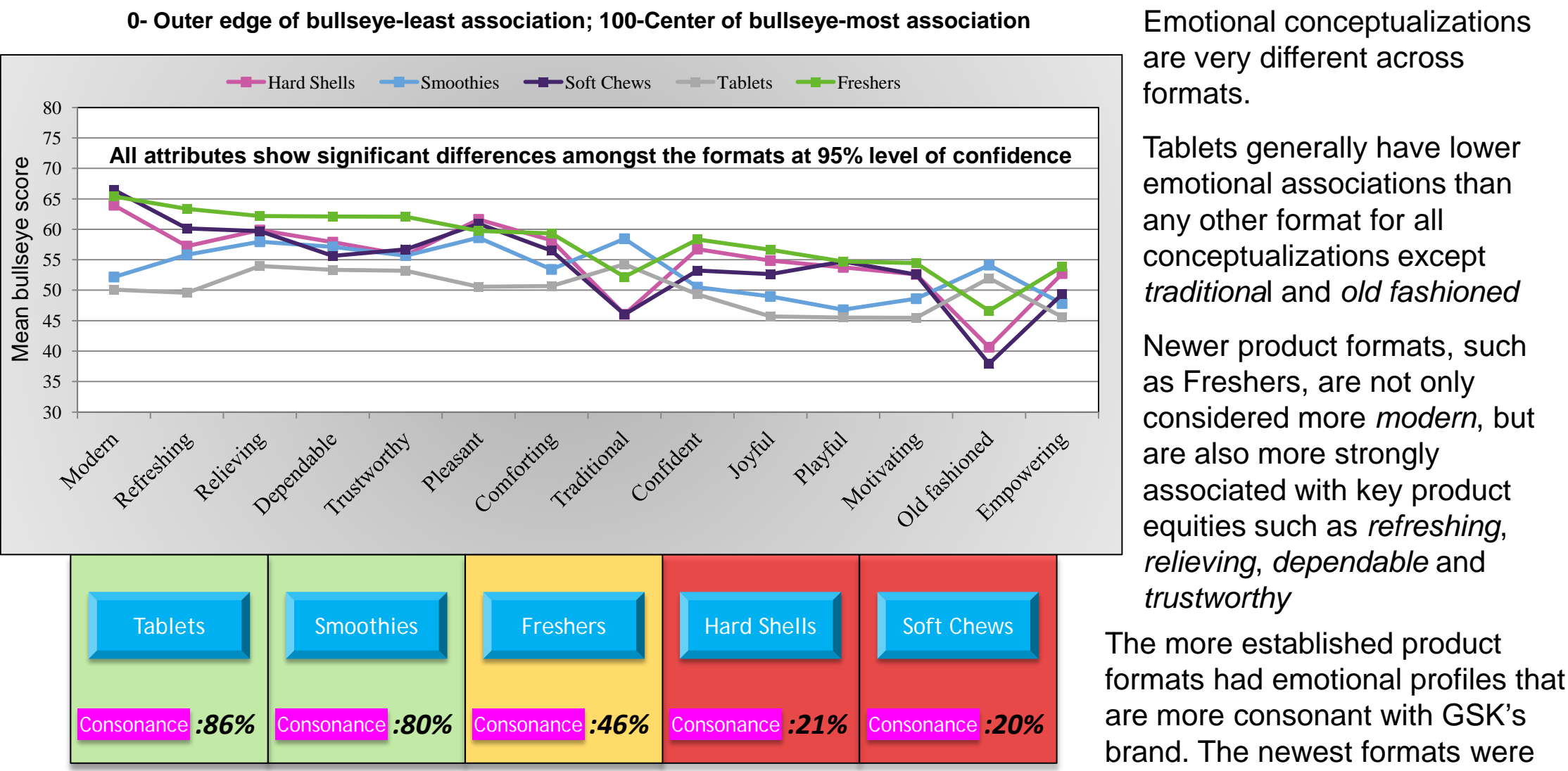


Figure 6: Emotional message differs by format



Conclusion

- Format has greater impact than flavor on how consumers conceptualize antacid products.
- Conceptual profiling demonstrates that while all formats communicate the ability to deliver functional benefits equally well, the newer formats are able to drive a higher degree of emotional engagement.
- Currently, GSK's brand is more consonant with the emotional conceptualizations communicated by traditional product formats. Adoption of the newer product formats requires that brand communication should be modified to support the intrinsic emotional profile of the product - thereby achieving brand-product consonance with all that this implies.

References

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