



A Study on Brand Preference of Packaged Spices in Madurai

Dr. V. Kamarasan

Associate Professor & Head, P.G & Research Department of Commerce,
Saraswathi Narayanan college, Madurai-Tamilnadu.

ABSTRACT

Spices trade is a big business from time immemorial. Spices from India and far Eastern Asia were in demand from Ancient times;.. "Instead of trying to market what is easier for us to make, we must find out much more about what the consumer is willing to buy. we must apply our creativeness more intelligently to people, and their wants and needs rather than to product. In the modern marketing area consumer's satisfaction is very essential. Now there are many packaged spices powder factories all over the country with different brand names.. In order to find out the consumers brand preferences, their likings with regard to various varieties available under different brands, the present study focuses attention on marketing of packaged spices powder, by various packaged spices powder factories and also various factors influencing the consumers.

KEYWORDS :

Introduction:

Spice, aromatic vegetable product used as a flavoring or condiment, normally refers to the derivatives from certain herbs like seeds, leaves, bark, roots etc., They are used mainly for enhancing taste of food. Spices play a very important role in Indian cooking. "Masala" is the Hindi word for "Spice". When a combination of spices, herbs and others condiments are ground together, it is also called "Masala" Spices trade is a big business from time immemorial. Spices from India and far Eastern Asia were in demand from Ancient times; they were carried by caravan across China and India to ports of the Mediterranean sea or the Persian gulf and then to the market places of Athens, Rome and other cities, where they sold at exorbitant prices.

Buyers behaviour is the Process by which individuals decide whether, what, when, where, how and from whom to purchase goods and services. "Instead of trying to market what is easier for us to make, we must find out much more about what the consumer is willing to buy. we must apply our creativeness more intelligently to people, and their wants and needs rather than to product.

Statement of problem:

In the modern marketing area consumer's satisfaction is very essential. Now there are many packaged spices powder factories all over the country with different

brand names. Among them the major brands are Aachi, Aasai, MTR, Sakthi masala, Everest, Pandiyan and other local competitive brands. The above brands are considered for the study. In order to find out the consumers brand preferences, their likings with regard to various varieties available under different brands, the present study focuses attention on marketing of packaged spices powder, by various packaged spices powder factories. Hence the topic **A STUDY ON BRAND PREFERENCE OF PACKAGED SPICES IN MADURI** has been taken up for the study.

Objectives of the study:

1. To find the socio-economic characteristics of the sample respondents and their shopping pattern in the study area.
2. To study the purchase behavior of sample respondents.
3. To evaluate brand preference of the consumer.
4. To analyze the factors influencing brand preference.
5. To evaluate alternative purchase plans of the consumer.
6. To give conclusion and suggestion

Methodology

This study is based on both primary and secondary data. The secondary data were collected from books and web pages. An interview schedule was structured after thorough consultation and discussion with academic and professional experts. The same was first administered to a small selected group to collect their suggestion and the interview schedule was suitably modified in the light of their suggestion. There after the full version of Interview schedule was administered to the chosen sample. An empirical study was undertaken with help of an Interview schedule to determine the buying behaviour,

brand awareness and brand loyalty towards packaged spices. The schedule was administered to sample respondents living in different parts of Madurai City. The researcher has adopted convenient sampling technique for collecting data. The primary data have been collected from 120 respondents belonging to various part of Madurai City

Framework of analysis

In this study an attempt has been made by the researcher to analyse the brand preference of packaged spices. Inferences are made on the opinion expressed by one hundred and twenty sample respondents comprising of 32 from Low income group, 61 from Middle Income Group and 27 from High Income Group. The raw data collected were classified, edited and tabulated for analysis. Percentile analysis was adopted for analyzing the data and the analysis was made on the basis of age, gender, annual income and education.

Some statements were scored on a five point Likert type scale and such statements were analyzed as explained below. The answers supporting the statements fully are given the maximum score of five, while the answer on the other end gets a score of one. The score value was calculated for each question and was divided by the maximum possible score. So that the final score will represent the extent of the support to the statement mentioned in the question.

Brand awareness of customers

Awareness in the mind of the customers about the various brand of packaged spices powder is created through various sources like Friends, Relatives, Media, Newspaper, T.V., Journal, Magazines, Radio etc., To know whether these factors have strong influence in creating awareness in the mind of customers, this question was put up to the customers. The under mentioned table will explain this.

Brand Awareness of Customers.

Factors	Light Users	Medium Users	Heavy Users	Total
Friend Relatives	7 (21.87)	17(27.86)	7 (25.93)	31(25.84)
Mass Media	21 (65.63)	44(72.14)	16 (59.25)	81 (67.5)
Store Display	4(12.5)	-	4(14.82)	8(6.66)

Period of Consumption

As far as the period of consumption is concerned, there is no uniformity. It varies from one person to another and the researcher has made an attempt to know such difference in consumption. The following table will disclose the difference in duration of consumption.

Period of Consumption

Period	Light Users	Medium Users	Heavy Users	Total
Below 3	13 (40.63)	22(36.06)	11(40.74)	46(38.33)
Above 3 Years	19 (59.37)	39 (63.94)	16(59.26)	74(61.67)

Factors influencing Brand preference

There are so many factors to influence the customers to select their own brand of packaged spices powder. The researcher has made an attempt to know the factors that have great influence over customers in Brand preference. This is illustrated in the following table.

Factors influencing Brand preference

Factors	Light users	Medium users	Heavy users	Total
Good for health	9(28.12)	28(45.91)	17(25.92)	59(49.17)
Company image	6(18.75)	5(8.20)	5(18.52)	9 (7.5)
Taste and Flavors	7(21.87)	17 (27.86)	5(18.52)	30(25)
Price	5(15.63)	5(8.19)	5(18.52)	9(7.5)
Easy availability	5(15.63)	6(9.84)	5(18.52)	13(10.83)

Place of purchase

Each product has its own place of availability. Like that of other products packaged spices powder also has its own purchasing or selling place. The packaged spices powder can be bought from the near by shop, department store, Door to door sales supermarket etc. The researcher has made an attempt to know the place of purchase that the customers mostly follow. The following table reveals the answer for this question

Place of Purchase

Place	Light users	Medium users	Heavy users	Total
Nearby shop	15(46.87)	25(40.93)	9(33.34)	53(44.17)
Departmental store	7(21.88)	13(21.34)	5(18.52)	24(20)
Door to door sales	5(15.63)	9(14.76)	5(18.52)	18(15)
Super market	5(15.62)	14(22.97)	8(29.62)	25(20.83)

Brand of turmeric powder used

Now-a- days most of the women use turmeric powder to avoid the growth of hair on their body. It is also used for cooking. Hence it is widely used in this modern world either directly or indirectly. Most of the facial creams have the combination of turmeric in their products. The researcher has taken a step to analyze the use of turmeric brand among the customers. The preference of brand of Turmeric powder by the customers is interpreted in the following table.

Brand of Turmeric powder used

Brands	Light users	Medium Users	Heavy Users	Total
Aachi	14(43.75)	25(40.99)	10(37.03)	49(40.83)
Aasai	5(15.62)	5(8.19)	2(7.40)	12(10)
Sakthi	8(25)	15(24.59)	6(22.21)	29(24.17)
MTR	-	9(14.76)	3(11.12)	12(10)
Pandiyan	5(15.63)	7(11.47)	3(11.12)	15(12.5)
Everest	-	-	3(11.12)	3(2.5)

Brands	Light users	Medium users	Heavy users	Total
Aachi	9(28.12)	16(26.22)	6(22.23)	34(28.33)
Aasai	5(15.63)	8(13.11)	6(22.23)	13(10.84)

MTR	5(15.63)	6(9.85)	5(18.52)	9(7.5)
Sakthimasala	8(25)	26(42.63)	5(18.51)	55(45.83)
Pandiyan	5(15.62)	5(8.19)	5(18.51)	9(7.5)

Brand of sambar powder used

Sambar powder is mixing of the masala items. It is mainly used for making a sambar. It is very essential for the cooking purpose, it saves greater time in making of sambar. The consumer's Preference of sambar powder is interpreted in the following table.

Brand of Sambar Powder Used

Brands	Light users	Medium users	Heavy users	Total
Aachi	19(59.37)	23(37.72)	12(44.45)	54(45)
Aasai	2(6.25)	4(6.25)	-	6(5)
Sakthimasala	8(25)	21(34.42)	9(33.33)	38(31.67)
MTR	-	6(9.83)	2(7.40)	8(6.67)
Pandiyan	1(3.13)	-	2(7.41)	3(2.5)
Everest	2(6.25)	7(11.47)	2(7.41)	11(9.16)

Brand of coriander seed powder used

Coriander powder is prepared from coriander seed. It is used for making extra flavour for food items. The preference by the consumers of coriander seed powder is interpreted in the following table.

Brand of coriander seed powder used

Brand of Rasam powder used

Compared with other items, Rasam is prepared very quickly. There are many brands of Rasam powder. It is also making a time saving in the modern world. The preference by the consumers of Rasam powder is interpreted in the following table.

Brand of Rasam powder used

Brands	Light Users	Medium Users	Heavy Users	Total
Aachi	12(37.5)	14(22.96)	15(55.56)	41(34.16)
MTR	4(12.5)	6(9.84)	3(11.11)	13(10.83)
Sakthimasala	10(31.25)	25(40.99)	4(14.82)	39(32.6)
Pandiyan	6(18.75)	16(26.21)	5(18.51)	27(22.5)

Brand of Chilly powder Used

Chilly powder is prepared from Chillii. There are many varieties of Chillies. Red chilly or ripened chilly is used to make chilly powder. It is used in almost all vegetarian and non-vegetarian food. It is also an essential thing in Daily Life for people. The preference by the consumers of Chillii powder is interpreted in the following table.

Brand of Chilly powder used

Brands	Light users	Medium users	Heavy users	Total
Aachi	11(34.37)	20(32.78)	10(37.04)	41(34.16)
Aasai	3(9.37)	-	5(18.55)	8(6.66)
Sakthimasala	16(50)	24(39.35)	12(44.44)	52(43.34)
MTR	2(6.26)	7(11.48)	-	9(7.5)
Everest	-	-	-	-
Pandiyan	-	10(16.39)	-	10(8.34)

Brand of Lemon powder used

It is simple and easy to prepare lemon rice by mixing white rice with the lemon powder. It is popular variety rice. It is also good for health. The preference by the consumers of Lemon powder is interpreted in the following table.

Brand of Lemon powder used

Brands	Light users	Medium users	Heavy users	Total
Aachi	10(31.25)	24(39.32)	9(33.33)	43(35.84)
Pandiyan	6(18.76)	8(13.11)	5(18.51)	17(14.16)

MTR	5(15.62)	6(9.82)	7(25.94)	14(11.67)
Sakthimasala	11(34.37)	23(37.75)	6(22.22)	46(38.33)

Brand of Chicken, Mutton and Fish Masala Used

The availability of readymade mutton masala saves much time in preparing food. In the olden days the people spent a lot of time to prepare a masala for the mutton, and fish masala. But now many people use only mutton masala readily available in the market for making mutton. The brand preferences of the Sample respondents are given in the following table.

Brand of mutton, chicken and fish Masala used

Brands	Light users	Medium users	Heavy users	Total
Aachi	19(59.37)	35(57.37)	15(55.56)	69(57.5)
Aasai	-	2(3.28)	-	2(1.67)
sakthimasala	9(28.12)	19(31.14)	9(33.33)	37(30.83)
Everest	2(6.25)	3(4.92)	2(7.40)	7(5.84)
MTR	-	-	1(1.64)	1(0.83)
Pandiyan	2(6.25)	2(3.28)	-	4(3.33)

Brand of polio-gare powder used

Household can prepare polio-gare rice easily and quickly by mixing readymade polio-gare powder with rice. It stimulates digestion. The preference by the consumers of polio-gare powder is interpreted in the following table.

Brand of polio-gare powder used

Brands	Light users	Medium users	Heavy users	Total
Aachi	17(21.87)	30(49.18)	10(37.03)	47(39.16)
Everest	7(21.88)	6(9.84)	5(18.52)	18(15)
MTR	5(15.63)	5(8.19)	5(18.52)	15(12.5)
sakthimasala	13(40.62)	20(32.79)	7(25.93)	40(33.34)

Brand of pepper powder used

Pepper powder is mainly used to make some special food. Pepper also has the power to control fat and cholesterol which is good to health. Pepper powder is very good medicine for a cough and cold. The preference by the consumer of pepper powder is interpreted in the following table.

Brand of Pepper Powder used

Brands	Light users	Medium users	Heavy users	Total
Aachi	14(43.75)	28(45.91)	12(44.44)	57(45)
sakthi	18(56.22)	33(54.09)	15(55.56)	66(55)

Brand of Curry Masala powder Used

In the olden days the people spent a lot of time to prepare a masala, but now many people use only curry masala powder available readily in the market. The brand preferences of the sample respondents are given in the following table.

Brand of Curry Masala Powder used

Brands	Light users	Medium users	Heavy users	Total
Aachi	10(31.25)	21(34.42)	10(37.03)	41(34.16)
Pandiyan	5(15.62)	11(18.03)	5(18.52)	21(17.5)
Sakthi	12(37.5)	20(32.79)	7(25.93)	39(32.5)
MTR	5(15.62)	9(14.76)	5(18.52)	39(15.84)

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. Consumers are aware of their brand of packaged spices powder mostly through advertisement (Newspaper Journal, Magazines and Radio) which occupies 67.5percent.
2. 61.67percent of the consumers have packaged spices powder

consumption habit for above 3 years.

3. The important factors that have influenced the consumer to prefer their brand are the taste of their brand with 25percent followed by Good for Health 49.17percent.
4. The study reveals that 44.17percent of consumers consume packaged spices powder in the nearby shop, followed by super market 20.83percent.
5. Most of the consumers prefer Aachi.e.(40.83percent), followed by sakthi masala 24.17percent, pandiyan 12.5percent, Aasai and MTR 10percent each, Everest 2.5percent in respect of Turmeric powder used.
6. In respect of chilly powder the consumers mostly prefer sakthi masala i.e.43.34percent followed by Aachi 34.16percent, pandiyan8.34percent, MTR 7.5percent and Aasai 6.66percent.
7. In respect of coriander seed powder the consumers mostly prefer Aachi i.e.28.33percent, followed by Aasai 10.84percent, MTR 7.5percent and Sakthi masala 45.83percent and pandiyan7.5 percent.
8. Most of the consumers prefer Aachi i.e 45percent, followed by sakthi masala 31.67percent, pandiyan 9.16percent, MTR 6.67percent, Aasai 5percent, and Everest 2.5percent in respect of brands of sambar powder used.
9. Most of the consumers prefer Aachi i.e 34.16percent, followed by Sakthi masala 32.6percent, pandiyan 22.5percent, MTR 10.83percent in brands of Rasam powder used.
10. Most of the consumers prefer Aachi i.e 55percent followed by Sakthi Masala i.e 45 percent in respect of pepper powder used
11. In respect of Polio-gare powder, most of the consumers prefer Aachi (39.16percent) followed by MTR (12.5percent) Everest (15percent) and Sakthi masala (33.34percent).
12. In respect of Lemon powder, most of the consumers prefer Aachi 35.84percent followed by pandiyan 14.16percent, MTR 11.67percent and Sakthi masala. 38.33percent.
13. Most of the consumers prefer Aachi (57.5percent) followed by Aasai (1.67percent), Everest (0.83percent), pandiyan 3.33percent, MTR (5.84percent) and Sakthi masala (30.83percent) in brands of Mutton, Chicken and fish masala.
14. In respect of Curry leaves powder; most of the consumers prefer Aachi(34.16percent) followed by pandiyan 17.5percent, MTR 15.84percent and Sakthi masala. 32.5percent.

SUGGESTIONS

Based upon the findings of the study conducted, the following are the suggestions made to improve the packaged spices.

1. Price should be minimized to some possible extent to attract customers. The price is the important criterion while selecting the particular brand.
2. Taste plays an important role for using the preferred brand. So all the companies should concentrate on the taste and quality of the spices.
3. Most of the respondents came to know about the product through advertisement. So the Companies may give maximum importance to the advertisement. It may increase the knowledge of the product.
4. Majority of the respondents say that the quality of the product makes them purchase the Product consistently. So the companies should consider seriously and maintain it continuously.

CONCLUSION

Spice is a very essential daily using commodity. Spice is useful to all the group members. In Madurai city the packaged spice is widely used and liked by the respondents. From this study the researcher conclude that the packaged spices are more preferable than the loose spice. In Madurai city, "Aachi" spice is preferred by majority of the respondents.

The analysis revealed that there is a strong association between Income level and purchasing behavior which means that with the variation in income levels and purchasing behaviour the choice for branded / unbranded spices also varies. It was inferred that the purchase of a particular Brand & the factors affecting its choice, there by meaning that while choosing a brand the consumer consider factors like packaging, price, availability, taste etc. Effectiveness of media has bearing on age, that is, age affects a consumers preference for a particular brand. Profession does have a bearing on the choice of branded / unbranded spices.

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