



Customers Perception of Sugar-Free Biscuits

KEYWORDS

Customer Perception, Sugar- free biscuits, Price range preferred, Diabetes.

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ABSTRACT Perception the organization, identification, and interpretation of sensory information in order to represent and understand the environment. All perception involves signals in the nervous system, which in turn result from physical or chemical stimulation of the sense organs. Customer perception is typically affected by advertising, reviews, public relations, social media, personal experiences and other channels. The main aim of the study is to know about the **customer perception of sugar-free biscuits** with respect to Chennai city. The study focused on various factors like (1) **The perception of sugar free biscuits.** (2) **The reason for consuming sugar free biscuits** (3) **The price range preferred to buy sugar-free biscuits** (4) **The most preferred brand** (5) **To identify the users profile of sugar-free biscuits.** The number of samples collected by the researcher is 97 customers, who were consumers of sugar-free biscuits. The study was conducted in Chennai city. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data. The study concluded that in today's world youngsters go for branded products and the most preferred brand from the study happens to be Cadbury. Youngsters like to consume Sugar free biscuits at anytime irrespective whether they are happy or distress. Sugar free biscuits occupy as the major part of gift during occasions (Diwali, Raksha Bandhan etc) in India.. They spend a part of the expenditure in buying Sugar free biscuits. Nowadays, doctors suggest taking dark Sugar free biscuits are good for heart and it nourishes the energy of mind and body.

1. (a) INTRODUCTION:

Customer opinion is a belief about matters commonly considered to be subjective, i.e., it is based on that which is less than absolutely certain, and is the result of emotion or interpretation of facts.

Sugar-free baked goods, such as these cookies made with sunflower seeds and raisins, are well-suited to diabetes sufferers. They allow sugary foods to be replaced with those containing sugar substitutes.

Rising incidences of diabetes and overweight/obesity are pushing consumers from sugar and toward sugar-free alternatives. Both conditions are prevalent among the general population: according to the National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse, 20.8 million children and adults in the U.S. in 2005 (7% of the total population) had some form of diabetes. Preliminary figures from the "2006 National Health Interview Survey" suggest these numbers may be even higher and, based on current trends, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) predicts that one in three Americans born in 2000 will develop diabetes.

Mintel's exclusive research shows diabetes influencing the purchase decisions of more than a third of respondents: 34% of those purchasing sugar-free products for themselves do so for a diabetes-related reason, as do 39% who purchase sugar-free items for another household member. Sugar-free products are well-suited to sufferers of the disease, as they allow sugary foods to be replaced with those containing sugar substitutes.

Overweight and obesity also influence purchase decisions. More Americans are overweight or obese than at any other time in the nation's history. According to the 2003-2004 "National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey" undertaken by the CDC, 66.3% of U.S. adults aged 20 years old or older are overweight

(having a Body Mass Index—BMI—of between 25.0 and 30.0) or obese (having a BMI greater than 30.0).

Controlling weight through dieting provides an opportunity for manufacturers of sugar-free foods. According to Mintel's exclusive research, 29% of respondents are extremely or very interested in sugar-free or low-sugar products as a form of diet plan or part of a regulated diet program. Sugar-free foods provide a way to assist consumers in making diet choices that could lead to weight loss or control.

(b) SUGAR FREE BISCUITS INDUSTRY

Traditionally seen as an indulgence, Biscuits are now being increasingly accepted in the Indian society. Of the total confectionary market of 176.9 thousand tons in 2009, 46.8 thousand tons came from biscuits confectionary. This number was much higher in terms of value with biscuits contributing Rs. 1790 crores of the total industry sales value of Rs. 4081 crores in 2009 (Euromonitor, 2009). The table below gives the breakup of the confectionary market in India by sales volume and sales value.

	Retail Volume ('000 tonnes)	Volume %	Retail Value RSP (Rs mn)	Value %
Biscuits Confectionary	46.8	26.5%	1790.4	43.9
Sugar Confectionary	111.8	63.2%	18083.5	44.3
Gums Confectionary	18.3	10.3%	4830.4	11.8
	176.9	100.0%	40818.5	100.0

MAJOR PLAYERS

Aclame: Contains Alitame - (E956)

AminoSweet: Contains Aspartame - (E951)

Candarel: Contains Aspartame - (E951)

Cologran: Contains Saccharin - (E954) and Cyclamate - (E952)

Equal: Contains Aspartame - (E951)
Heremesetas: Contains Saccharin, - (E954)
NatraTaste: Contains Aspartame - (E951)
NutraSweet: Contains Aspartame - (E951)
Splenda: Contains Sucralose - (E955) and Maltodextrin
Sucaryl: Contains Saccharin - (E954) and Cyclamate - (E952)
Sunett: Contains Acesulfame K - (E950)
Sweet'N Low: Contains Saccharin, - (E954)
Sweet One: Contains Acesulfame K - (E950)
TwinSweet: Contains Aspartame - (E951) and Acesulfame K - (E950)

2. BRIEF REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

A person, company, or other entity which buys goods and services produced by another person, company, or other entity.

In general, an opinion is a subjective belief, and is the result of emotion or interpretation of facts. An opinion may be supported by an argument, although people may draw opposing opinions from the same set of facts. Opinions rarely change without new arguments being presented. Opinions are never right or wrong, they are merely a figment of what someone believes. However it can be reasoned that one opinion is better supported by the facts than another by analysing the supporting arguments. In casual use, the term *opinion* may be the result of a person's perspective, understanding, particular feelings, beliefs, and desires. It may refer to unsubstantiated information, in contrast to knowledge and fact-based beliefs. The combination of qualities, quantities, acts and tendencies characterizing a community or human group's use of resources for survival, comfort and enjoyment.

Jane See Siou Zhen (2012) studies the impact of factors that (4As: Acceptability, Affordability, Availability and Awareness and Consumer Innovativeness) might influence the consumer intense to purchase organic food. 145 questionnaires were collection from the female participant age between 20-34 years old based on convenience sampling. The results have discovered that acceptability, affordability, and awareness are main important factors that can influence consumer purchase intention. These finding can be helpful for marketing managers in order to develop the most suitable strategy to gain higher level of market share.

Sharma Sushama and Thakur Nandita (2012) know the self medication and diet management practices of women. A statistically adequate sample of fifty women aged 30-50 years belonging to middle income group were selected from MIG area of Indore City. A questionnaire was formed and filled from them asking questions about their health seeking behavior. The subjects were divided into two groups, as per their age as 30-40 years and 40-50 years and compared for experimental characteristic using % and Chi test. Obtain in Results show that in both age groups more subjects are housewife (58% and 66%), have some health problem (62% and 76%) and higher age group has health problems and have different types of health problems. The results show that self medication is a common practice which may cause health problems.

Indu and Jagathy Raj (2012) examine the need for the study of advertising credibility and review the advertising- consumer behaviour- credibility – healthcare theories which form a basis for the study. It identifies the different components and dimensions of advertising credibility and the importance of communication effect, purchase be-

havior and ad skepticism. It also studies the relevance of credibility in the consumer healthcare products advertising. The study focuses on an analysis of credibility and related factors in the Indian context. A credible communication through mass media is essential for building consumer trust and loyalty in the highly sensitive, competitive consumer healthcare market segment.

Rajas, V. Antony Joe, (2012) explore scope of direct to consumer advertising of prescription drugs in Indian market. Research study is exploratory in nature and helps in tracing knowledge, perceptions, and responsiveness of consumers, doctors & marketers towards direct-to-consumer advertising of prescription medicines. Factorial analysis is used to draw conclusion and to know about factors which drive towards and against DTCA in India. Direct to Consumer Advertisement (DTCA) is an innovative practice of promoting prescription drugs through popular media, which is currently allowed only in US & New Zealand. In India we are already exposed to television advertisements of many OTC drugs like contraceptive pills, inhalers in bronchial asthma, insulin for diabetes mellitus, etc.

Caroline Christine Godwin (2013) proposes more-effective ways to merchandise diabetes products, with a cross-merchandised approach that provides education and a better in-store experience for shoppers. This research aims to help shoppers by proposing and testing—through in-store intercepts and a questionnaire—a well organized and comprehensive merchandising approach for drugstores, specifically Walgreens and Rite Aid. The results of the questionnaire indicate that the proposed merchandising solution (see Appendix B) provided welcomed improvements to the following areas: 1) organization of products and cross-merchandise product options, 2) shelf signage/navigation, and 3) education. Questionnaire respondents reported that the proposed merchandising solution offered a more effective and engaging merchandising option than do current diabetes shelves.

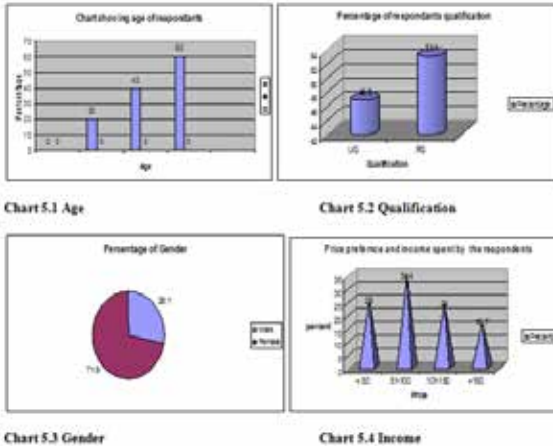
3. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Hypothesis: To identify the significant difference between the demographic variables (GENDER) on preference towards the sugar free biscuits

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher has chosen the college teaching and non-teaching staffs as sample unit. The sample size determined is 100, but after discarding the missing values and extreme cases, the size is 96. The study was administered using a structured questionnaire, the first set of questions contains demographic factors and the rest contains questions related to opinion of the respondent on sugar free biscuits consumption used optional type of questions. SPSS 14.00 was used to analyze ANOVA, One-sample test and Correlation.

5. CHARTS & TABLES



MEASUREMENT ITEM	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Sugar free biscuits liking		
Yes	88.	91.7
No	08	8.3
Sugar free biscuits Eaters		
Yes	84	87.5
No	12	12.5
Brand Preference		
Equal	48	50.0
NutraSweet:	20	20.8
Splenda	05	5.2
Aclame	19	19.8
Others	04	4.2
Frequency of Sugar free biscuits eaters		
Daily	37	38.5
Weekly	46	47.9
Monthly	09	9.4
Yearly	04	4.2
Preference of Sugar free biscuits Price		
<100	15	15.6
101-150	29	30.2
151-200	22	22.9
>200	30	31.3
Type of Sugar free biscuits		
Fruit & nut	34	35.4
Milk	30	31.3
Dark	14	14.6
Carmel	18	18.8

MEASUREMENT ITEM	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Influencing factors in buys Sugar free biscuits		
Advertisement	28	29.2
Friends	41	42.7
Price	15	15.6
Others	12	12.5
Reason for eating Sugar free biscuits		
Control Diabetes	58	60.4
Taste	34	35.4
others	04	04.2
Likings of new arrival product		
Diet Product	37	38.5
Cool Drinks	37	38.5
Energy Drinks	22	22.9

Table 5.5

The following table depicts the frequency and percentage of the measurement items from the questionnaire for the sample size of 96.

6. ANALYSIS

Table 6.1 ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.473	1	.473	.271	.604
Within Groups	164.016	94	1.745		
Total	164.490	95			

7. MAJOR FINDINGS:

The chart 5.1 shows that 65% of the respondents belong to the age between 30-40 and 30% of the respondents are between 41 -60. From chart 5.3, majority (72%) of the respondents who prefer Sugar free biscuits are female. And the chart 5.4 shows that most of them fall into the income group ranging 51000 to 1 lakh.

The table 6.1 depicts that the F ratio is 0.271 for 1 degree of freedom, which is insignificant (p=0.604). So the hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, the researcher conclude that male and female have difference in preferring Sugar free biscuits

8. LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER SCOPE FOR RESEARCH

This study would help the industry to know the preference of Sugar free biscuits by the Chennai consumers, so that they can adopt proper marketing and distribution strategies. The study has certain limitations that it was restricted to Chennai city. The study is been confined to Sugar free biscuits preference; the research can be further extended to know the consumption pattern

9. SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

The more of advisement is done through word of mouth

after the Sugar free biscuits is been tasted by the people so, Marketers can tap on these areas and make the quality of the Sugar free biscuits more delicious and by which the share in market by marketers can zoom up

In today's world Diabetic patients and health conscious people go for branded products and the most preferred brand from the study happens to be Equal and Splenda. Diabetic patients and health conscious people like to consume Sugar free biscuits at anytime irrespective whether they are happy or distress. Sugar free biscuits occupy as the major part of gift for Diabetic patients and health conscious people in India. So it is clear that Diabetic patients and health conscious people are really interested in taking Sugar free biscuits. They spend a part of expenditure in buying Sugar free biscuits. Nowadays, doctors suggest taking Sugar free biscuits are good for maintaining the sugar level and it nourishes the energy of mind and body.

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