

Key Indicators of Decision Making Style of Urban Consumers in the Purchase of Flavored Yoghurt

AMIP Abeysinghe*, HSR Rosairo and JPNW Kumari

Department of Agribusiness Management, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka

Abstract

Flavored yoghurt has become a popular processed dairy food in the market in recent years. The broad objective of this study was to identify factors affecting the purchasing decision of flavored yoghurt in urban areas and to develop an effective strategy to enhance sales within the Colombo district. Convenience sampling was used to select two hundred respondents from Colombo district. The primary data gathered through an interviewer administered questionnaire was analyzed using descriptive, cross tabulation, chi square and Spearman correlation analysis. More than half of the respondents (52%) were young females. Good taste/flavor, product awareness, chemical properties and content of chemicals, attitude on staying healthy, brand loyalty, nutritional value and naturalness, information on the product label, and attractiveness of the packaging showed strong positive correlations while recommended by family and friends and prestige of the company showed moderate positive correlations with the consumer purchasing decision of flavored yoghurt. Location of shop, outdoor promotion, seasonal discounts, product display and sponsorship displayed weak positive correlations with consumer purchasing decision. The marketing strategy should promote the product by considering more about consumer gender since a large number of urban buyers was female.

Keywords: Flavored yoghurt, Purchasing decision, Urban consumer

***Corresponding author:** iabeysinghe1988@gmail.com

Introduction

Rising consumer demand for convenience, combined with a healthy diet and preferences for natural food ingredients has led to a growth in functional foods. Consumer needs, trend and lifestyle are subjected to continuous change. Yoghurt is a functional food and moreover, preference towards the yoghurt and its eating occasions differ among countries and cultures. Yoghurt can be categorized into plain, fruit and flavored yogurt based on the particular flavor of the yoghurt (Delft, 2015). Yoghurt is available in a vast array of flavors, including fruit (apple, apricot, black cherry, black currant, blueberry, lemon, mandarin, raspberry, strawberry and peach) cereal, vegetables, chocolate, vanilla, caramel, ginger, coffee, etc. Flavors bring excitement to many different market segments. Yoghurt is a food having a fast moving flavor train, which has not only received national attention, but international as well. People in China eat more probiotic yoghurt while those in the USA opt for more Greek-style yoghurt and polish consumers eat more flavored options, while the majority of the Sri Lankan consumers prefer plain yoghurt. Hence the consumer purchasing decision has important roles to be analyzed in order to expand markets of flavored yoghurt. The synthesis of the results is expected to provide better understanding of key indicator decision making style of urban consumers in the purchase of flavored yoghurt. The broad objectives of the study were to identify factors

affecting sales of flavored yogurt in urban areas and to develop an effective strategy.

Materials and Methods

Research approach was deductive and survey method was used as the research strategy. The study used convenience sampling approach. Colombo district was selected as the geographical area to conduct this study. 200 respondents representing 50% of the total sample size, fewer than 5% margin of error and at a 95 confidence level were selected from the Colombo District. Primary data was collected through an interviewer administered questionnaires using Likert interval scale (Wilkinson and Bhandarkar, 2004) and multiple-choice (MC) questions based on Sato (2003). The study was taken twenty seven indicators to measure the consumer purchasing decision and the reliability of the questionnaire was confirmed by cronbach's Alpha value 0.845. Secondary data was collected through, books, journals/research papers, government statistical reports, internet sources or online information and news from many websites concerning with consumer perception and decision to purchase flavored yoghurt. Descriptive analysis was utilized to explain the socio - economic characteristic of urban respondents. In order to test the relationship between the variables measured and to find the significance of the hypothesis developed data were analyzed with the use of analytical tools such as Spearman

correlation and chi-square analysis. All cross tabulation and graphical representation of data and findings were done using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0.

Results and Discussion

The study revealed that the highest numbers of consumer (52%) in urban areas were female and of the females as high as 55% were below 35 years. Furthermore, 69% of urban female were occupied.

In urban area buyer (77%) were higher than non-buyer (23%). It implied that flavored yoghurt tended to be more popular among urban consumers, may be they have more access to information and product knowledge regarding flavored yoghurt. The highest frequency of flavored yoghurt consumption in the urban area was once a week (29%). The study revealed that sources of information in the urban areas were product advertisement in TV, newspapers, internet or in other media.

In terms of flavors, plain yoghurt or original flavor was the most favorite taste of the urban consumers, followed by strawberry and chocolate flavor. Consumer preference towards strawberry and chocolate flavor was in accordance with the criteria of the urban consumers who mostly were female with age ranging between 18-35 years, and were mostly employed. An approximately similar number of the consumers mentioned that they prefer flavors such as vanilla, mango, orange/lemon and grape while melon flavored yoghurt was less preferred.

According to the frequency analysis the mean values less than 2.5 indicated that past experience, attitude of stay healthy, brand loyalty and prestige of the company, chemical properties and content of chemicals, recommended by medical doctor or nutrition consultant recommended by family or relatives/friends, product quality verified by SLS or international agency, price and comparing the price between different brands, cleanliness of the store, nutritional value and naturalness smell and appearance, the variation in flavor good taste/flavor, information on product label were key factors that considered consideration when urban consumer purchase flavored yoghurt.

Awareness on flavored yogurt, attractiveness of tv advertisement, free sample and gift, coupons, seasonal discounts, product display, advertising

on social media, outdoor promotion, location of the shop were determinants became moderate to less consideration while urban consumer purchased the flavored yoghurt.

According to the cross tabulation and Chi-square test the consumer purchasing decision of the flavored yoghurt in the urban areas had significant association with gender, age, occupation variables. To identify the relationship between the factors governing the purchasing decision and the actual purchasing of flavored yoghurt by urban buyers, Spearman correlation analysis was used as the statistical tool.

Good taste/flavor, awareness of flavored yoghurt, chemical properties and content of chemicals included in the yoghurt, to stay healthy, brand loyalty, nutritional value and naturalness of flavored yoghurt, information in the product label, attractiveness of the packaging were the significant key factors. correlation co-efficient value higher than 0.60 showed those factors have strong positive correlation with consumer purchasing decision of flavored yoghurt.

Recommended by doctor or nutrition consultant and by family or relatives/friends, prestige of the company were factors having moderately positive correlation with consumer purchasing decision of flavored yoghurt (correlation co-efficient value between 0.40-0.59). Location of shop, outdoor promotion, seasonal discounts, product display, and sponsorship were weak positively correlated with consumer purchasing decision (correlation co-efficient value less than 0.20)

Conclusions

Employed young female was the suitable target market segment for urban area. Highest purchasing frequency was once a week. Most frequently mentioned source of information in the urban areas was the product advertisement in mass media. Plain /original flavour was the most favourite taste of the urban consumers, followed by strawberry and chocolate flavour. Melon is the least preferred flavour in urban areas. Good taste/flavour, product awareness, chemical properties and content of chemicals included in the yoghurt, to stay healthy, brand loyalty, nutritional value and naturalness of flavoured yoghurt, information in the product label, and attractiveness of the packaging were the key factors having strong positive correlation with consumer purchasing decision

of flavoured yoghurt. The marketers should develop and redesign their marketing strategy, particularly aiming female buyers in order to attract their interest towards flavored yoghurt.

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