INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMPUTER APPLICATION & MANAGEMENT

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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS

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SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

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APPENDIX/ANNEXURE

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- Kumar S. (2011): "Customer Value: A Comparative Study of Rural and Urban Customers," Thesis, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra.

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CONSUMER PREFERENCE TOWARDS PACKED WATER IN TUTICORIN

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ABSTRACT

Water is the most important necessity for life. The drinking-water needs for individuals vary depending on the climate, physical activity and the body culture. but for average consumers it is estimated to be about two to four liters per day. The growing number of cases of Water-borne diseases, increasing water pollution, increasing urbanization, increasing scarcity of Clean and Safe Drinking Water Quality etc. have made the bottled water business just like other consumer items. Scarcity of potable and wholesome water at railway stations, tourists spots, and role of tourism corp. etc. has also added to the growth.

KEYWORDS

Water, Disease and Health

1. INTRODUCTION

The increasing health consciousness of people needs of protected food and beverages. Even drinking water has become a commercial product as people want it in purified and protected form. Bottled water become internationally branded products of multi-national business giants. Bottled water is a drinking water packaged in bottles for individual consumption and retail sale. The water can be glacial water, spring water, and purified water. Many countries, particularly developed countries, regulate the quality of bottled water through government standards, typically used to ensure that water quality is safe and labels accurately reflect bottle contents. In many developing countries, however, such standards are variable and are often less stringent than those of developed nations. The overall packaged bottled water in India is estimated to touch the Rs 10,000 crore mark in the 2012-13 fiscal, growing at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 19%, says a new report by Ikon Marketing Consultants. Presently, this market is estimated at Rs 8,000 crore, and could touch Rs15,000 crore by 2015, the report adds. While Bisleri continues as the top brand with a 36% share among national players, Coca-Cola's Kinley follows with 25% share, followed by Aquafina at 15%. Other smaller brands include Parle Agro's Bailley, Kingfisher and McDowells No. 1, according to the report.

1.1 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Annamalai Solayappan, Jothi Jayakrishnan (2010) their research showed that branded computers play a prestigious role in the students segment. Due to the computer world everything is in the hands of the students. Everything in the world seems to be digital. Everyone needs a computer to drive a smooth and fast race. Especially, branded computers will try to safeguard the competitive race. So, the various factors discussed may determine the student to purchase branded computers.

A study by Falahee & MacRae (1995), based on blind comparisons of different waters by British students, suggests that waters with high mineral content – in this case several bottled and borehole waters – are preferred over those with low mineral concentration – i.e. distilled water and a local tap water.

A study by Johnson (2003) found that overall assessments of water supply quality or supplier performance did not change as a result of receiving different types of water quality reports, with prior general beliefs about risk being more significant than the content or format of water quality reports in influencing concern about water quality.

A similar study by Joshi et al (2002) conducted in India with water consumers who experienced relatively frequent supply interruptions also showed an ability to cope, with consumers developing routines for dealing with intermittent supplies and adapting through storage of water.

As previously noted in the literature by Bates (2000), the primary expectation that consumers have of their supplier is that they provide safe drinking water. This has been confirmed by a number of studies. For example Burn et al (2003) found the two major priorities of water consumers in Australia were quality of water supply and continuity of water supply.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There are many companies offering packed/bottled water in Indian market. As the competition for the manufacturer is tough and the choices for the customers are many, consumer's preference and their behavior are very important areas for analysis in bottled water industry. In this context the researcher had chosen this topic for his study.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To study the customer's satisfaction towards the packed/bottled water
2. To know about the benefits of using packed/bottled water.
3. To study the preference of customers among various packed/bottled water companies.

1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The primary data were collected directly from the consumers using a detailed questionnaire. The secondary data was collected from text books and internet the collected data were coded tabulated and analyzed with the help of statistical tools like percentages and various inferences have been drawn.

The researcher has adopted convenience sampling method and selected 50 sample consumers for the present study. In order to give due representation care was taken to include different type of customers such as employed, professional, student and housewives.

2. ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY

This chapter includes analysis and interpretation of data about the core aspects of the study. Tables and tools were used for analysis.

TABLE 2.1: AGE –WISE DISTRIBUTION OF CONSUMERS

Age	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Below 30	3	6
30-40	25	50
41-50	15	30
51 and above	7	14
Total	**50**	**100**

Source: Primary Data

The above table stated that out of 50 respondents,3 (6%) of them are under the age group of below 30 years and 25 (50%) of them are under the age group 0f 31-40. Another 15(30%) of them are under the age group of 41-50 and the remaining 7(14%) are under the age group of 51 and above.

TABLE 2.2: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY OCCUPATION

Occupation	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Government Employees	22	44
Private Employees	12	24
Businessmen	8	16
Students	5	10
Housewives	3	6
Total	**50**	**100**

Source: Primary Data

The above table indicates the occupational status of the respondents. Among the respondents 22(4%) of them are government Employees and 12(24%) of them are private employees. Another 16% the respondents are businessmen and 10% of the respondents are students. Remaining 6% of the respondents are Housewives.

TABLE 2.3: BUYER'S OPINION ABOUT PACKED /BOTTLE WATER

Opinion	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Hygienic	32	64
Not Hygienic	18	36
Total	**50**	**100**

Source: Primary Data

The above table indicates that out of 50 respondents, a majority of the respondents(64%) the opinion that packed/bottle water is hygienic and 36% of the respondents have the opinion that packed/bottle water is not hygienic.

TABLE 2.4: BUYER'S OPINION ABOUT THE COST OF PACKED /BOTTLE WATER

Opinion	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Reasonable	37	74
Not reasonable	13	26
Total	**50**	**100**

Source: Primary Data

The above table indicates that out of 50 respondents, a majority of them (74%) have the opinion that the cost of packed/bottled water is reasonable and another 26% of the respondents feel that the cost is not reasonable.

TABLE 2.5: OVERALL SATISFACTION OF THE BUYER'S

Status	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Satisfied	32	64
Not satisfied	18	36
Total	**50**	**100**

Source: Primary Data

The above table indicates that out of 50 respondents, 64% of the respondents are satisfied with the packed/bottled water and the remaining 36% of the respondents are not satisfied with the packer bottled water.

TABLE 2.6: PURPOSE OF USING BOTTLE WATER

Purpose	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Drinking only	40	80
Drinking and cooking	10	20
Total	**50**	**100**

Source: Primary Data

Above table shows out of 50 respondents 80% of the respondents are using the water for drinking only. The remaining 20% of the respondents are using the water for drinking and cooking.

TABLE 2.7: REASONS FOR BUYING BOTTLED WATER

Reasons	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Status affair	4	8
Health consciousness	40	80
To go along with others	6	12
Total	**50**	**100**

Source: Primary Data

The table shows that out of 50 respondents, 8% of the respondents buy bottled water as a status affair. A majority of the respondents 80% buy it due to their health consciousness and the remaining 12% of them buy just to go along with others.

TABLE 2.8: FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PREFERENCE OF PACKED/BOTTLED WATER

Factors	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Quality	7	14
Easy availability	6	12
Low Price	12	24
Brand image	25	50
Total	**50**	**100**

Source: Primary Data

The above table indicates that among the 50 respondents 7 (14%) of the respondents prefer packed/ bottle water on the basis of quality and another 6(12%) prefer packed/ bottle water on the basis of its easy availability. Another 12(24%) of the respondents prefer on the basis of low price and the remaining 25(50%) respondents prefer packed/ bottle water on the basis of brand image.

TABLE 2.9: PREFERENCE OF CUSTOMERS AMONG VARIOUS PACKED/BOTTLED WATER COMPANIES

Companies	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Bisleri	20	40
Kinley	12	24
Aquafina	18	36
Total	**50**	**100**

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that the out of 50respondents 20 (40%) of them prefer Bisleri brand and 12 (24%) of them prefer Kindly brand. Another 18(36%) of them prefer Aquafina.

3. FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This study was conducted on consumer preference towards packed /bottle water in Tuticorin with the objectives to know the preference and satisfaction of the consumers with the packed/bottled water. Primary data were collected through detailed questionnaire. The collected information was edited and coded by using short tables, percentage. And the secondary data were collected from the available books and internet. After analyzing and processing, the collected information, the following findings suggestions and conclusion are drawn.

3.2 FINDINGS

- Majority of the respondents (50%) of them under the age group of 30-40.
- Many of the respondents (50%) prefer packed/bottled water on the basis of brand image.
- Majority of the respondents (64%) the opinion of the packed/bottled in hygienic.
- Many of them (74%)have the opinion that cost of packed/bottled water.
- Majority of the respondents (64%) satisfied with packed/bottled water.
- Many of the respondents (80%) using the packed/bottled water for drinking only.
- Many of the respondents (80%) buy it due to their health consciousness.

3.3 SUGGESTIONS

- It is observed while collecting data that most of the users are not happy about the body of the package. So the manufactures can improve the body of the package.
- The shops need to be located in main areas. So as to have easy access. Even though location plays a vital role in promoting sales, proper advertisement is also necessary.
- The price of the packed/bottled has to be moderate with enhanced quality to attract the middle class people.
- Due to water pollution there is a need for packed water even in households. So more concern is need on quality.

4. CONCLUSION

This study is based on the attitude of the consumer's preference towards packed/bottled water. Most of the consumers have expressed positive opinion. However some of the consumers have a negative opinion. The companies which produce products should produce the goods with superior technology and make the consumers satisfy and there by survive in the market for a very long period.

Water utilities want to meet consumers' needs and preferences. To target investments they need knowledge about consumer acceptance, (dis)satisfaction and willingness to pay. For example, when consumers' willingness to pay for changes is known, the available financial resources to implement these changes can be directed towards an economic optimum.

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