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A STUDY ON CONSUMER PERCEPTION TOWARDS DRINKING PACKAGED WATER WITH REFERENCE TO COIMBATORE CITY

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ABSTRACT

The introduction of packaged drinking water for human consumption at recent times is a boon to mankind and more convenience are realized. Whenever a common man purchases packaged water, he thinks that the quality is assured and it is safe water. Such assurance should be given to consumer by each and every manufacturer of packaged mineral water and packaged drinking water. Keeping in view the utmost importance of quality, Bureau of Indian Standards has promulgated standards for packaged drinking intended for human consumption. The standards are published classifying the packaged water into two groups: Packaged Natural Mineral Water and Packaged Drinking water (other than packaged natural mineral water) This water should be suitable for direct consumption without any further treatment and may be filled in suitable containers made up of recommended materials or in sterile glass bottles and properly sealed. Packaged drinking water (other than packaged natural mineral water) is the drinking water of satisfactory quality derived from any source, and packed in suitable containers and sealed properly. To make the water to suit the quality requirement, the water may be subjected to any type of treatment namely, filtration (including activated carbon filtration), demineralization and reverse osmosis.

KEYWORDS

packaged drinking water, bureau of Indian standards, filtration, demineralisation.

INTRODUCTION

Water is an odourless, tasteless, transparent liquid which is colourless in small amounts but exhibits a bluish tinge in large quantities. It is a priceless gift of nature. It is the most familiar and abundant liquid on earth. Without water, there is no life on earth. None can deny that water is a friend to human race but it also acts as a foe by way of harbouring disease producing micro-organisms and containing some substances that may lead to ill health. In solid form (ice) and liquid form it covers about 70% of the earth's surface. Natural mineral water is defined as the water obtained directly from natural or drilled source from underground stratum which is protected from possible contamination. It is characterized by its content of its composition. The water may be disinfected by any method, provided that the disinfection procedure will not leave any harmful residues in water.

In general terms, perception is our ability to make some kind of sense of reality from external sensory stimuli to which we are exposed. Consumer perception applies the concept of sensory perception to marketing and advertising. Just as sensory perception relates to how humans perceive and process sensory stimuli through their five senses, consumer perception pertains to how individuals form opinions about companies and the merchandise they offer through the purchases they make.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Turgeon, Steve; Rodriguez, Manuel J.; Theriault, Marius; and Levallois, Patrick (April 2004) in their article "Perception Of Drinking Water: The Influence Of Water Quality And Consumer Location In The Distribution System" in the "Journal of Environmental Management" states that water quality variations and geographic location in the distribution system have a significant impact on the consumer perception and it appears to be strongly associated with residual chlorine level. Strenk (Feb 2006) published in the journal "Restaurant Business" in his article "Food Service Buyer: Bottled Water" presents information about bottled water, purified water and its processes. And also states that bottles come in PET plastic or glass. Water is usually shipped in 24 count shrink-wrapped cases. Packaging designers have put a great deal of thought and ingenuity into water bottle design. Christen, Kris (2006) in his article "Bottled Antimony" released in the journal "Environmental Science & Technology" reports that waters bottled in PET containers has as much as 550 parts per trillion of antimony, fortunately too low to trigger health and environmental risks. Angrisani, Carol (2007) in the article "Water Rising" published in the journal "SN: Supermarket News" states that the presence of vended water in supermarkets is an extension of the popularity of bottled water in the country. It mentions the environmental benefits of vended water. Devasenathipathi T, Saleendran, P.T., Jeevaraj, J.T. (Dec 2008) in the "ICFAI Journal of Consumer Behaviour" states in the article "A Study On Consumers' Approach Towards Bottled Water" that the success of water marketing highly depends on the water purity, easy availability at the right time and place and also the consumers' attitude towards the whole aspect of the bottled water.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Packaged drinking water is getting familiar as the aspect of convenience and quality has been guaranteed. The customers are having numerous brands in selecting the packaged drinking water, and the variety of packaged drinking water is also like mushroom with various styles viz., bottled, bubble top, canned, and so on. But when many aspects influence the purchase there comes the threat on domestic brand also, hence a research has been carried over to analyse the attitude and perception of customers consuming packaged drinking water.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study aims at finding the consumer perception towards drinking packaged water with respect to Coimbatore City. The study also aims to find out consumer attitude towards drinking packaged water. The study by ascertaining the factors that influence them to go in for a particular brand enable the other brands to improve where they lag in satisfying their customers. It also finds out the source of awareness from which they started drinking packaged water so that the awareness can be spread to many other people who are unaware of it.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ❖ To study the consumer perception towards drinking packaged water.
- ❖ To analyse the factors influencing the purchase of packaged drinking water.
- ❖ To analyse the reasons which influence the consumers to buy a particular brand of packaged drinking water.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Sources of data: Primary Data and Secondary Data

Area of the study: The area of the study was Coimbatore and the sample size includes 125 respondents.

Sampling technique: Convenience sampling

Tools used: Simple Percentage Analysis

ANALYSIS

TABLE 1: AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Age	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Below 20 Years	34	27.20
20 to 35 Years	39	31.20
35 to 50 Years	39	31.20
s50 to 60 Years	7	5.60
More than 60 Years	6	4.80
Total	125	100.00

The result from the above table states that 31.20 percentage of the respondents belong to the age group of 20 to 35 years, 31.20 percentage of the respondents belong to the age group of 35 to 50 years, 27.20 percentage of the respondents are below 20 years of age, 5.60 percentage of the respondents belong to the age group of 50 to 60 years and only 4.80 percentage of the respondents are more than 60 years of age.

It is concluded that most (31.20 percentage) of the respondents belong to the age group of 20 to 35 years and 35 to 50 years.

TABLE 2: GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS

Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Male	82	65.60
Female	43	34.40
Total	125	100.00

INTERPRETATION

From the above table it is known that 65.60 percentage of the respondents are male and 34.40 percentage of the respondents are female.

It is concluded that majority (65.60 percentage) of the respondents are men.

TABLE 3: OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF THE RESPONDENTS

Occupation	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Student	35	28.00
Professional	22	17.60
Business	23	18.40
Salaried	42	33.60
Housewife	0	0.00
Others	3	2.40
Total	125	100.00

The above table shows that 33.60 percentage of the respondents are salaried, 28.00 percentage of the respondents belong to student category, 18.40 percentage of the respondents are doing business, 17.60 percentage of the respondents are professionals, and 2.40 percentage of the respondents belong to other category.

It is concluded that most (33.60 percentage) of the respondents are salaried people.

TABLE 4: TYPES OF DRINKING WATER PREFERRED BY THE RESPONDENTS

Types of Drinking Water	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Only Packaged Drinking Water	76	61.00
Only Corporation Tap Water	0	0
Tap Water & Packaged Water	49	39.00
Total	125	100.00

The above table reveals the type of drinking water preferred by the respondents. The result states that 39 percentage of the respondents consume both tap water & packaged water while 61 percentage of the respondents consume packaged drinking water only

It is concluded that most (61 percentage) of the respondents drink Packaged Water only.

TABLE 5: REASONS FOR DRINKING PACKAGED WATER

Reasons for consumption of packaged drinking water	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Healthy	49	39.20
Taste	9	7.20
Convenience	31	24.80
Trend	1	0.80
Image	1	0.80
Scarcity of Corporation Water	17	13.60
Availability	11	8.80
Advertisement	2	1.60
Others	4	3.20
Total	125	100.00

From the above table it is known that 39.20 percentage of the respondents drink packaged water because they feel it is healthy, 24.80 percentage of the respondents drink packaged water for their convenience, 13.60 percentage of the respondents drink due to scarcity of corporation water, 8.80 percentage of the respondents prefer packaged water because of its availability, 7.20 percentage of the respondents drink for its taste, 3.20 percentage of the respondents prefer for other reasons, 1.60 percentage of the respondents drink packaged water because of its advertisement and 0.80 percentage of the respondents drink packaged water because of trend and image.

It is concluded that most (39.20 percentage) of the respondents drink packaged water for health factors.

TABLE 6: PERCEPTION TOWARDS DRINKING PACKAGED WATER

Rank to Prefer particular Brand of Packaged Water	agree	neutral	disagree	Total
1.Packaged water Tastes more than Tap Water	65	39	21	125
	52.0%	31.2%	16.8%	100.0%
2.Advertisement Have Influenced Over the Quantity of Packaged Water I Drink	56	48	21	125
	44.8%	38.4%	16.8%	100.0%
3.I Drink more of Packaged Water When I am not at home	79	30	16	125
	63.2%	24.0%	12.8%	100.0%
4.Packaged water contains more minerals that are good for my Health	36	55	34	125
	28.8%	44.0%	27.2%	100.0%
5.Drinking Packaged Water is a part of my Life Style	43	51	31	125
	34.4%	40.8%	24.8%	100.0%
6.My Image goes Up When I Drink Packaged Water	19	43	63	125
	15.2%	34.4%	50.4%	100.0%
7.I am sure about the Quality of Packaged drinking Water	55	54	16	125
	44.0%	43.2%	12.8%	100.0%

PACKAGED WATER TASTES MORE THAN TAP WATER

For the above statements, it is clear that 52 percentage of the respondents agree that packaged drinking water tastes better than tap water and 16.8 percentage of the respondents disagree to the same.

ADVERTISEMENT HAVE INFLUENCED OVER THE QUANTITY OF PACKAGED WATER I DRINK

For the above statement, 44.8 percentage of the respondents agree that advertisement have an influence over the quantity of packaged water they drink and 16.8 percentage disagree to the same.

I DRINK MORE OF PACKAGED WATER WHEN I AM NOT AT HOME

For the above statement, it is known that 63.2 percentage of the respondents agree that they drink more packaged water when they are not at home and 12.8 percentage of the respondents disagree to the statement that they drink packaged water when they are not at home.

PACKAGED WATER CONTAINS MORE MINERALS THAT ARE GOOD FOR MY HEALTH

For the above statement, it is known that 28.8 percentage of the respondents agree that packaged water contains more minerals that are good for their health while 27.2 percentage disagree to the same.

DRINKING PACKAGED WATER IS A PART OF MY LIFE STYLE

For the statement "Drinking packaged water is a part of my life style", 34.4 percentage of the respondents agree and 24.8 percentage of the respondents disagree.

MY IMAGE GOES UP WHEN I DRINK PACKAGED WATER

For the above statement, it is clear that 15.2 percentage of the respondents agree that their image goes up when they drink packaged water and 50.4 percentage disagree to the same statement.

I AM SURE ABOUT THE QUALITY OF PACKAGED DRINKING WATER

For the above statement, it is known that 44 percentage of the respondents agree that they are sure about the quality of packaged drinking water and 12.8 percentage of the respondents disagree to the same statement.

BRANDS OF PACKAGED DRINKING WATER

TABLE 7

Brands of Packaged Water	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Bisleri	45	36
Aquafina	34	27.2
Sabols	9	7.2
TATA Plus	6	4.8
Siruvani	11	8.8
Kinley	9	7.2
Himalayan	2	1.6
Cascade	1	0.8
Qua	4	3.2
Polaris Water	1	0.8
Others	3	2.4
Total	125	100.00

Out of 125 respondents, 36 percentage prefer Bisleri, 27.2 percentage of the respondents choose Aquafina, 7.2 percentage prefer Sabols, 4.8 percentage prefer TATA Plus, 8.8 percentage prefer Siruvani, 7.2 percentage choose Kinley, 1.6 percentage of the respondents prefer Himalayan, Cascade is preferred by 0.8 percentage of the respondents, 3.2 percentage of the respondents choose Qua and 0.8 percentage select Polaris Water. 2.4 percentage of the respondents prefer some other brands.

It is concluded that most (36 percentage) of the respondents prefer Bisleri brand.

SUGGESTIONS

- All the manufacturers should concentrate on the details of manufacturing date and expiry date of bottles which can be clearly printed.
- As drinking water is very essential, the manufacturers should concentrate on quality, so that the proportion of people buying packaged water gets increased.
- The water is sourced by the manufacturers by the nearby rivers and wells, hence proper water treatment has to be made.
- The usage of packaged drinking water has made significant impact on the minds of people, hence care should be taken to ensure that the taste and necessary nutrients present in the packaged drinking water.
- Advertisements for packaged drinking water can be made even more effective.

Eco-friendly bottles can be used instead of plastic bottles.

CONCLUSION

Failure of monsoon has highly thrift the common public to pressure water by large, the advent of packaged water has gained popularity in recent times. Medical practitioners also suggest common public to drink purified water to ensure good physical and mental health. The town has been stuffed with numerous shops witnessing huge market which completely relies on packaged water to quench thirst, hence lies a profound demand on the packaged drinking water. If proper plans, strategies are made, there will be an absolute tapping of market which will enhance a positive attitude regarding the packaged drinking water on the minds of common public.

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