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ABSTRACT

Consumers are the kings of business. The study of consumer behaviour is as important as managing finance. Without consumers no business can run and each and every activity of the business concerns end with consumers and consumer satisfaction. India is a well-populated country. Demand for all products is firmly embedded in social, economic, cultural aspects. Soft drinks are considered as an energy booster and refreshment product. Soft drinks product also plays an important role in the consumers market. Soft drinks require quick purchase decision, and thus, buying behaviour is a considerable term nowadays. The term "soft drink" is a category in the beverage industry, and is broadly used in product labelling and on restaurant menus. This study examined the consumer buyer behaviour and the result reveals that consumers are influenced by four major factors such as taste, friends and family, habit and advertisement. The major attributes of consumers buying behaviour are availability and lifestyle.

Keywords: soft drink, taste, preference, buying behaviour,

INTRODUCTION

A soft drink is a drink which usually contains water with a sweetener usually but not necessarily carbonated with a natural and/or artificial flavouring. The first marketed soft drinks appeared in the 17th century as a mixture of water and lemon juice sweetened with honey. Buying behaviour is complex and influenced by many factors, some of which may conflict with so-called rational decision making, the interactions of groups and personal behaviour, the international shifts between attitudes and behaviour, the challenges of authority and status. The profound, and sometimes subtle, effects of culture of consumption make up, in part, the intricate web of influences which surrounds patterns of consumptions. In the earlier years, consumers shopped to satisfy their needs and wants but today their taste and preference have changed. Soft drinks have become part and parcel of our day today life style. Each and everyone in the country enjoy drinking a soft drink may it be a children, or a college student or a housewife or the old aged. Gone are the days when one used to have a soft drink just to combat a sunny day, but today with the lifestyle changes, soft drinks are enjoyed with almost every meal that one has outside his/her home. The soft drinks industry in India is categorized on the basis of production of carbonated and non-carbonated drinks. The carbonated drinks include flavours like cola, lemon and orange and the non-carbonated drinks segment includes mango, pineapple, litchi flavours.

products and services due to the potential of opinion leaders to influence behaviour of other members of society as consumers.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Samples are collected on the basis of primary data from 100 soft drinks consumers. After rejecting the incomplete questionnaire, 95 responses were recorded for the analysis. The study of economic condition depends on economic factors such as age, gender, monthly income, educational qualification, occupational status, place of residence, factors which influencing the consumption of soft drinks, buying a single brand soft drinks,

1. AGE

Age is an important factor to understand the nature of the respondents'. The age classification of the respondents are given in the below table.

AGEWISE CLASSIFICATION OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

S. NO	AGE	NO. OF THE RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Below 30	40	42
2.	30 - 40	25	26
3.	40 - 50	17	18
4.	Above 50	13	14
	TOTAL	95	100

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that 42 per cent (40) of sample respondents comes under the age group below 30, 26 per cent (25) of sample respondents comes under the age group of 30 – 40. The survey reveals that the young respondents are consuming soft drinks.

2. GENDER

Gender is the characteristics that relate to the categories of male, female or some combination thereof.

GENDERWISE CLASSIFICATION OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

S. NO.	GENDER	NO. OF THE RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Male	60	63
2.	Female	35	37
	TOTAL	95	100

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that, male population has the highest as compared to female population in Kavalkinaru Junction.

3. MONTHLY INCOME

In order to survive and spend, income is necessary to all the people. All the efforts taken by human beings are to earn money (i.e.) money.

INCOMEWISE CLASSIFICATION OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

S. NO	AGE	NO. OF THE RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Below Rs. 10,000	18	19
2.	Rs. 10,001 – Rs. 15,000	41	43
3.	Rs. 15,001 – Rs. 20,000	17	18
4.	Above Rs. 20,000	19	20
	TOTAL	95	100

Source: Primary Data

The above figure displays that 43 per cent (41) of the sample respondents earn Rs. 10,001 to Rs. 15,000 per month and only 18 per cent (17) earn Rs. 15,001 – Rs. 20,000 per month.

4. EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION

The educational qualification is classified into 6 groups, such as Primary School, High School, Higher Secondary School, U.G, P.G, and other category.

EDUCATIONWISE CLASSIFICATION OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

S. NO	EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	NO. OF THE RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Primary School	12	13
2.	High School	22	23
3.	Higher Secondary School	15	16
4.	UG	18	19
5.	PG	20	21
6.	Other Category	8	8
	TOTAL	95	100

Source: Primary Data

The above table depicts that 23 per cent (22) of the respondents have High School level of qualification and 8 per cent (8) of the respondents fall on the other category.

5. OCCUPATIONAL STATUS

The occupational status is classified into 5 groups namely, Public Servants, Private Employees, Entrepreneurs, Homemakers and Student Community.

OCCUPATIONWISE CLASSIFICATION OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

S. NO.	OCCUPATION	NO. OF THE RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Public Servants	17	18
2.	Private Employees	21	22
3.	Entrepreneurs	22	23
4.	Homemakers	5	5
5.	Students	30	32
	TOTAL	95	100

Source: Primary Data

The above table clearly shows that 32 per cent (30) of the respondents are from student community and 5 per cent (5) of the respondent are homemakers. It is highlighted that majority of the soft drink consumers are students and the least consumers are the homemakers.

6. RESIDENTIAL AREA

RESIDENTIAL STATUSWISE CLASSIFICATION OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

S. NO	RESIDENTIAL AREA	NO. OF THE RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Rural	18	19
2.	Urban	26	27
3.	Semi-urban	51	54
	TOTAL	95	100

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that 54 per cent (51) of the respondents are from semi-urban area and 27 per cent (26) of the respondents are from urban areas.

7. FACTORS INFLUENCING THE RESPONDENTS FOR BUYING SOFT DRINKS

Each consumer is unique in nature. During decision making process, some factors influence the buying behaviour of the consumers. Some of the factors are taste, low price, advertisement etc., The following table shows the various types of factors that influences the respondents.

INFLUENCING FACTORS OF BUYING BEHAVIOUR

RESPONSE	HS	S	NO	DS	HDS	TOTAL SCORE	MEAN SCORE	RANK
Taste	21 (105)	26 (104)	20 (60)	15 (30)	13 (13)	312	3.28	I
Price	19 (95)	25 (100)	17 (51)	18 (36)	16 (16)	298	3.14	VI
Refreshment	17 (85)	20 (80)	22 (66)	17 (34)	19 (19)	284	2.99	IX
Habit	19 (95)	22 (88)	27 (81)	14 (28)	13 (13)	305	3.21	III
Fashion	22 (110)	15 (60)	20 (60)	22 (44)	16 (16)	290	3.05	VII
Addiction	15 (75)	12 (32)	20 (60)	21 (42)	27 (27)	236	2.48	X
Digestion	21 (105)	20 (80)	15 (45)	21 (42)	18 (18)	290	3.05	VII
Brand Image	24 (120)	20 (80)	15 (45)	18 (36)	18 (18)	299	3.15	V
Advertisement	22 (110)	22 (88)	17 (51)	19 (38)	15 (15)	302	3.18	IV
Friends & Family	19 (95)	27 (108)	24 (72)	10 (20)	15 (15)	310	3.26	II

Source: Primary data

HS - Highly Satisfied, S - Satisfied, NO - No Opinion, DS - Dissatisfied & HDS - Highly Dissatisfied

The above table clearly depicts that out of ten factors which influence the buying behaviour of consumers, "Taste" has been given the first rank with the means score of 3.28, followed by "Friends & Family" with the means score of 3.26, followed by "Habit" with the means score of 3.21, followed by "Advertisement" with the means score of 3.18, followed by "Brand Image" with the means score of 3.15, followed by "Price" with the means score of 3.14, followed by two factors namely "Fashion" & "Design" with the same means score of 3.05, followed by "Refreshment" with the means score of 2.99 and "Addiction" with the means score of 2.48.

8. ATTRIBUTES OF BUYING BEHAVIOUR OF SOFT DRINKS

The five variables related to the attributes of the respondents for the in-take of soft drinks are given below:

S. NO.	RESPONSE	MEAN SCORE	RANK
1.	Availability	5.42	I
2.	Affordable Price	4.40	V
3.	Current Trend	4.81	III
4.	Lifestyle	5.16	II
5.	Energy Drink	4.59	IV

Source: Primary data

The above table shows that "Availability" of soft drinks plays a vital role for the in-take with its mean score of 5.42 and the least bothered attribute is "Affordable Price" with its mean score of 4.40.

The present study highlights the factors that influence the buying behaviour of soft drinks of the respondents in Kavalkinaru Junction. It could be concluded, that soft drinks are becoming most popular among its users mainly because of its taste, brand image and the price endorsement used by them. Thus the companies should focus on good taste as the respondents preferred taste as the most influencing factor of their buying behaviour. The majority of the people are aware of the health hazards of consuming soft drinks, therefore the companies can produce non-carbonated soft drinks and sell in the market to increase the consumption pattern.

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