Abstract

The juice market in India is witnessing a plethora of activity. With the focus on a healthy diet, there has been an increase in demand for fresh fruit juices. According to data by Euro monitor, the soft drinks category in India shows trade volumes grow at a CAGR of around 18.04 percent from 2007 onwards to reach around 9.98 billion litres by 2013. In terms of market shares, Dabur’s Real and Pepsi’s Tropicana dominate the 100 percent juice category with market shares of 48.3 percent and 42.8 percent respectively (Euro monitor). The appearance plays an important role in influencing consumer perception and subsequent acceptance of the product. These trends are showing that there will be a healthy competition in juice market in India. Hence apart from the marketing strategies like targeting, distribution, segmenting and packaging, it is imperative to analyse the demand by finding the consumer perception towards Minute Maid Pulpy Orange and the level of acceptance for the product.

The primary objective of the study is to find out whether Minute Maid Pulpy Orange is recognized in the districts of Puducherry. The research design employed for the present study is confined to Puducherry as it enjoys the minimum area with moderate population. A sample of 400 people was selected at random in a span of 45 days across cities in Puducherry. An open ended questionnaire was admitted to the samples to record the opinion of people and their perceptions towards the product. The likes and dislikes of the product were recorded against the socio economic characters like age, gender, price and preference of taste and flavour. The analysis from the study concludes that Price was the major hindrance for consumers in Puducherry, who were willing to increase their frequency. Also it is understood that the advertisement should be more focused towards differentiating qualities like pulp, health conscious and taste. The present study elaborates the consumer perception towards Minute Maid Pulpy Orange and concludes that quality and safety are central issues in today’s food economics.

Keywords
FMCG, Consumer Perception, Customer - Centric Strategies, Healthy Diet

I. Introduction

Fruit juice consumption has shown steady growth in recent years. The rising consumption of packaged products reflects the demand for the organized juice market. Indian consumers are becoming aware regarding the health benefits associated with products such as juice. In addition, the rising disposable income driven by a developing economy is allowing individuals to meet their nutritional requirements through products. Furthermore, the growth in modern retail has allowed consumers access to a wide variety of products manufactured by a whole host of players. The availability of such products has created strong opportunity for players to capitalize upon by catering to a larger audience. The market has observed some challenges which include price rise, existing perception against packaged juice as well as the lack of variation and fluctuation in quality.

“Think local, act local”, is the mantra that Coca-Cola follows, with punch lines like “Life ho to aisi” for Urban India and “Thanda Matlab Coca-Cola” for Rural India. This resulted in a 37 percent growth rate in rural India as against 24 percent growth seen in urban India. Between 2001 and 2003, the per capita consumption of cold drinks doubled due to the launch of the new packaging of 200 ml returnable glass bottles which were made available at a price of Rs.5 per bottle. This new market accounted for over 80 percent of India’s new Coca-Cola drinkers. At Coca-Cola, they have a long standing belief that everyone who touches their business should benefit, thereby inducing them to uphold these values, enabling the Company to achieve success, recognition and loyalty worldwide.

In the rapid growth of juice industry, the company in order to strengthen its diversified product portfolio and to provide more choice to consumers, Coca-Cola very recently launched Minute Maid Pulpy Orange that eliminated 80 percent of the water content in orange to form a frozen concentrates. The product was thereby branded ‘Minute Maid’, a name signifying the convenience and the ease of preparation i.e. the drink could be prepared in just about a minute. The positive in Minute Maid Pulpy Orange (MMPO) is that, it has no added preservatives or added color. The product is available in Apple, Grape as well as Orange flavours. Innovative consumer proposition of Minute Maid 100 percent juice is best explained by the brand’s tagline ‘Life ka Ras’.

The product is aimed to further extend the leadership of Coca-Cola in India in the fresh juice drink category. Apart from this the consumer perception and the acceptance of the product plays a major role in increasing the demand and sales of the product. Hence this study attempts to find out the consumer perception and acceptance of Minute Maid Pulpy Orange.

II. Background of the Study

Coca-Cola’s market movements provide valuable indications on the overall trends. It does seem that the 100 percent juice category is one where players perceive a lot of potential ostensibly because of the ‘pure’ proposition, and Coca-Cola’s launch of Minute Maid Pulpy Orange demonstrates the potential and health conscious of people. Coca-Cola system has the highest standards and processes for ensuring consistent product safety and quality. The appearance plays an important role in influencing consumer perception and subsequent acceptance of the product. These trends are showing that there will be a healthy competition in juice market in India. Hence apart from the marketing strategies like segmenting, targeting, distribution and packaging, it is imperative to analyse the demand by finding the consumer perception towards Minute Maid Pulpy Orange and the level of acceptance for the product in Puducherry.

III. Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of the study is

• To find out consumer awareness about Minute Maid Pulpy Orange in Puducherry
• To understand consumer perception towards the product
• To estimate the level of acceptance
IV. Statement of Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1
There is no significant relationship between age and awareness of the product

Hypothesis 2
There is no significant relationship between age and consumer perception towards the product

Hypothesis 3
There is no significant relationship between age and level of acceptance of the product.

V. Research Methodology
The research design employed for the present study is confined to Puducherry as it enjoys the minimum area with moderate population. A sample of 400 people was selected at random in a span of 45 days across cities in Puducherry. Primary data collection method was used which involved direct interaction with customers. Observations were made while asking open ended questions in interviews. Questionnaires recorded opinions of people and their perceptions towards the product. The likes and dislikes of the product were recorded against the socio economic characters like age, gender, price and preference of taste and flavour.

VI. Analysis and Interpretation
The analysis was carried out in two stages. In the first stage, convenient sampling was done to collect the data from households. A close ended questionnaire was developed and was administered to 400 households to find out the consumer awareness and the perception towards the Minute Maid Pulpy Orange Product. The data was analysed with mean scores to find the awareness between Age and different types of juice available in the market. In the second stage, single factor ANOVA was used to analyse the variations between age and other variables like taste, price, preference towards fruit juice and pulp. Finally, the acceptance of the product were analysed based on factors like price, packaging, availability and quality

Hypothesis 1
There is no significant relationship between age and awareness of the product

Table 1 elaborates about the awareness of the product with respect to age and willingness to drink fruit juice. Out of the 400 households, 343 tasted fruit juice of which 231 not tasted Minute maid pulpy orange. It is observed from the survey that there is a large proportion of intake of juice between the age group 15 to 35. Also it is interesting to note that out of the 279 households between the age of 15-45, 210 tasted MMPO and conveyed that MMPO control thirst. It is obvious from the mean scores that most of the people who drink fruit juice ever tasted MMPO which indicates that there is an easy way of conversion of the people from unorganized fruit juice to organized fruit juice. It is clear from F test that there is no age limit in knowing about the type of fruit juices existing in the market. Therefore, hypothesis ‘there is no significant relationship between age and awareness of the product’ is accepted.

Hypothesis 2
There is no significant relationship between age and the consumer perception towards the product

Table 2: Single Factor ANOVA Test for Consumer Perception

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Var. 2</th>
<th>Var. 1</th>
<th>Taste</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Preference towards fruit juice</th>
<th>Preference towards Pulp</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F test</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>8.4636</td>
<td>4.9128</td>
<td>12.3751</td>
<td>8.7977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P value</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.0037</td>
<td>0.00044</td>
<td>0.0007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 discusses the consumer perception towards the Minute Maid Pulpy Orange. Variables such as Taste, Price, and Preference towards fruit juice, Preference due to Pulp and brand were tested with respect to the age to know the consumer perception towards the product. The results from Table 2 indicate that between various variables there exists significant difference in the consumer perception towards the product. One-way ANOVA revealed a significant F value of 8.464, 4.9128, 12.375 and 8.7977 towards taste, price, preference towards fruit juice and preference towards Pulp respectively. Therefore Hypothesis 2 is rejected, as Consumer perception towards MMPO varies with taste, price preference towards fruit juice and towards the mango pulp.

Hypothesis 3
There is no significance relationship between age and level of acceptance of the product.

Table: 3 Consumers Acceptance of MMPO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Can’t say</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Package</td>
<td>87 123 111 52 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability</td>
<td>104 165 73 43 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulp taste</td>
<td>67 143 87 77 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>93 137 92 26 52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>93.67 109.83 68.5 42.33 21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance</td>
<td>4596.667 3423.36 1512.7 625.067 320.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F value</td>
<td>3.741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-value</td>
<td>0.0161</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is important to find out the level of acceptance of the product whenever a new product is launched. Five point Likert scale was used to find out the level of acceptance of the product. From Table 3, packaging and the availability of the product scores the maximum with that of price and pulp taste. Majority of people in Puducherry are of the opinion that Minute maid pulpy orange is slightly overpriced. They believe that price is an important factor while purchasing such juices. Also they would be more than willing to purchase such juices on a regular basis if the price was slightly brought down. It is observed when compared to other products; 250ml pack is very good which is adequate to quench the thirst at one point of time for a single person. As quality is the main criterion concerning food products, Pulpy orange scores good in the acceptance of the product. One way ANOVA revealed a significant F-value of 3.741. From the variance values, it is evident that the MMPO scores a good score of 4596.67 which shows that most of people accepted the product. Therefore Hypothesis 3 of ‘no significance relationship between age and level of acceptance of the product’ is rejected. It is found that price, taste, package, availability of product and quality determines the acceptance of the product.

Conclusion and Suggestions
Price was a major hindrance for people in Puducherry, who were willing to increase their frequency of purchase of Minute Maid Pulpy Orange. It is evident from the study that advertisements regarding the product focuses more on fresh juice but fails to address qualities like pulp. Moreover the target customers should be clearly defined as health conscious, so that more people can be convinced to purchase the product. The present study elaborates the consumer perception towards Minute Maid Pulpy Orange. It concludes that quality and safety are central issues in today’s food economics. The study also briefly discusses many factors that affect the perception process and the significance of food product development in the food industry. It concludes that smaller packs should be introduced for smaller towns. The economic logic behind the launch of MMPO is to find the more number of markets of Fruit Juices in India. In nutshell, Coca cola should consider targeting customers from by converting the unbranded fruit juice market into branded juice thereby increasing its growth rate. It had created a different identity compared to that of other brands of products.

References