

Relationship Between Source Of Awareness And Consumer Awareness On Purchasing Drinking Water – An Analysis

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Abstract

The research paper aimed to delve into the nuances of consumer awareness regarding packaged and unpackaged drinking water in Ramanathapuram District while examining the correlation between various sources of awareness and purchasing behavior. Utilizing ANOVA and Pearson Correlation, the study uncovered those consumers generally exhibited higher awareness levels concerning unpackaged water, showing better understanding and adherence to scientific guidelines. Notably, the study highlighted the significant influence of diverse awareness sources, such as recommendations from relatives, television advertisements, and online platforms, on consumer perceptions and purchasing habits. These findings underscore the necessity for tailored marketing strategies that capitalize on influential channels to promote safe and sustainable drinking water practices. Moreover, the research recommends enhancing consumer education initiatives to foster informed decision-making and emphasizes the importance of considering multiple awareness sources when designing marketing campaigns. Overall, the study provides valuable insights into consumer behavior surrounding drinking water purchase in Ramanathapuram District, advocating for continuous efforts to ensure consumer well-being and environmental sustainability. The present paper is showing few reviews that are explore into consumer behavior concerning packaged drinking water, drawing insights from a range of studies spanning various regions and demographics. It discusses the significance of consumer awareness, preferences, and satisfaction, influenced by factors like advertising, brand loyalty, and perceived benefits. Additionally, it highlights the role of packaging type, health concerns, quality perception, market trends, and environmental implications in shaping consumer choices. While existing literature provides valuable insights, there's a need for further exploration of socio-economic and cultural influences on consumer choices, along with deeper analysis of the bottled water industry's environmental sustainability. The study concluded that the need for tailored marketing strategies that leverage key sources of consumer awareness to promote safe and sustainable drinking water practices. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of ongoing consumer education initiatives aimed at enhancing awareness and fostering informed decision-making among consumers.

Keywords: Consumer awareness; Packaged and Unpackaged drinking water; and Purchasing behavior

Introduction

Consumer awareness on packaged and unpackaged drinking water refers to the extent to which individuals are knowledgeable about the differences, qualities, and safety considerations associated with both types of water. It encompasses understanding factors such as the source, purification methods, health implications, storage requirements, price variations, and environmental impact of packaged and unpackaged drinking water. Consumer awareness includes being informed about the benefits and drawbacks of each option, adhering to scientific guidelines for consumption, checking labels, and considering factors like brand reputation and vendor credibility when making purchasing decisions. Consumer behavior regarding drinking water, particularly the choice between packaged and unpackaged options, is influenced by various factors including awareness, preferences, and external stimuli such as advertising. This study aims to explore the differences in consumer awareness of packaged and unpackaged drinking water in Ramanathapuram District and investigate the correlation between consumer awareness sources and their purchasing behavior. By examining these aspects, the research seeks to provide valuable insights into consumer decision-making processes in the context of drinking water purchase.

Review of literature

The literature presents a comprehensive examination of consumer behavior regarding packaged drinking water, spanning various regions and demographics. Studies by Senthil Kumar (2002), Karthikeyan & Surya Vardhan (2012), Narasimha Rao et al. (2019), Selvi (2017), Selvam & Saranya (2019), and Sunil Kumar Dhal & Kausik Mitra (2015) underscore the significance of consumer awareness, preferences, and satisfaction, influenced by factors like advertising,

brand loyalty, and perceived benefits. Additionally, research by Karthikeyan & Surya Vardhan (2012) emphasizes the role of packaging type in consumer convenience and preferences. Health concerns and quality perception also emerge as crucial factors affecting consumer choices, as highlighted in studies by Mirajul Haq, Usman Mustafa, & Iftikhar Ahmad (2001), Morton & Mahler (2011), Narasimha Rao et al. (2019), Selvi (2017), and Selvam & Saranya (2019). Furthermore, investigations by Deepah et al. (2005), Louis Alphonse & Rajangam (2020), Quazi Md. Kamran (2020), Vanitha (2017), and Bidhu Bhusan Mishra & Shoven Mohanty (2018) offer insights into market trends, industry dynamics, and consumer behavior, contributing to a nuanced understanding of the packaged drinking water market. However, there is a notable gap in exploring the socio-economic and cultural influences on consumer choices comprehensively, as well as a lack of in-depth analysis on the environmental implications and sustainability of the bottled water industry, suggesting avenues for future research.

Objective

The present research paper is focusing and investigating on the following two objectives: such as

1. To explore the difference between source of awareness of consumer and their awareness on packaged and unpackaged drinking water in Ramanathapuram District.
2. To investigate the correlation between consumer awareness sources and their purchasing behavior regarding drinking water in Ramanathapuram District.

Statistical tools for the analysis

researcher as adopted the ANOVA for exploring the difference between source of awareness of consumer and their awareness on drinking water in Ramanathapuram District; the researcher has used the Pearson Correlation to investigate the correlation between consumer awareness sources and their purchasing behavior regarding drinking water in Ramanathapuram District.

Table No.1 Consumer Awareness on Packaged and Unpackaged Drinking Water

Consumer Awareness on Packaged and Unpackaged Drinking Water	Type of Drinking water purchasing frequently		Total
	Packaged Drinking Water	Unpackaged Drinking Water	
Has a thorough understanding of both packaged and unpackaged drinking water.	3.05	3.17	3.15
Consistently follows scientific guidelines for consuming both types of water.	2.92	3.10	3.07
Always checks labels on packaged drinking water before consumption.	3.12	2.98	3.01
Samples unpackaged drinking water before purchasing.	2.81	3.03	2.99
Shows interest in details about the company and vendor for both types of water.	2.86	3.18	3.12
Inquires about or verifies customer care websites and contact numbers during purchase.	3.18	3.06	3.08
Aware of ideal consumption periods.	3.22	3.11	3.13
Knows that packaged water undergoes processing (micron-filtering, RO, UV treatment, ozonation) while unpackaged water is simply purified.	2.84	3.11	3.06
Understands that packaged water needs cool, hygienic storage, while unpackaged water needs hygienic storage.	2.85	3.16	3.10
Aware that packaged water should be protected from sunlight and heat to prevent harmful reactions, while unpackaged water is safe in suitable containers.	3.07	3.09	3.08
Understands that packaged water has price barcoding for wholesale pricing in stores, while unpackaged water pricing varies with market demand.	3.08	3.15	3.14
Recognizes the importance of environmental messages like "crush the bottle after use" for packaged water, with no equivalent for unpackaged water.	2.73	3.09	3.02
Average	2.98	3.10	3.08

Source: Primary Data

The results indicate that, on average, consumers in Ramanathapuram District show slightly higher awareness levels regarding unpackaged drinking water compared to packaged drinking water. Specifically, consumers tend to have a better understanding of unpackaged water, consistently follow scientific guidelines for its consumption, and express more interest in details about the company and vendor for unpackaged water. However, they are equally aware of the ideal consumption periods for both types of water. Interestingly, while consumers are more aware of the need for cool, hygienic storage for unpackaged water, they are equally aware of the need to protect packaged water from sunlight and heat. Additionally, consumers are slightly more aware of the price barcoding system for packaged water compared to

the varying pricing of unpackaged water based on market demand. Overall, consumers show a higher average awareness level for unpackaged drinking water compared to packaged drinking water in Ramanathapuram District.

Table No. 2 Consumer Awareness on Packaged and Unpackaged Drinking Water in Ramanathapuram District (Cross Tabulation)

Consumer awareness on drinking water	Type of Drinking water purchasing frequently		Total
	Packaged Drinking Water	Unpackaged Drinking Water	
Not Very High	16 (18.8)	62 (16.5)	78 (17.0)
Not High	28 (32.9)	92 (24.5)	120 (26.1)
Neutral	12 (14.1)	85 (22.7)	97 (21.1)
High	25 (29.4)	110 (29.3)	135 (29.3)
Very High	4 (4.7)	26 (6.9)	30 (6.5)
Total	85 (100)	375 (100)	460 (100)

Source: Primary Data

The Table No.1, presents a cross-tabulation of consumer awareness levels and their purchasing behavior for packaged and unpackaged drinking water in Ramanathapuram District. Among consumers with "Not Very High Awareness," 16 (18.8%) frequently purchase packaged drinking water, while 62 (16.5%) opt for unpackaged water, totaling 78 individuals (17.0% of the sample). For those with "Not High Awareness," 28 consumers (32.9%) buy packaged water, compared to 92 (24.5%) who prefer unpackaged water, making up 120 consumers (26.1%). In the "Neutral Awareness" category, 12 consumers (14.1%) purchase packaged water, while 85 (22.7%) choose unpackaged water, summing up to 97 consumers (21.1%). Those with "High Awareness" show 25 (29.4%) purchasing packaged water and 110 (29.3%) opting for unpackaged, totaling 135 (29.3%). Finally, among those with "Very High Awareness," 4 (4.7%) prefer packaged water, and 26 (6.9%) choose unpackaged, adding up to 30 (6.5%). Overall, out of 460 respondents, 85 (18.5%) frequently purchase packaged drinking water, whereas 375 (81.5%) frequently purchase unpackaged drinking water. This distribution indicates that most consumers, regardless of their awareness level, tend to purchase unpackaged drinking water more frequently than packaged drinking water.

Table No. 3 Source of Awareness and Their Level of Perception on Consumer Awareness on Drinking Water Purchase (Mean)

Source of awareness	Level of perception	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Suggestions from relatives and friends	Not Very High	78	2.12	1.128	.128	1.86	2.37
	Not High	120	2.29	1.170	.107	2.08	2.50
	Neutral	97	3.15	1.253	.127	2.90	3.41
	High	135	3.73	1.187	.102	3.52	3.93
	Very High	30	4.27	1.413	.258	3.74	4.79
	Total	460	2.99	1.401	.065	2.87	3.12
Television advertisements	Not Very High	78	2.22	1.180	.134	1.95	2.48
	Not High	120	2.50	1.237	.113	2.28	2.72
	Neutral	97	3.60	1.222	.124	3.35	3.84
	High	135	3.73	1.181	.102	3.52	3.93
	Very High	30	4.37	.928	.169	4.02	4.71
	Total	460	3.17	1.378	.064	3.04	3.29
Website and social media	Not Very High	78	1.92	.923	.104	1.72	2.13
	Not High	120	2.57	1.090	.100	2.37	2.76
	Neutral	97	3.15	1.130	.115	2.93	3.38
	High	135	3.72	1.291	.111	3.50	3.94
	Very High	30	4.20	1.270	.232	3.73	4.67
	Total	460	3.03	1.343	.063	2.90	3.15
Newspaper, Journals and Magazines	Not Very High	78	1.94	1.073	.122	1.69	2.18
	Not High	120	2.42	1.081	.099	2.22	2.61
	Neutral	97	3.18	1.208	.123	2.93	3.42
	High	135	3.71	1.257	.108	3.50	3.93
	Very High	30	4.53	.681	.124	4.28	4.79
	Total	460	3.01	1.372	.064	2.89	3.14
Agencies, retailers	Not Very High	78	2.05	1.092	.124	1.81	2.30

and Vendors	Not High	120	2.59	1.254	.114	2.37	2.82
	Neutral	97	3.49	1.292	.131	3.23	3.76
	High	135	3.91	1.187	.102	3.71	4.11
	Very High	30	4.30	1.208	.221	3.85	4.75
	Total	460	3.19	1.424	.066	3.06	3.32

Source: Computed Primary Data

Suggestions from relatives and friends: Consumers with a "Not Very High" level of perception have a mean score of 2.12, which increases steadily with higher levels of perception, reaching a mean of 4.27 for those with a "Very High" perception level. Overall, the total mean perception score for this source of awareness is 2.99. Television advertisements: Similar to suggestions from relatives and friends, perception levels increase as awareness levels rise. The mean perception score ranges from 2.22 for "Not Very High" to 4.37 for "Very High" perception levels, with a total mean perception score of 3.17. Website and social media: Perception levels show a similar trend across different awareness levels, with the mean perception score increasing from 1.92 for "Not Very High" to 4.20 for "Very High" perception levels. The total mean perception score for this source of awareness is 3.03. Newspaper, Journals, and Magazines: Perception levels increase steadily with awareness levels, ranging from a mean score of 1.94 for "Not Very High" to 4.53 for "Very High" perception levels. The total mean perception score for this source of awareness is 3.01. Agencies, retailers, and vendors: Consumers with higher awareness levels tend to have higher perception scores, ranging from 2.05 for "Not Very High" to 4.30 for "Very High" perception levels. The total mean perception score for this source of awareness is 3.19. Overall, perception levels increase with higher levels of awareness across all sources, indicating a positive correlation between awareness and perception of drinking water purchase in Ramanathapuram District. Table No. 3 illustrates the perception levels of consumers regarding purchasing drinking water, categorized by different sources of awareness in Ramanathapuram District. Across all sources, including suggestions from relatives and friends, television advertisements, website and social media, newspaper, journals, and magazines, as well as agencies, retailers, and vendors, perception levels ascend with increasing awareness. For instance, consumers with a "Very High" perception level tend to have substantially higher mean scores compared to those with "Not Very High" perception levels across all sources of awareness. The total mean perception scores for each source of awareness indicate an overall positive correlation between awareness and perception concerning the purchase of drinking water in the district.

Null Hypothesis

H₀: There are no significant differences among the sources of awareness and the consumer awareness on Awareness on Drinking Water Purchase.

Table No. 4 ANOVA on the Source of Awareness and Their Level of Perception on Consumer Awareness on Drinking Water Purchase

Sources of Awareness	ANOVA	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Suggestions from relatives and friends	Between Groups	242.821	4	60.705	41.967	.000
	Within Groups	658.160	455	1.447		
	Total	900.980	459			
Television advertisements	Between Groups	227.003	4	56.751	40.068	.000
	Within Groups	644.440	455	1.416		
	Total	871.443	459			
Website and social media	Between Groups	227.898	4	56.974	43.221	.000
	Within Groups	599.789	455	1.318		
	Total	827.687	459			
Newspaper, Journals and Magazines	Between Groups	270.855	4	67.714	51.950	.000
	Within Groups	593.067	455	1.303		
	Total	863.922	459			
Agencies, retailers and Vendors	Between Groups	260.278	4	65.070	44.171	.000
	Within Groups	670.267	455	1.473		
	Total	930.546	459			

Source: Computed Primary Data

The results of the ANOVA test on the source of awareness and their level of perception on consumer awareness regarding drinking water purchase reveal significant differences among the sources of awareness. The null hypothesis, which posits that there are no significant differences among the sources of awareness and consumer awareness on drinking water purchase, is rejected based on the obtained F-values and their associated p-values. Across all sources of awareness, including suggestions from relatives and friends, television advertisements, website and social media, newspaper, journals, and magazines, as well as agencies, retailers, and vendors, the F-values are statistically significant

at $p < 0.05$. This indicates that the sources of awareness significantly influence consumer awareness regarding drinking water purchase in Ramanathapuram District.

Null Hypothesis

H₀:2 There is no significant correlation between consumer awareness sources and their purchasing behavior regarding drinking water in Ramanathapuram District.

Table No. 5 Consumer Awareness on Drinking Water and Pearson Correlations

Consumer awareness on drinking water and Pearson Correlations		1	2	3	4	5
Consumer awareness on drinking water	P Correlation	1	.509**	.490**	.524**	.558**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	460	460	460	460	460
1. Suggestions from relatives and friends	P Correlation	.509**	1	.171**	.278**	.398**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	460	460	460	460	460
2. Television advertisements	P Correlation	.490**	.171**	1	.181**	.196**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	460	460	460	460	460
3. Website and social media	P Correlation	.524**	.278**	.181**	1	.291**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	460	460	460	460	460
4. Newspaper, Journals and Magazines	P Correlation	.558**	.398**	.196**	.291**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	460	460	460	460	460
5. Agencies, retailers and Vendors	P Correlation	.522**	.282**	.297**	.151**	.164**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.001	.000
	N	460	460	460	460	460

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Computed Primary Data

Table No. 5 illustrates the Pearson correlations between consumer awareness sources and their purchasing behavior regarding drinking water in Ramanathapuram District. The null hypothesis, suggesting no significant correlation between consumer awareness sources and purchasing behavior, is rejected based on the obtained correlation coefficients and their associated p-values. Across all consumer awareness sources (namely suggestions from relatives and friends, television advertisements, website and social media, newspaper, journals, and magazines, as well as agencies, retailers, and vendors) significant positive correlations are observed. The correlation coefficients range from 0.490 to 0.558, all with p-values less than 0.01, indicating a strong and statistically significant relationship between consumer awareness sources and purchasing behavior regarding drinking water.

Implications

The findings suggest that consumers in Ramanathapuram District exhibit higher awareness levels regarding unpackaged drinking water compared to packaged drinking water. This underscores the importance of understanding consumer preferences and perceptions in the marketing and distribution of drinking water products. Additionally, the study highlights the significant influence of various sources of awareness, such as recommendations from relatives, television advertisements, online platforms, print media, and interactions with retailers, on consumer perceptions and purchasing behavior. These insights can inform marketing strategies and interventions aimed at promoting safe and sustainable drinking water practices.

Recommendation

Based on the study's findings, it is recommended that stakeholders in the drinking water industry, including manufacturers, distributors, and policymakers, take into account the diverse sources of consumer awareness and their impact on purchasing behavior. This entails designing targeted marketing campaigns that leverage the most influential channels identified in the research, such as recommendations from friends and family, television advertisements, and online platforms. Moreover, efforts should be made to enhance consumer education and awareness regarding the benefits of safe drinking water practices, including the importance of quality standards, health considerations, and environmental sustainability.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study provides valuable insights into consumer behavior regarding drinking water purchase in Ramanathapuram District. By examining the differences in consumer awareness levels and their correlation with purchasing behavior, the research sheds light on the factors influencing consumer decision-making in this context. The findings underscore the need for tailored marketing strategies that leverage key sources of consumer awareness to promote safe and sustainable drinking water practices. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of ongoing consumer education initiatives aimed at enhancing awareness and fostering informed decision-making among consumers.

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