



Brand Preference For Mineral Water With Reference To Pollachi

* Dr. R. Ganapathi ** G. Murali Manokari

* Assistant Professor, Directorate of Distance Education, Alagappa University, Karaikudi

** Assistant Professor in Management Studies, Nehru Institute of Engineering and Technology, Coimbatore

ABSTRACT

Mineral water is water containing minerals or other dissolved substances that alter its taste or give it therapeutic value. Salts, sulphur compounds, and gases are among the substances that can be dissolved in the water. Mineral water can often be effervescent. Mineral water can be prepared or can occur naturally. Traditionally mineral waters would be used or consumed at their source, often referred to as taking the waters or taking the cure and such sites were referred to as spas, baths or wells. Water is necessary for our body to digest and absorb vitamins and nutrients. It also detoxifies the liver and kidneys, and carries away waste from the body. And when it comes to digestion . . . it's just not happening without water. Fiber alone cannot aid proper digestive function by itself. In fact, without water as its partner, good fiber goes bad, causing constipation and extreme discomfort. Simple water -- when it's pure and free of contaminants -- is truly a "wonder drug". Taking eight glasses of natural or pure water without additives, can keep a person very healthy. Today mineral water is a ubiquitous product and consumers prefer mineral water over any other form of water. With this spurt in demand and growing awareness, the number of brands of mineral water available in the market has increased manifold. This study aims at finding out the brand preference for mineral water with respect to the consumers in Pollachi.

Keywords :

INTRODUCTION

Mineral water is water containing minerals or other dissolved substances that alter its taste or give it therapeutic value. Salts, sulphur compounds, and gases are among the substances that can be dissolved in the water. Mineral water can often be effervescent. Mineral water can be prepared or can occur naturally. Traditionally mineral waters would be used or consumed at their source, often referred to as taking the waters or taking the cure and such sites were referred to as spas, baths or wells. Spa would be used when the water was consumed and bathed in, both when the water was not generally consumed and well when the water was not generally bathed in. Often an active tourist center would grow up around a mineral water site (even in ancient times). Such tourist development resulted in spa towns and hydropathic hotels (often shortened to Hydros). In modern times, it is far more common for mineral waters to be bottled at source for distributed consumption. Traveling to the mineral water site for direct access to the water is now uncommon and in many cases not possible (because of exclusive commercial ownership rights). There are over 3000 brands of mineral water available commercially worldwide. Considering the increasing usage and importance of mineral water, this study is made.

ABOUT MINERAL WATER

Some nutritionists insist that 80% of the country is walking around dehydrated. We drink too much coffee, tea, and sodas containing caffeine, which prompts the body to lose water. More troubling is the fact that when we are dehydrated, we don't know what to drink. Water is pure liquid refreshment and accounts for a large percentage of what make each of us "human." The average 150 lb. adult body contains 40 to 50 quarts of water. Almost 2/3rds of our body weighted is "water weighted":

- * Blood is 83% water
- * Muscles are 75% water
- * The brain is 74% water

- * Bone is 22% water

Water is necessary for our body to digest and absorb vitamins and nutrients. It also detoxifies the liver and kidneys, and carries away waste from the body. And when it comes to digestion . . . it's just not happening without water. Fiber alone cannot aid proper digestive function by itself. In fact, without water as its partner, good fiber goes bad, causing constipation and extreme discomfort.

If we are dehydrated, our blood is literally thicker, and our body has to work much harder to cause it to circulate. As a result, the brain becomes less active, it's hard to concentrate, our body feels fatigued, and we just "poop out."

Water - The Miracle Worker

Simple water -- when it's pure and free of contaminants -- is truly a "wonder drug." Without chemicals, additives, or anything unnatural, a steady dose of 8 glasses of water a day (ideally ½ your body weighted in ounces of water) will:

- * Improve your energy
- * increase your mental and physical performance
- * remove toxins & waste products from your body
- * keep skin healthy and glowing
- * help you lose weight
- * reduce headaches and dizziness
- * allow for proper digestion
- * help to keep you more alkaline and
- * drinking water is heart-healthy

The findings of a six-year study of more than 20,000 healthy men and women aged 38 -100 in the May 1, 2002 American Journal of Epidemiologist found that women who drank more than five glasses of water a day were 41% less likely to die from a heart attack during the study period than those who drank less than two glasses. The protective effect of water

was even greater in men.

Drinking Water and Weighted Loss

Water is a natural appetite suppressant, so developing a good water drinking habit can be a long-term aid in achieving and maintaining a healthy weighted body. Doctor F. Batmanghelidj, M.D, author of "Your Body's Many Cries For Water" says most times our "hunger" is our body asking for water – not food.

It's also important to remember that when the body is dehydrated, fat cells get "rubbery" and cannot be easily metabolized. This means that it's harder to lose when we don't drink water.

Water is especially important for pregnant women and nursing mothers. For athletes and workout fanatics, drinking water reduces cardiovascular stress and improves performance. And since water reduces body temperature, it makes the whole exercise process safer and more effective.

Water is also an important "healing tool" for people with a history of kidney stones. Since water dissolves calcium in the urine, drinking at least 8 glasses daily reduces the risk of stone formation. Drinking water is also valuable in preventing urinary tract infections in both men and for women, flushing impurities out of the system.

When our body is hydrated, drainage from allergies and colds do not stick and collect in our throat and lungs, and our cough is more "productive". Even cold sores that appear on the lips are minimized by drinking water because those eruptions tend to favor dry areas on the body.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following are the specific objectives of the study.

1. To know the profile of mineral water users.
2. To find the fast moving brand of mineral water in Pollachi town.
3. To evaluate the factors influencing in buying mineral water.
4. To understand customers preference and satisfaction towards various brands and
5. To analyze the brand loyalty of customers.

HYPOTHESES

To analyze the association between various factors, the following hypotheses have been framed.

1. There exists no association between age and frequency of consumption of mineral water and
2. There exists no association between family income and amount spent for mineral water.

METHODOLOGY

A total of 150 respondents are contacted. Simple random sampling method is used to identify the sample respondents. The respondents from Pollachi town are selected for the study. The data used in this study is primary data. Questionnaire is used for data collection. A pilot study was undertaken. The data collected from the period of November 2011 to February 2012. The data collected is analyzed with the help of statistical tools such as, Simple percentage, Weighted Average, and Chi-square test. Along with these statistical tools, tables are used for understanding facts of the research study at a glance.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. Some of the respondents answered in hurry so this leads to bias in the response.
2. Less educated people find difficult to answer the questions.
3. Time and cost is major constraint, which limits the scope of the study.

4. The study is confined only to Pollachi town, so care should be taken in extending the results to other areas and

5. The data used in this study is primary data and hence all the limitations of primary data are applicable to this study.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The results of the analysis of the collected data are presented below:

**TABLE 1
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BASED ON GENDER**

Sl. No.	GENDER	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Male	72	48
2.	Female	78	52
	TOTAL	150	100

Out of 150 respondents, 72 (48%) respondents are male and 78 (52%) respondents are female. Both male and female respondents are equally distributed.

**TABLE 2
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BASED ON AGE**

Sl. No.	AGE GROUP	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Below 30 years	85	57
2.	30 to 45 years	55	36
3.	Above 45 years	10	7
	TOTAL	150	100

Out of 150 respondents, 85 (57%) respondents belongs to age group below 30 years, 55 (36%) respondents belongs to the category of age between 30 and 45 years and 10 (seven percentage) respondents belongs to age above 45 years. Majority (57%) of the respondents are youngsters whose age is below 30 years.

**Table 3
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BASED ON AREA OF RESIDENCE**

Sl. No.	AREA OF RESIDENCE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Rural	74	49
2.	Urban	76	51
	TOTAL	150	100

Out of 150 respondents, 74 (49%) respondents belongs to rural area and 76 (51%) respondents belongs to urban area of residence. Both rural and urban respondents are equally distributed.

**Table 4
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BASED ON MARTIAL STATUS**

Sl. No.	MARTIAL STATUS	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Married	76	51
2.	Un married	74	49
	TOTAL	150	100

Out of 150 respondents, 76 (51%) respondents are married. 74 (49%) respondents are unmarried. Both married and unmarried respondents are equally distributed.

**Table 5
RESPONDENTS BASED ON EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION**

Sl. No.	EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	School Level	29	19
2.	Graduate	87	58
3.	Professional	27	18
4.	Others	7	5
	TOTAL	150	100

Out of 150 respondents, 29 (19%) respondents are educated till School Level, 87 (58%) are graduates, 27 (18%) respondents are professionals, the remaining 7 (5%) respondents belong to other categories like diploma holders, those completed teacher training courses etc. Majority (58%) of the respondents are graduates.

Table 6
RESPONDENTS BASED ON OCCUPATION

Sl. No.	OCCUPATION	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Student	35	23
2.	Employee	63	42
3.	Business	29	20
4.	Others	23	15
	TOTAL	150	100

Out of 150 respondents, 35 (23%) respondents are students, 63 (42%) respondents are employees, 29 (20%) respondents are businessmen and 23 (15%) respondents belongs to others category like house wives, advocates etc. Majority (42%) of the respondents are employees.

TABLE 7
RESPONDENTS BASED ON MONTHLY FAMILY INCOME

Sl. No.	FAMILY INCOME	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Below Rs.5,000	29	19
2.	Rs.5,000 to Rs.15,000	82	55
3.	Above Rs.15,000	39	26
	TOTAL	150	100

Out of 150 respondents, 29 (19%) respondents belong to income group below Rs.5,000. 82 (55%) respondents belongs to income group between Rs.5,000 and Rs.15,000. 39 (26%) respondents are with monthly family income above Rs.15,000. Majority (55%) of respondents belongs to middle income group with monthly family income ranging between Rs.5,000 and Rs.15,000.

Table 11
Ranking of factors in buying mineral water

Rank	Weighted	PURITY		PRICE		TASTE		BRAND		QUALITY	
		No. of Respondents	Score	No. of Respondents	Score	No. of Respondents	Score	No. of Respondents	Score	No. of Respondents	Score
1	5	62	310	10	50	32	160	16	50	21	105
2	4	28	112	36	144	73	292	52	208	32	128
3	3	33	99	23	69	8	24	28	84	64	192
4	2	6	12	47	94	14	28	22	44	23	46
5	1	21	21	34	34	23	23	32	32	10	10
	Weighted Score	150	554	150	391	150	527	150	448	150	481
	Weighted Average		110.8		78.2		105.4		89.6		96.2
	Rank		I		V		II		IV		III

Among the various factors considered in buying mineral water, purity stands first with a weighted average of 110.8, taste stands second with a weighted average of 105.4. Quality occupies the 3rd Rank with a weighted average of 96.2. The fourth place is occupied by brand with weighted average of 89.6 and the last Rank is held by price with the weighted average of 78.2.

Table 12
AMOUNT SPENT FOR MINERAL WATER PER MONTH

Sl. No.	AMOUNT SPENT	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Below Rs.100	57	38
2.	Rs.100 to Rs.500	35	23
3.	Above Rs.500	58	39
	TOTAL	150	100

Table 8
REASONS FOR DRINKING MINERAL WATER

Sl. No.	REASONS	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Health care	107	71
2.	Prestige issue	15	10
3.	Both	23	16
4.	Others	5	3
	TOTAL	150	100

Among 150 respondents, 107 (71%) said that they respondents drink mineral water for health, 15 (10%) of them prefer mineral water for prestige issue, 23 (16%) of them use it for both health care and prestige issue, the remaining, 5 (3%) of them have various other reasons. The reason for maximum of the respondents (71%) to consume mineral water was health care.

TABLE 9
PLACE OF CONSUMPTION OF MINERAL WATER

Sl. No.	PLACE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	House	25	17
2.	Place of work	40	27
3.	Out of station	85	56
	TOTAL	150	100

Among 150 respondents, 25 (17%) respondents consumer mineral water in house very often, 40 (27%) respondents use in place of work, and 85 (56%) respondents, use the mineral water when out of station. Majority (56%) of the respondents use mineral water very often only when they go out of station.

Table 10
FREQUENCY OF CONSUMING MINERAL WATER

Sl. No.	FREQUENCY	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Regular	60	40
2.	Occasional	90	60
	TOTAL	150	100

Among 150 respondents, 60 (40%) respondents are regular consumers of mineral water and 90 (60%) respondents are occasional consumers of mineral water. More number of respondents (60%) are consuming mineral water occasionally.

The respondents who spend below Rs.100 per month for mineral water comes around 38%, 23% of respondents spend between Rs.100 and Rs.500 per month. For buying mineral water, 39% of respondents spend above Rs.500 per month for buying mineral water. Majority of the respondents spending behaviour ranges between two extremes-one those who spend below Rs.100 and the other are those who spend above Rs.500 per month for buying mineral water.

TABLE 13
BRAND CONSUMED BY SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

Sl. No.	BRAND	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Bisleri	56	38
2.	Aquafina	44	29
3.	Sabot	13	9
4.	Siruvani	17	11
5.	Kinley	15	10

6.	Others	5	3
	TOTAL	150	100

Among 150 respondents, 56 (38%) respondents are using Bisleri, 44 (29%) respondents are using Aquafina, 13 (9%) respondents are using Sabol, 17 (11%) respondents are using Siruvani, 15 (10%) of the respondents are using Kinley, 5 (3%) respondents are using other brands like ARC, Surya, etc. Majority (38%) of the respondents are consumers of Bisleri mineral water.

Table 14
SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE BRAND

Sl. No.	SOURCE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Advertisement	63	42
2.	Friends	61	41
3.	Agents	16	10
4.	Others	10	7
	TOTAL	150	100

Among 150 respondents, 63 (42%) respondents came to know about their brand through advertisement, 61(41%) respondents known their brands through friends, 16 (10%) respondents know their brands through agents and 10 (7%) respondents know about their brand through other sources. Majority (83%) of the respondents come to know about their brand through advertisements and friends.

Table 15
BRAND EASILY AVAILABLE IN THEIR AREA

Sl. No.	BRAND	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Bisleri	50	33
2.	Aquafina	44	29
3.	Sabol	16	11
4.	Siruvani	23	15
5.	Kinley	13	9
6.	Others	4	3
	TOTAL	150	100

Around 33% of respondents said that Bisleri is easy available in their area, 29% respondents said that Aquafina, 11% of them said Sabol, 15% of them said Siruvani, nine percentage of them said Kinley and nine percentage of them said other brands like ARC, Soorya, king fisher etc. are the easily available brands in their area. This reveals that Bisleri is one of the easily available brand and next easily available brand is Aquafina.

TABLE 16
REASONS FOR BUYING THEIR BRAND

Sl. No.	REASONS	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Quality	48	32
2.	Price	25	17
3.	Brand name	26	17
4.	Availability	43	29
5.	Others	8	5
	TOTAL	150	100

Around 32% of respondents said that quality is the reason for buying the particular brand, 17% of them as price, 17% of them as brand name, 29% of them as availability and remaining (five percentage) of them has other reasons like taste, goodwill etc. for buying the particular brand. Quality is considered as the first reason and it is followed by availability as the important reason for buying the specific brand.

Table 17
RANKING OF BRAND OF THEIR PREFERENCE

Rank	Weight	BISLERI		SABOL		SIRUVANI		AQUAFINA		KINLEY	
		No. of Respondents	Score	No. of Respondents	Score	No. of Respondents	Score	No. of Respondents	Score	No. of Respondents	Score
1	5	62	310	28	140	30	150	48	240	39	192
2	4	23	92	22	88	23	92	23	92	63	252
3	3	32	96	7	21	27	81	34	102	12	36
4	2	13	26	26	52	42	84	28	56	20	40
5	1	20	20	67	67	28	28	17	17	16	16
Weighted Score		544		368		435		507		539	
Weighted average		108.8		73.6		87		101.4		107.8	
Rank		I		V		IV		III		II	

Bisleri is ranked as most preferred brand with the weighted average of 108.8, Kinley stands second with the weighted average of 107.8, Aquafina occupies the third place with the weighted average of 101.4. The fourth preferred brand is Siruvani with weighted average of 87 and the last preferred brand is Sabol with the weighted average of 73.6.

AGE AND CONSUMPTION OF MINERAL WATER

To find the association between age and consumption of mineral water, the following null hypothesis is framed.

H₀: There exists no association between age and consumption of mineral water.

TABLE 18
AGE AND CONSUMPTION OF MINERAL WATER

AGE	REGULAR	OCCASIONAL	TOTAL
Below 30 years	38 (45%)	47 (55%)	85
30 to 45 years	26 (47%)	29 (53%)	55
Above 45 years	3 (30%)	7 (70%)	10
TOTAL	67	83	150

Degrees of freedom = 2, Calculated c² value = 1.44
Table value: 5% level = 5.991

Among 150 respondents, 85 are below age of 30. Among them, 38 (45%) respondents are consuming mineral water regularly, and 47 (55%) respondents consume occasionally. Among 150 respondents, 55 are of age between 30 and 45 among them, 26 (47%) respondents are consuming mineral water regularly and 29 (53%) respondents consume occasionally. Among 150 respondents 10 are of age above 45 years. Among them 3 (30%) respondents are consuming mineral water regularly and 7 (70%) respondents consume occasionally. As the calculated c² value is less than the table value at five percent level of significance, it is inferred that there is significant association between age and consumption of mineral water.

INCOME AND AMOUNT SPENT FOR MINERAL WATER

To find the association between family income and amount spent for mineral water, the following null hypothesis is framed.

H₀: There is no association between family income and amount spent for mineral water.

TABLE 19
FAMILY INCOME AND AMOUNT SPENT FOR MINERAL WATER

FAMILY INCOME	Below Rs.100	Rs.100 – Rs.500	Above Rs.500	TOTAL
Below Rs.5,000	10 (33%)	7 (24%)	13 (43%)	30
Rs.5,000 to Rs.15,000	9 (41%)	7 (30%)	7 (30%)	22
Above Rs.15,000	38 (39%)	40 (41%)	20 (20%)	98
TOTAL	57	53	40	150

Degrees of freedom: 2 Calculated c² value: 2.88

Table value 5% levels: 13.277

Among 150 respondents, 30 respondents monthly family income is Rs.5000, them 10 (33%) respondents are spent below Rs.100, seven (24%) respondents family income is Rs.5000 to 15000 and 13 (43%) respondents monthly family income is above Rs.45000 they spend above Rs.500. Among 150 respondents, 22 respondents monthly family income is Rs.5000 to 15000. Among them nine (41%) respondents are spent below Rs.100, seven (30) respondents spent Rs.100 to 500, seven (30%) respondents spent above Rs.500. Among 150 respondents, 98 respondents monthly family income is Rs.5000 among them 38 (39%) respondents are spent below Rs.100, 40 (41%) respondents are spent Rs.100 to 500, 20 (20%) respondents are spend above Rs.500. As the calculated c2 value is less than the table value at five percent level of significant it is inferred that significant association between family income and amount spent for mineral water.

SUGGESTIONS

1. The mineral water companies should convert the occasional users in to regular users.
2. Companies should increase the usage of mineral water in houses and in place of work.
3. Percentage of respondent's aware about the advertisement is very less. So effective advertisement should be made to attract the customers towards their brand.
4. The companies should take measures to teach their customers to identify the duplicate brands.

5. Steps should be taken to create brand loyalty among customers.
6. Further the distribution channels must be improved to increase the availability of more brands in maximum places and
7. The mineral water sales can be increased to a great extent by promoting the usage of mini bottles of 200ml etc. for use in family functions, business meetings, informal parties and the like.

CONCLUSION

There is a paradigm shift in the usage pattern of mineral water. The previous notion of mineral water meant for high-class people is now changed. The increasing importance for health care among all classes of people irrespective of the economy and social status has made the mineral water as one of the product consumed in day-to-day life without any discrimination. Though there is an increasing awareness among the public about the importance of mineral water for health aspects more occasional users are yet to be converted in to regular users and more non-users should be converted into users. The choice of brands is limited in many small towns and villages. Attractive advertisements, increasing brand loyalty and enhancing the number and standard of marketing channels will help to tap the potential market.