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A study on consumer's perception and buying pattern towards health drinks with special reference to rural areas of Coimbatore district

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Abstract

This research is mainly dealt with the mindset of the consumers buying health drinks. This research also focuses on the changing preference of the customers because in today's time, there are much more options in choosing the health drinks according to the consumers taste. In order to increase the customer's satisfaction, marketers have developed various marketing programs derived Consumer behaviourable changes make "Yesterday's luxuries are today's necessities". The present study attempts to know the buyer behavior of health drink users. Seven brands of health drinks are available in the study area. Horlicks, Complian, Bournvita, Boost, Maltova, Viva and Milo. This study would bring to light which brand of health drink is mostly preferred by the consumers and why they choose a particular health drink. Questionnaires were designed and distributed to the consumers for the collection of primary data. The total sample size is 200 in total. From the Primary Data, the Percentage Analysis, Ranking Analysis and Chi-Square Test were derived.

Keywords: Consumers Perception, Consumer Behavior, Customers Preference, Health Drinks.

Introduction

Consumer is the king in modern marketing world. Consumer behaviour and attitude helps to determine effective technique and strategies by the marketers for attaining great competition advantage in the market. Consumer behaviourable changes make "Yesterday's luxuries are today's necessities". In the modern and competitive world people must do heavy work both mentally and physically to survive successfully. So that they required more energy and stamina for that they want nutritious and health drinks. Health is man's precious possession. It influences all his activities and shapes his destiny. An understanding of health is the basis of all health care. Health is wealth. This indicates the importance of health. Health, infact is a key to education, success, good citizenship and happy life. Without good health an individual cannot perform efficiently. When compared to the other food supplements, health drinks stands the top most of any other thing in this world.

Objectives of the Study

- ❖ To study the socio economic profile and awareness of rural consumers towards Health drinks.
- ❖ To examine the buying behavior and the level of the satisfaction of the respondents.
- ❖ To analyze the influencing factor and brand preference by the respondents.
- ❖ To offer findings and suggestions.

Statement of the Problem

In the recent years manufactures producing Health drinks are playing an important role in full filling the need of the consumers. Many new companies which have established name in the field of business have also emerged as the manufactures of new brands of Health drinks as a result number of Health drinks such as Horlicks, Boost, Viva, Milo, Maltova, etc., are available. The consumer's need and preference are changing as per the current market scenario. Goods are produced for the purpose of consumption. The aim of marketing is to meet and satisfy consumer's needs and wants, perceptions, preferences and shopping and buying behavior. But knowing consumer is not simple. Consumer may state their needs and wants but act otherwise Consumer's preference various from brand to brand on the basis of

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quality, price advertisement etc., and Consumer's preference also vary with their income, age, sex or other. Major Seven brands of health drinks are available in the study area. The study covers all these brands of health drinks. This research work has been carried out to know why these health drinks are needed and what nutritional values are included in them.

Limitation of the Study

Though the research study has been designed carefully, it is subject to the following limitations.

1. The study is limited to rural area of Coimbatore district only and therefore results cannot be generalized.
2. The study has been restricted to 200 respondents due to the limited span of time.
3. It is limited to the data collected through the structured and closed ended questionnaire.
4. The study being primary one, the accuracy and reliability of data depends upon the information provided by the respondents.
5. The respondent's views and opinions may hold good for the time being and may vary in future.

Research Methodology

Descriptive research have been undertaken in this research work to make research effective and find the results of the research work successfully.

Data Collection

Both primary and secondary data have been collected for the research work.

Primary Data

Primary data have been collected by framing questionnaire and interview schedule with the sample respondents. Necessary corrections, additions and deletions have been made in the questionnaire with the help of the experts and supervisor to make the research as an effective and useful to the society.

Secondary Data

Secondary data was collected from the books and journal published relating to the health drinks products used for children and also the malted products

Sampling Method

In this research work respondents will be selected from the total population at random by using convenient sampling method

Sample Size

As the population for the research work in the study area is numerous. Out of total population employees, 200 customers were selected by using convenience sampling method. The sample constitutes both the female and male customers those buy health drinks.

Period of Study

The research work was carried out for the period of starting from November 2015 to January 2016.

Methods of Data Collection

In this study the researcher has used question nary method to data obtained data. In this method the respondent has to fill up the questionnaire which can interpret the question when necessary.

The tools used for analysis were

- Percentage analysis
- Chi-Square Analysis
- Ranking

Percentage Analysis

The percentage analysis is mainly used to specify the number of respondents. In this sample falling in each category. Further, it is also used as a standard for comparison purpose.

Chi-Square Test

Chi-square test is a non-parametric test. It can be used to determine if categorical data show dependency or the classification are independent. It can also to make comparisons between theoretical populations

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant relationship between the Amount of the respondents and purchase period of health drinks
2. There is no significant relationship between the purchase period of the respondents and the opinion of health drinks.
3. There is no significant relationship between the purchase period of the respondents and the opinion of health drinks.

Review of literature

Shophiya. R (2009) ^[1] in her research thesis entitled, A study on consumers' satisfaction towards various brands of malted milk food in gobichettipalayam town" reveals that majority Of the samples respondents prefer to buy Horlicks for its reasonable price, quality, quantity, packing, health care, doctor's advice, content of vitamin and mineral's. However, different type of Malted Milk FOOD manufactures have to concentrate on those aspects and work out better strategy to attract more no of consumers for their brands. Arun. Kumar. S.k. (2010) ^[2] in his study on "Brand preferences' and consumer satisfaction towards health drinks – A study in Coimbatore city" concluded that majority of the respondents preferred by the brand of Horlicks, followed by Boost. The socio –economic factors like age. Gender, marital status, education, occupation, income, etc.do not influence the satisfaction of the customers. Sadia, *et al.* (2010) ^[3] in their study n " flexible approach Satisfaction index – an Indian case study Of health drinks sectors" have opined that Globalization and profit making lead companied to adopt measures for satisfaction of their retailers and customers. Strategic decision of the company for retailers and customer satisfaction are considered to be multidimensional, interdisciplinary, complex and unstructured regarding time, quantity and quality. In this paper, a multiple decision making criteria have been proposed based on American customer satisfaction. Index. The designed model requires quantitative and qualitative evaluation based on information such as anticipated and perceived quality. This tool helps marketing planners in evaluating satisfaction. Sivakumar. p (2012) ^[4] in his " A study on consumer behavior and brand preference of Horlicks in Erode town "concluded that Horlicks is the leading brand in the health food drink market in Indian and as the "most trusted drink brand" in India enjoys more than half of the health food drink market. With revitalized packaging synergetic with the new brand personality, it is a favorite with both mothers, for its nourishments and with the kids for its great taste and variety.

Prema, M. Kandaswamy Kandar’s (2014) [5] Review of literature is essential for every researcher to carry on the investigation successfully. A thorough review of literature will expose the researcher to previous researches conducted, their areas of study etc. Usha3 in her study focused to find the consumers preference towards soft drinks. Percentage analysis is used for data interpretation. She found that the awareness about Pepsi is the most preferred brand. Coco-cola and slice occupy the next two places.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Classification of Respondents According To Their Demographic Profile & Study Factors

S. No	Variables	Categories	Total Respondents	Percentage
1	Age	Below 20 years	12	6
		20 – 30 years	30	15
		31 – 40 years	38	19
		Above 40 years	120	60
		Total	200	100
2	Gender	Male	88	44
		Female	112	56
		Total	200	100
3	Marital Status	Married	8	4
		Unmarried	192	96
		Total	200	100
4	Qualification	Illiterate	50	25
		School level	76	38
		Under graduate	44	22
		Post graduate	18	9
		Diploma	12	6
		Total	200	100
5	Occupation	Agriculture	20	10
		Business	16	8
		Professional	12	6
		Govt. employee	4	4
		Private employee	48	24
		Retired person	4	2
		Others	92	46
Total	200	100		
6	Monthly Income	Below Rs. 10000	8	4
		Rs.10001 to20000	72	36
		Rs.20001 to 30000	76	38
		Above Rs.30,000	44	22
		Total	200	100

The above table shows that the Majority 60% of the respondents are in the age group of 41 and above. The Majority (56%) of the respondents are female. The Majority (96%) of respondents the respondents are Unmarried, The Majority (38%) of respondents are school level. The Majority (46%) of respondents are house wife. The Majority (36%) of respondents monthly income are Rs.10001-20000.

Awareness of the Respondents

S. No	Source of Awareness	No of Respondents	Percentage of the Respondents
1	Through advertisements	80	40
2	Through friends and relatives	56	28
3	By doctors advice	64	32
4	Others	0	0
	Total	200	100

Interpretation

From the above table, it is observed that 32% of the respondents regularly are using Horlicks, 24% of the respondents are using Bourn vita, 17% of the respondents use Complian, 13% of the respondents regularly using Boost, 3% of the respondents use malt ova, 2% of the respondents use viva, 2% of the respondents use milo.

Reason behind Buying the Brand

S. No	Option	No of Respondents	Percentage of the Respondents
1	Taste	136	68
2	Advertisements	32	16
3	Easily available	32	16
4	Packaging	0	0
	Total	200	100

Interpretation

From the above table, it is observed that 68% of the respondents said that reason behind choosing the brand is taste, 16% of the respondents said Advertisements, 16% of the respondents said Easily available,

Opinion towards the Price of the Health Drink

S. No	Option	No of Respondents	Percentage of the Respondents
1	Low	8	4
2	High	112	56
3	Moderate	58	29
4	Reasonable	22	11
	Total	200	100

Interpretation

From the above table, it is observed that 4% of the respondent’s opinion towards the price of the health drink is low, 56% of the respondents said high, 29% of the respondents said moderate, 11% of the respondents said reasonable

Classification of Ranking about the Brand

Brand	Rank I	Rank II	Rank III	Rank V	Rank VI	Rank VII	Rank VIII	Mean	Rank
Horlicks	10	10	6	18	0	0	0	5.282496	1
Boost	12	15	11	4	2	0	0	6.237368	3
Bournvita	11	13	7	10	2	0	1	6.872998	4
Complan	6	6	17	9	3	3	0	5.529144	2
Maltova	0	0	0	3	26	7	8	9.322272	7
Milo	0	0	0	0	8	17	19	8.538429	6
Viva	5	0	3	0	3	16	16	6.962485	5

Interpretation

Among the various factors listed above the respondents have their own preferences towards different factors, which they feel as important. The respondents felt Horlicks is the important factor, so this factor is most important thus it ranks number 1.

Apart from Horlicks the respondents people prefer Complan ranks number 2. Peoples prefer to boost thus it ranks number 3, apart from these the respondents prefer drinking Bournvita and it ranks 4. These four factors are given the most importance among the 6 factors. And people preferred viva ranks number, 5 milo ranks number 6 malt ova ranks number.

Association between the Amount and Purchase Period of Health Drinks

Null Hypothesis (H₀)

There is no significant relationship between the Amount of the respondents and purchase period of health drinks

Alternative Null Hypothesis (H₁)

There is no significant relationship between the Amount of the respondents and purchase period of health drinks

	Calculated x ² value	Degrees of Freedom	Significant level
Chi square	13.54	24	*

Chi square was applied to find where there is no significant relationship between the amount spent by the health drinks and purchase level of health drink. The calculated value of chi square is 13.54 which are higher than the table value of 12.6 at 5% level of significance. Since the calculated value is higher than the table value it is inferred that there is a significant relationship between amount spent by purchase of health drinks. Hence the hypothesis has been rejected.

Association between the Purchase Period and Of Opinion of Health Drinks

Null Hypothesis (H₀)

There is no significant relationship between the purchase period of the respondents and the opinion of health drinks.

Alternative Null Hypothesis (H₁)

There is no significant relationship between the purchase period of the respondents and the opinion of health drinks.

Purchase Period of Health Drinks and Opinion of Health Drinks

	Calculated x ² value	Degrees of Freedom	Significant level
Chi square	4.636	9	*

Chi square was applied to find where there is no significant relationship between the purchase period of the health drinks and opinion of health drink. The calculated value of chi square is 4.636 which are higher than the table value of 16.9 at 5% level of significance. Since the calculated value is higher than the table value it is inferred that there is a significant relationship between amount spent by purchase of health drinks. Hence the hypothesis has been accepted\

Association between the Income and Purchase Period of Health Drinks

Null Hypothesis (H₀)

There is no significant relationship between the income of the respondents and the purchase period of health drinks.

Alternative Null Hypothesis (H₁)

There is no significant relationship between the income of the respondents and the purchase period of health drinks.

Income and Purchase Period of Health Drink

	Calculated x ² value	Degrees of Freedom	Significant level
Chi square	29.1	9	*

Chi square was applied to find where there is no significant relationship between the income by the respondents and purchase level of health drink. The calculated value of chi square is 29.1 which are higher than the table value of 16.9 at 5% level of significance. Since the calculated value is higher than the table value it is inferred that there is a significant relationship between amounts spent by purchase of health drinks. Hence the hypothesis has been rejected.

Findings

- Majority 60% of the respondents are in the age group of 41 and above.
- Majority 56% of the respondents are female.
- Majority 96% of the respondents are married.
- Majority 38% of the respondents are school level.
- Majority 68% of the respondents are in nuclear family.
- Majority 46% of the respondents are others.
- Majority 62% of the respondents are having a family size of 4 to 6.
- Majority 36% of the respondents are having monthly income are Rs, 10001 to 20000.
- Majority 40% of the respondents were aware through advertisements.
- Majority 68% of the respondents said that reason behind choosing the brand is taste
- Majority 56% of the respondent’s opinion towards the price of the health drink is high.

The Results of the Chi Square Analysis Revealed The Following

- There is no significant relationship between the amount spent for the health drinks and the purchase period of the respondents.
- There is no significant relationship between the purchase of health drink and the opinion of the respondents.
- There is no significant relationship between the monthly income and the purchase of the respondents

Suggestions

Based on the findings given above, the following suggestions are provided for the manufacturers and marketers of the different brands of health drinks. As the health drinks have perceived nutrition and energy suppliers, the manufactures have to concentrate on the energy needs and requirements of different age groups and try to prepare formulation suitable for each of them. As the study is made in rural area, consumers are made available with only few brands. The literacy rate of the people and the adverse reach of media have created awareness among the rural people about their health issues. Therefore the manufactures should make sure that all kinds of brands of health drinks are made available for consumption. Affordability should also be considered by the manufacturers while fixing the price for the products as people in rural areas hesitate to buy for a high price. So few consumers prepare their own traditional home made nutritional health drinks. Government can take necessary steps to make available all the health drinks in the ration shops of the rural areas at reasonable prices As the consumption rate of Viva, Maltova and Milo is very low when compared to other brands in the study area sales promotion strategies like more advertisements, discount offers, compliments can be offered by the manufacturers to increase their turnover. So manufacturers and marketers should follow ethics in marketing their products by avoiding offering of expired goods to the consumers as most of the health drinks are consumed by children. Doctors working in both government and private hospitals in the rural areas can create awareness to the patients to consume health drinks

Conclusion

Nowadays there seems to be no vast difference between urban and rural consumers in knowledge, awareness, brand, and quality and consumption level of the products. This is because compared to urban area consumers people in the rural areas also have raised their standards in acquiring high educational level, use of social media like internet, whats app, etc. Few differences lie in the earning capacity, lifestyle, standard of living etc among the rural and urban areas. Even now many people are not consuming health drinks in these rural areas. This is so because people are not aware that health drinks are useful for increasing their nutritional value like to develop their physical and mental health. Moreover people are not able to afford to pay high price for consuming branded health drinks. Few brands which are slow moving like Vivo, Maltova and Milo can increase their turnover by introducing new flavors', offers and other promotional strategies.

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