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CONSUMERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE DAIRY PRODUCT IN THE ETHIOPIAN MARKET: CASE OF ADDIS ABABA

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to investigate the consumers' attitudes towards the dairy product. The objectives of the study was to, examine the awareness level of consumers about the benefits of dairy product, identify the factors that affects the consumption of milk, identify the consumption level of milk and examine the purchasing decision making process of milk. The sample size for this research is 242 between the age group of 16-30 at Addis Ababa area. The researcher employs the three components of attitude, namely Cognition (awareness), Affection (feeling), and Behavior (action), in order to measure the consumers attitude towards the Dairy product particularly milk. The questionnaire was designed to include all of the three components of attitude. Results provide the detailed analysis of the finding. Accordingly the mean difference and crosstab analysis were employed. Moreover the chi square test, and mean comparison of variables were also presented. The researcher employs different data collection tools. Based on the findings of the study the researcher provides the conclusion and recommendation.

KEYWORDS

Advertisement, Consumer Attitude, Consumer Awareness, Consumer Behaviour.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Historically the modern dairy production in Ethiopia was started in the early 1950s following the receipts of the first batch of dairy cattle from United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) and it passes through three phases of dairy development policies called Imperial Regime (1960-1974), the Socialist Dergue Regime (1974-1991) and the current phase from 1991 to the date (Mohamed et al, 2004). The demand for dairy products depends on many factors like consumers' attitudes, preference, consumer income, population size, price of the dairy products, price of substitute products and other related factors (Feleke and Geda, 2001).

According to Feleke and Geda (2001), the majority of the people in Ethiopia consume dairy products in either of the following forms, as fresh milk or in fermented or sourced form. Further, they estimated that 68 percent of the total milk produce is used for human consumption in the form of fresh milk, butter, cheese, and yogurt while the rest is given to calves and wasted in the process. According to Mohamed et al, (2004), out of the total milk production in Ethiopia, 40 percent is allocated for butter whereas only 9 percent is allocated for cheese.

The dairy marketing system can be classified in to three types on the basis of mode of production (traditional vs. modern) and marketing of imported products. These are;

- The traditional dairy marketing system,
- The modern dairy marketing system, and
- The dairy imports marketing system (Mohamed et al, 2004).

The consumption of milk in Ethiopia was very low. The annual consumption of milk per person was 19 to 20 liters in 1993/1994 and it further reduced to 17 liters in 1998 (Gebrewold et al, 1998, and ILRI, 2000). Apart from the aforementioned contributions of dairy product to the society, Ethiopia has low consumption rate of milk and milk products (Zewdu and peacock, 2003). The annual per capita milk consumption was 19-20 liters in 1993-94 which is even much less than the African milk consumption average (37 L per year per individual) and it was further reduced to 16 liters in 1998 (Gebrewold et.al, 1998, ILRI, 2000 and Zewdu and Peacock, 2003).

Ethiopia experiences high infant and child mortality rate due to malnutrition. Out of the total mortality children less than five year old mortality rate 48% was due to malnutrition (Zewdu and Peacock, 2003). Therefore, the low consumption rate of dairy may be one of the contributing factors for the high infant and child mortality rate. The consumption of milk in Ethiopia was very low. The annual consumption of milk per person was 19 to 20 liters in 1993/1994 and it further reduced to 17 liters in 1998 (Gebrewold et al, 1998, and ILRI, 2000). However there is no much specific research work conducted on consumers' attitudes towards the consumption of dairy product in the Ethiopian context. In this scenario of the consumption it is very important and inevitable to identify and analyze the consumers' attitudes and purchase patterns of dairy products in the Ethiopian context in general and Addis Ababa in specific. Therefore the researcher has focused to study of consumers' attitudes towards dairy product.

Based on these problems, the researcher has developed the following research questions:

1.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Under this section there are lists of questions to be answered at the end of the study.

- Are consumers aware of the nutritional value available in dairy products?
- Why is the consumption rate of dairy product in Ethiopia low?
- What factors hinder the society from consuming milk and milk products?
- How are consumers processing information about milk and milk related products?
- How are consumers making buying decision of milk and milk products?

1.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AREA

Since many of the dairy product processors are located in and around Addis Ababa, they distribute almost all of their produces to the Addis Ababa market. As a result the researcher is interested to conduct the study on dairy consumers located in Addis Ababa. Addis Ababa is the capital city of Ethiopia (which is located in the eastern part of Africa). The population of the city was about 2.8 million in the 2007 (census, 2007). The people are composed of low, middle and high income earning societies.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 MEASUREMENTS AND UNIT OF ANALYSIS

The measurement adopted for this study to identify the consumer's attitudes is the same the measurement proposed by George H. Brown and DuBois (1994). The Measurement of consumer knowledge will be more of psychological process. The measurement will employ the aided and unaided recall of the brand with consumer's full description of reason of selecting the brand. There are different brands of milk distributed in Addis Ababa. The customers will be assessed regarding their knowledge of various milk brand's through aided (providing alternatives to select) and unaided recall (letting them to write the alternatives). The cognitive element will help to identify the type and sources of information which would deliver to the customer. The affective element would be very challenging to investigate. Here the researcher employed proximity variable called action of the customer to measure the affective variable of individuals. Because it would be challenging to understand how the customer would process information. Finally the behavior of the customer regarding the milk is measured.

The study incorporated both the consumer and non-consumer of dairy product found between 16 and 30 age limit because, the researcher was interested to identify why these individuals are consuming and not consuming the dairy product. Then the researcher gains a capability to identify, the type of attitude that the consumer have about the dairy products and factors that force individuals to consume and not to consume it. The samples were taken from four higher educational institutions namely, Addis Ababa University College of Commerce, Ethiopian Civil Service College, St. Marry University College and Unity University.

2.2 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE AND DATA COLLECTION

The study was conducted using both the probability and non probability sampling technique. The **simple random** sampling was used to identify the respondents from the selected educational institutions and **convenience** technique was used to identify from which institutions the samples shall be selected. All of the individuals who were in the cafeteria were identified to fill the questionnaire. The probability sampling was selected to minimize the biasness of the study. The non probability technique was also used to maintain an equal distribution among respondents under different age group.

2.3 SAMPLE SIZE DETERMINATION

Determining sample size is a very important issue because samples that are too large may waste time, resource and money, while samples that are too small may lead to inaccurate results. According to Cooper and Schindler, (2006) the formula for calculating the sample size is as the follows:

(+,-) 0.05=desired interval range with in which the population proportion is expected (subjective decision)

$1.96(z)$ =95 percent confidence level for estimating the interval within which the population proportion is expected (subjective decision)

$E=0.045$ =standard error for the proportion (subjective decision).

PQ=measure of sample dispersion (used here as an estimate of the population dispersion).

$$n = \frac{Z^2 * p * q}{e^2} = \frac{\{1.96^2 * 0.5 * 0.5\}}{0.045^2} = 242$$

n= the desired sample size=242

2.4 SOURCE OF DATA

The researcher used both primary as well as secondary sources of data. The primary data was collected through the survey questionnaire. The questionnaire was filled by selected individuals who were identified through simple random sampling. Except for the employees of the dairy processing companies, customers were filling the questionnaire only. The researcher had aimed to interview employees of dairy enterprises' however; the enterprises were not cooperative to hold the interview. Secondary data was gathered from different articles, books, and company and institutional publication to develop and gain an understanding about the consequences of dairy product and other related information. Mainly the secondary data were analyzed to prepare related literature in order to understand the theoretical framework of attitude formation and consumers' attitudes towards dairy products.

2.5 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Following the completion of the data collection, the data were coded and entered in to Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) computer program for analysis because it saves the time and effort exerted by the researcher and provides accurate and reliable data. Data were analyzed using different quantitative and qualitative statistical procedures and methods.

Descriptive statistical tools were used to analyze the quantitative data namely, Crosstab Regression, and Mean difference. The important statistical measures that were used to summarize and categorize the research data were means, percentages, frequencies, and standard deviations. Descriptive tools were supplemented by qualitative analytical methods (mainly for those data acquired through open ended questions and interviews/qualitative methods) like interpretation and explanation of various opinions, views and concepts; and summarizing, categorizing, and presentation of these in convenient forms.

3.0 RESULTS

3.1 DISCUSSION

Milk is an important food for all groups of the human being. The finding of the study supports this idea. The mean Consumption of milk of female (1.25) is almost near to the mean consumption of milk of male (1.26). The mean difference of milk consumption between male and female is equal to zero at 95% significance rate. Therefore there is no difference on the consumption of milk between male and female. In other word both male and female likes to consume milk equally. More over the correlation result shows that there is a negative relationship between consumption and gender of the respondents particularly maleness. This indicates that as the researcher includes one additional male respondent to the sample the probability of the respondents to say yes would deteriorate by 0.071 rates. Most individuals were found consuming one glasses of milk per day. However, the mean difference of the number of glasses of milk consumed between male and female is high. This indicates that there is a significance difference on the number of glasses of milk consumed between male and female per day. Analysis shows that the highest numbers of respondents were aware of the benefits of milk to the human being. The mean comparison test of this variable shows that, the mean awareness levels of male is almost equal to the mean awareness levels of female. The majority of consumers were found to rank milk as their first choice over the substitute products. The mean difference for the ranking of milk by the different gender groups shows that, females are more interested to consume milk than male consumers. However, the mean difference of the two gender groups of milk choice is not significant. The consumers were asked to rate their consumption level of milk. Accordingly the highest number of respondents recognized themselves as a medium consumer of milk. The mean comparison result of this variable shows that, there is no significance difference on the consumption level of milk between male and female respondents. This infers that male and female respondents have an equal distribution over the alternatives given under this particular variable.

Data depicts that children are the most recommended part of the people to consume milk than others. Accordingly the mean difference of this particular variable shows that there is a deviation between male and female respondents. Most of the female respondents feel that it would be appropriate to provide milk for children. However lesser number of male groups of respondents is supporting this idea.

The majority number of the respondents recognized their mothers as a decision maker for the purchase of milk. The mean comparison result of this particular variable shows as if there is a small difference between male and female respondents. More number of females recognizes their mother as a purchase decision maker for purchase of milk.

The highest number of respondents was more interested to keep on consuming milk afterwards. The mean difference of the respondents for this particular question is found to be 0.112. This infers, those female respondents are more interested to keep on consuming milk afterwards than male respondents. As a result females found to be the major consumer of milk than males in the future. Unlike the other marketing mix elements, the price of milk is recognized as very expensive. The mean difference of this variable shows that female respondents are seems to be more sensitive to the price of milk. Because relatively speaking female respondents take the highest share of the response which recognize the price of milk as an expensive one.

3.2 CONSUMPTION OF MILK BY RELIGION

Here the consumption level of each religion groups would be analyzed. Accordingly, the crosstab result of the consumption level by different religion group shows that, respondents from other religion (atheists) are found to be 100% consumers of milk whereas, orthodox is said to be the least consumer of milk. This is may be due to the longer fasting day of Orthodox respondents. It shows that Protestants are 83% consumers of milk which is followed by Muslim respondents that accounts 80%. The literature encourages an individual to take three glasses of milk per day. Taking it as a bench mark there are small number of respondents who took three glasses of milk per day from each religion group. Result shows that 8% of protestant respondents are taking three glasses of milk per day whereas 7.3% and 3.8% of Orthodox and Muslim respondents are taking three glasses of milk per day respectively.

Result shows that the highest number of respondents was select milk as their first choice compared to its substitute products. It shows that respondents from other Religion (Pagan) group prefer milk as their first choice. 60% of Muslim respondents prefer milk over the substitute products. Orthodox Christians are less sensitive to consume milk as their first choice.

When we look at the response rate of individuals in each religion group, the lion share of this response is given by protestant respondents followed by Orthodox Christian and Muslims respectively. The price of milk is found to be very expensive as it was recognized by all the religious group respondents. The frequency distribution strengthens this idea. This section will tell us the price of milk in the eyes of each religious group. The majority numbers of Muslim respondents recognize the prices of milk as expensive. This figure is followed by orthodox respondents.

3.3 MILK CONSUMPTION BY AGE GROUP

Though, the largest numbers of respondents are between 20 and 23, the highest numbers of consumers of milk are found to be the age group between 28 and 30. 96% of the respondents between age group 28 and 30 are consumers of milk. This figure is followed by 76% of the respondents are consumers of milk is between 24 and 27 age group. This shows that as the age of individual increase the consumption level of milk also increases. The numbers of glasses of milk consumed by the different age group also vary from one to another. The highest numbers of glasses of milk is consumed by the age group between 24 and 30. 23.6% of these respondents consume three glasses of milk per day. And 64.3% of these respondents consume two glasses of milk per day. However the largest number of respondents between age group 16 and 23 consume one glasses of milk per day. This depicts that the number of glasses of milk consumed will increase as the age of the individual increases.

The largest number of respondents presented that they dislike milk. This figure best describes the interest of respondents found between 16 and 23 age groups. However the majority of the respondents who falls between 24 and 30 age groups are affected by the price and availability problems of milk. This shows that the majority of age groups above 24 are more sensitive to the price of milk. Almost the majority numbers of consumers are aware of the different benefits that milk has to the human being. 94% of the respondents between age group 16 and 19 are more aware of the benefits of milk followed by the age group between 28 and 30. The majority numbers of respondents rank milk as their first choice against its substitutes. Contrary to the respondents between 16 and 23 age group, the figure best describes the interests of respondents who fall between 24 and 30 age group. The age group between 16 and 23 are also more interested to consume milk than substitute products. However the numbers of respondents in the latter age group are less.

3.4 CONSUMPTION LEVEL OF MILK BY INCOME

There is a positive relationship between income of the respondents' mother and the consumption level of milk by individuals. Table 1 show that the coefficient of the income of the respondents is positive 0.1. This depicts that the change in the income variable will have a positive change in the consumption level of individuals. More over there is a negative relationship between the educational levels of mothers' and the glasses of milk consumed & whether they are a consumer or not. The educational level of mothers of respondents has nothing to do with the consumption of milk.

TABLE 1: COEFFICIENTS FOR THE INCOME OF MOTHERS' AND CONSUMPTION LEVEL OF RESPONDENTS

Model	Un standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	4.463	.613		7.286	.000
How many glasses of milk do you consume per day	.200	.246	.104	.814	.419

a. Dependent Variable: An income of the Respondents' Mother

The highest numbers of respondents prefer the pasteurized milk than raw type of milk. Table 2 shows that the majority number of respondents prefers to consume pasteurized milk. If we look at the respondents whose mothers' income is zero, the individuals prefer to consume pasteurized milk. Generally the number of respondents preferring pasteurized milk is large in number.

TABLE 2: THE TYPE OF MILK PREFERRED

Count					
		What type of milk you are consuming			Total
		Raw milk	Pasteurized milk	Other	
An income of the Respondents' Mother	500-1000	3	6	1	10
	1001-1500	2	9	0	11
	1501-2000	1	3	0	4
	2001-2500	1	2	0	3
	2501-3000	2	1	0	3
	>3000	3	7	0	10
	<500	1	4	0	5
	No income	4	18	1	23
Total		17	50	2	69

3.5 THE CONSUMPTION OF MILK BY MARITAL STATUS

Consumption of milk varies between married and unmarried respondents. It depicts that the mean difference of married respondents is different from unmarried individuals. According to the finding married respondents are more interested to consume milk than unmarried respondents. The reason behind this finding might be, married individuals feel responsible to their dependants than to themselves. However with regard to the number of glasses of milk consumed, married respondents were found to consume more than one glasses of milk per day. The frequency distribution result depicts that many of the individuals do not like milk. Moreover these consumers are also affected by the expensiveness price of milk. Unmarried respondents are found to be victims of these factors. The mean difference of the variable also shows that there is a strong difference between married and unmarried respondents on the factors that affect the consumption rate of milk.

Most of the respondents are more interested to keep on consuming milk. It shows that about 80% of the respondents will keep on consuming milk products. The mean difference of the two respondent groups is not significant. This infers that both groups of respondents are more interested to consume milk throughout their life.

4.0 CONCLUSION

According to the analysis of the study the majority numbers of the respondents were found to be the consumer of milk and milk products. This indicates that there is not a problem with regard to the consumption habit of milk in Ethiopia. In other word, the majority population of Ethiopia wants to consume milk and milk products. However, there are insignificant numbers of consumers who don't like milk. Yet these consumers would like to consume ice-cream which is the produce of milk. The consumption of milk is not limited to a particular gender group. Both female and male consumers have equal preference for the consumption of milk. However the female consumers are found to be more interested to consume milk than male consumers. In terms of the number of glasses of milk consumed the largest number of the population found to consume one glasses of milk per day. However, milk advertisements by Land O'lakes Ethiopia, recommends three glasses of milk per day. A significant numbers of respondents were suggesting children to drink milk more. This shows that the people in Ethiopia accepted milk as the food for children. The awareness level of the population about milk is good. According to the findings of this study the majority numbers of respondents are well aware of the benefits of milk. the majority numbers of respondents blame the company for the low consumption rate of milk in Ethiopia. According to these people, the price of milk in Ethiopia is very high.

With regard to the responses given by different religious groups, the people from other (nonbeliever) religion groups are found to be the heavy consumer of milk. The Protestants are the second to consume milk heavily. Orthodox respondents are found to be the least consumer of milk. Here the Muslim populations of Ethiopia are found to be the third majority whose followers are more aware of the benefit of milk to the human being. In addition to that, the populations from the different religious groups recognize that the price of milk is expensive. In other word, the price of milk in Ethiopia is said to be expensive.

The age in which the person is found affects his/her consumption level, preference, awareness and attitudes towards milk. Accordingly the majority numbers of persons between the age group 28 and 30 are found to be the major consumers of milk. The second rank of consumption rate of milk is held by the consumers found between age group 24 and 27. The awareness level of the individuals about the importance of milk varies among persons found in different age groups. The majority number of peoples found in the age group between 16 and 19 are more aware of the different benefits of milk. However, the peoples found between age group 28 and 30 are less aware of the importance of milk to the human being. Therefore, the consumers found between the age group 24 and 30 are consuming milk without or being less informed about its importance.

The purchasing power of an individual is mostly determined by using his/her income level. Likewise the consumption level of milk would also be affected by the income level of individuals or the income level of their parents. According to the findings of the study, there is a direct relationship between the mothers' income of respondents and the consumption level of milk. The majority number of persons, whose mothers' income is high, found to consume frequently. However, the occupation of the parents has nothing to do with the consumption levels of milk. Mothers are the decision maker to purchase milk for the family. The result of the study shows that the majority numbers of the persons are getting milk through their mother. Therefore the main responsibility to purchase the milk is given to the mothers.

The marital status of the individual will also have an impact on the consumption levels of milk. Accordingly married individuals are said to be more interested to consume milk than unmarried individuals. This shows that married individuals are capable of buying milk at any time they want to consume it. Both married and unmarried individuals are more interested to keep on consuming milk afterwards. The type of milk preferred by various persons would also vary based on the situation within which the individual is living. The majority population of Ethiopia is more interested to consume pasteurized milk than raw milk. This shows that the consumers are more aware of the difference between the two types of milk (pasteurized and raw milk).

Generally, apart from the different factors that hinder the consumer from the consumption of milk, the consumers have a favorable attitude towards dairy product.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations are used to solve the problems identified as the beginning of this study. The recommendations are presented as follows.

Educating the Customer: It was indicated in the frequency distribution table the majority number of the population are consumers of milk. This depicts that there is a potential market for milk. The problem of the society is not consumption related problem rather the number of glasses of milk consumed by each individual is very low. In order to fine-tune the interests of consumers towards milk, the companies need to enhance the awareness levels of consumers about milk. As a result milk processing enterprises are required to involve in corporate social responsibility activities. For example, if these enterprises establish schools, then the companies will get educated society.

Creating Awareness about the benefits of milk: Though the majority of the persons are aware of the benefits of milk, their knowledge is found to be traditional. The respondents themselves strengthen the sentence. In the recommendation part of the questionnaire the majority number of persons indicated the need for further awareness creation.

Improving the quality of milk: Many persons in the questionnaire wrote about poor quality (interns of the defects appeared on the milk) of milk in Addis Ababa and recommend improving the quality of milk. Quality of milk is difficult to be identified because the nutrition content of the milk cannot be seen using the humans naked eye. But traditionally the customers can identify whether the milk is adulterated or not using the test, thickness and color of the milk. As a result the quality level of milk can be improved by adopting different manufacturing process like, establishing quality control department, use of latest technology, and so on.

Improve the supply of milk: There are a limited number of milk processing companies in Ethiopia. The production level of these companies is very low. The population size of Addis Ababa was 2.8 million in 2007 (Census 2007). The milk processing companies are not capable of supplying milk to the entire population of Addis Ababa. Therefore the production capacity of the enterprises needs to be improved. This can be achieved by educating and motivating the rural youth to become entrepreneurs in this dairy sector. Further, the combined need to redesign the procurement strategies from different rural places.

Stretching the product line length: Milk processing enterprises in Ethiopia are engaged in the production of milk, cheese, yogurt, and ice-cream. During the fasting season for both Orthodox and Muslim religious groups, the companies reduce their daily production rate of milk and take the surplus for the production of butter. These firms are not producing flavored and fasting milk. As a result milk processing companies need to produce milk which will be consumed at the fasting season. Moreover flavored milk should also be produced to those groups of consumers who don't like it because of test.

Advertisement: Currently the advertisement work is doing by the Non Governmental Organizations called Land O'Lakes Ethiopia together with USAID. Milk processing companies are not seen doing advertisements by their own. Therefore the milk processing enterprises need to engage in the awareness creation type of milk advertisement (i.e. the message of the advertisement need to be informative). There is also a need to identify specific media tools to tap the young generation of Ethiopia to the awareness levels as well as create desire to consume more milk.

Reduce the price of milk: the price of milk is found to be expensive. Many of the individuals were mentioning the price of milk as one of the factor that hinders them not to consume milk. Therefore the enterprises need to reduce the prices of milk by adopting different managerial mechanisms like different strategies relating to procurement and processing.

Prepare the Milk in different forms: most mothers are using the powder milk to their children . However, none of the milk processing companies are producing milk in that form. Powder milk has a good demand in the Addis Ababa market because of the ease of preparation. Therefore, the milk processing companies are required to produce powder milk. Apart from this the company needs to focus on developing the milk and milk products in different flavor, tastes, colors and packed forms.

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