

Children's Preferences Towards Branded and Unbranded Food Products in The State of Goa

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Abstract:

The health of children in many countries is under threat from obesity (Waters and Baur, 2003). Though there are a number of factors that contribute to increase in childhood obesity a major cause has been increase in consumption of energy dense food. The focus of this research is towards examining children's preferences towards branded and unbranded products. It was collected from 200 school children in the age group of 6-12 years from the state of Goa. The results showed that there was relatively more demand for branded food products as compared to unbranded food products It was also found that the consumption of branded and unbranded food products was within controllable limits in the state of Goa.

Keywords: Branded products, ordinary products, children, T.V advertisements, food preferences, food consumption.

Introduction: Fast food denotes food which is prepared and served quickly at outlets called fast food restaurants. It includes chips, sandwiches, hamburgers, fried chicken, french-fries, ice cream etc. For those who eat a meal or snack once a week or so, the effect is not so great but for those who eat on a daily basis the effect has to be monitored. Fast food is popular among children. Diet at this age has repercussions on the future health. High intake of fat, cholesterol and salt is associated with heart disease, cancer and diabetes. Improper intake of nutrients and inactivity may lead to lifelong obesity. Children are least bothered about what they eat so adults around them have to keep a watch what, where and with whom they eat because it determines their eating habits (Naheed Vaida, 2013).

Junk food means an empty calorie food which lacks micro nutrients such as vitamins, minerals, amino acids and fibre which has high energy (calories). Junk food is an informal term applied to some food which is perceived to have little or no nutritional value, but which also have ingredients considered unhealthy when eaten regularly. (Ashakiran & Deepthi. R, 2012).

Literature review:

Kara Chan (2000) in her study of Hongkong children found that children in grade 2 (aged 7-8 years) were beginning to understand what advertising was and were aware of the persuasive intention of television advertising like children in the west. The main reason for liking and disliking commercials depended on their entertainment element. An understanding of television advertising, recall of brands from slogans and comprehension of

advertising content were consistently related to cognitive development of children. Brand recognition from liked and disliked commercials was strong.

Attiya Kanwal (2011) in his study on consumer preferences of International brands over local brands state that if a consumer is satisfied with a product, he will buy it again, become loyal and over time develop a relationship with the brand. The price of a brand plays an important role in the consumer's choice of brand. If a brand is priced too high then consumer will avoid it.

Singh (1998) has pointed out that children constitute a major consumer market with direct purchasing power for snacks and sweets and indirect purchase influence while shopping.

Ahuja et al (1993) have found that in western countries, children have reported to yield a lot of influence in purchase decision for children's products such as snacks.

Findings from the study by Horsu Emmanuel Nondzor and Yeboah Solomon Tawiah (2015) indicate that growth of fast food is the result of urbanisation, long hours of work, growing interest in consuming outside food, advertising, availability of commercial buildings and rise in income. Those who patronise fast food perceive them to be convenient, time saving, delicious, good for fun and change. The most preferred menu happened to be the exotic ones (i.e. pizza, burger etc.)

Atkins and Bowler (2001) pointed out that people who have a busy lifestyle and working families with children prefer instant meals rather than home cooked food.

Farzana et al (2011) reiterated that most people prefer fast food meals because of the time constrains they face due to their busy lifestyle, longer working hours and women at work.

Scope of the study: The study examines children's interest in consuming branded and unbranded (ordinary) food products in the state of Goa. The food products considered are those which are normally consumed as snacks by children. Branded products are those which have a brand name while ordinary or unbranded products are those which are manufactured by local confectioneries and do not have any brand name. The present study covers the entire state of Goa which comprise the two districts i.e. North and South Goa and the time frame of this study is from August 2014 to December 2014. Sample of 200 children were taken from various schools in Goa through random sampling method.

Objective of the study:

To examine children's demand for branded and unbranded (i.e ordinary) food products in the state of Goa.

Research Methodology: The study is descriptive in nature. The primary data has been collected from respondent's comprising of children in the age group of 6-12 years through well designed and tested questionnaire. The questionnaire has been filled by the respondent's in the presence of their parents who no doubt have supported their children in filling the questionnaire. A sample of 200 respondents has been chosen from Goa by random sampling. The main objective of this research was to find the preference of children in the age group of 6-

12 towards eatables which are branded and ordinary (i.e unbranded) **Tools for the analysis:** The data has been analysed using percentage method.

Sample profile:

Out of the 200 respondents, 100 were from North Goa and 100 were from South Goa.

Result and discussion:

Table :1: Distribution of children consuming branded and unbranded (ordinary) food products in the state of Goa.

Particulars	Never	Less than once a week	4-6 times a week	1-3 times a week	Everyday	Total
Branded Burgers	142 (71%)	40 (20%)	6 (3%)	10 (5%)	2 (1%)	200
Ordinary Burgers	142 (71%)	39 (19.5%)	3 (1.5%)	15 (7.5%)	1 (.5%)	200
Branded Pizza	121 (60.5%)	63 (31.5%)	4 (2%)	10 (5%)	2 (1%)	200
Ordinary pizza	147(73.5%)	40 (20%)	5 (2.5%)	8 (4%)	-	200
Branded biscuit	-	28 (14%)	19 (9.5%)	86 (43%)	67 (33.5%)	200
Ordinary biscuit	22 (11%)	31 (15.5%)	14 (7%)	79 (39.5%)	54 (27%)	200
Branded chocolate	1 (.5%)	48 (24%)	23 (11.5%)	91 (45.5%)	37 (18.5%)	200
Ordinary chocolate	4 (2%)	73(36.5%)	20(10%)	81(40.5%)	22 (11%)	200
Branded wafers	13(6.5%)	65 (32.5%)	21 (10.5%)	76 (38%)	25 (12.5%)	200
Ordinary wafers	33 (16.5%)	64 (32%)	18 (9%)	61(30.5%)	24 (12%)	200
Branded chips	29 (14.5%)	70 (35%)	23 (11.5%)	60 (30%)	18 (9%)	200
Ordinary chips	27 (13.5%)	78 (39%)	28 (14%)	54 (27%)	13 (6.5%)	200
Branded ice-cream	9 (4.5%)	102 (51%)	18 (9%)	57 (28.5%)	14 (7%)	200
Ordinary ice-cream	33 (16.5%)	99 (49.5%)	14 (7%)	41 (20.5%)	13 (6.5%)	200
Branded soft drinks	1 (.5%)	83 (41.5%)	17 (8.5%)	76 (38%)	23 (11.5%)	200
Ordinary soft drinks	25 (12.5%)	75 (37.5%)	16 (8%)	62 (31%)	22 (11%)	200

Source: Primary data.

Let us now take a look at the consumption of the various food products by the children in the state of Goa.

Burgers: If we compare consumption of burgers among children in Goa, it can be seen that highest number of children i.e. 205 consumed branded burgers and 19.5% consumed ordinary burgers less than once a week. It has also been found that 5% children consume branded burgers and 7.5% consume ordinary burgers 1-3 times a week. On the other hand 71% children never consume any type of burgers at all. It can also be seen that 3% children consume branded burgers and 1.5% consume ordinary burgers and .5% consume ordinary burgers every day. Hence we can see that in most cases the consumption of burgers is less than once a week.

Pizza: In case of pizza we find maximum consumption as less than once a week. It has been found that 31.5% children consume branded pizza 20% consume ordinary pizza less than once a week. 5% children consume branded pizza and 4% consume ordinary pizza 1-3 times a week, while 2% children consume branded pizza and 2.5% consume ordinary pizza. Only a minimal amount of 1% consumes branded pizza every day. 60.5% and 75.5% children never consume branded pizza and ordinary pizza at all.

Biscuits: If we compare branded and ordinary biscuits it can be seen from the data that there is a craze for eating branded biscuits among children. There is no child who has never eaten branded biscuits while 11% children have never tasted ordinary biscuits. Highest number of children i.e. 43% consumes

branded biscuits and 39.5% consume ordinary biscuits 1-3 times a week, while 33.5% children consume branded biscuits and 27% consume ordinary biscuits every day. This shows that consumption of biscuits as a snack is very high among children. Similarly it has been found that 9.5% children consume branded biscuits and 7% consume ordinary biscuits 4-6 times a week. Only 14% consume branded biscuits and 15.5% consume ordinary biscuits less than once a week. This shows that as far as biscuits are concerned consumption is higher from 1-3 times to 4-6 times a week.

Chocolates: Chocolates are an irresistible temptation for children. It has been found from the data that 91 children consume branded chocolates while 81 consume ordinary chocolates 1-3 times a week, while 48 children consume branded chocolates and 73 consume ordinary chocolates less than once a week. 37 children consume branded chocolates and 22 consume ordinary chocolates every day, while 23 children consume branded chocolates and 20 consume ordinary chocolates 4-6 times a week. Only 1 child was found to have never eaten branded chocolates while 4 children were found to have never eaten ordinary chocolates. Hence we find that all children like to eat chocolates irrespective whether it is branded or unbranded.

Wafers: From the data it was found that 76 children consume branded wafers and 61 consume ordinary wafers 1-3 times a week, while 65 children consume branded wafers and 64 consume ordinary wafers less than once a week. This shows that a large section of the children consume limited amount of

wafers. Only 25 children were found consuming branded wafers and 24 consuming ordinary wafers every day, while 21 children consumed branded wafers and 18 consumed ordinary wafers 4-6 times a week. 13 children never consumed branded wafers and 33 never consumed ordinary wafers at all.

Chips: Chips are a common snack among children. It can be seen from the data that 30% children have branded chips and 27% children have ordinary chips 1-3 times a week. 11.5% have branded chips and 14% have ordinary chips 4-6 times a week while 35% children have branded chips and 39% have ordinary chips less than once a week. 14.5% children never had branded chips and 13.5% never had ordinary chips at all. Only 9% children have branded chips and 6.5% have ordinary chips every day. This shows that the consumption of chips among children in Goa is very less.

Ice cream: Ice cream is the favourite of children all around. From the data it can be seen that 57 (i.e. 28.5%) children like branded ice cream while 41(i.e. 20.5%) children like ordinary ice cream and consume it 1-3 times a week. On the other hand 102 (i.e.51%) children like to consume branded ice cream and 99 (i.e. 49.5%) children like to consume ordinary ice cream less than once a week. 18 children (i.e. 9%) like to consume branded ice cream while 14 (i.e. 7%) children like to consume ordinary ice cream 4-6 times a week. Similarly 14 children (i.e. 7%) like to consume branded ice cream and 13% (i.e. 6.5%) children like to consume ordinary ice cream every day. On the other hand 9(i.e. 4.5%) children never consumed branded ice

cream while 33 (i.e. 16.5%) children never consumed ordinary ice cream at all.

Soft drinks: It can be seen from the data that 76 children consume branded soft drinks and 62 children consume ordinary soft drinks 1-3 times a week. On the other hand 83 children consume branded soft drinks and 75 consume ordinary soft drinks less than once a week. 23 children consume branded soft drinks while 22 children consume ordinary soft drinks everyday while 17 children consume branded soft drinks and 16 children consume ordinary soft drinks 4-6 times a week. Only 1 child has never consumed branded soft drinks while 25 children have never consumed ordinary soft drinks.

Conclusion: The overall consumption of branded and unbranded (i.e. ordinary) food products have been assessed and it has been found that children have a greater preference for branded products as compared to ordinary ones. In most of the food products shown in table 1 it can be seen that branded products have an edge over ordinary products. This could be because they are widely advertised on various medias, most commonly on television which has wide viewership among children. Ordinary confectioneries are also consumed by children as they are fresh, tasty and have fewer preservatives and are also cheaper. The consumption has been quite closely competitive.

From the analysis it can be seen that expensive food products like burgers are never consumed by 71% children while pizzas are never consumed by 60.5% to 73.5% consumers. The highest amount of consumption of these two products is less

than once a week i.e. 19.5% to 31.5%. Only a small section of children are found to consume it 4-6 times a week.

On the other hand biscuits are consumed by children everyday due to their convenience to be used as a snack. It can be seen from the table 1 that branded biscuits are popular among children while a large section also consume ordinary biscuits (unbranded) manufactured by local confectioneries which are fresh and tasty. The highest consumption of biscuits is 1-3 times a week which includes 43% children demanding branded biscuits and 39.5% demanding ordinary biscuits. Everyday consumption is also high wherein 33.5% children consume branded biscuits and 27% children consuming ordinary biscuits. There is no one who has never eaten or tasted branded biscuits. This shows the popularity and demand of this product.

Moving on to chocolates maximum consumption of chocolates is 1-3 times a week which includes 45.5% children consuming branded chocolates and 40.5% consuming ordinary chocolates. Similarly we find the number of children consuming chocolates everyday was found to be 18.5% in case of branded chocolates and 11% in case of ordinary chocolates while in case of those consuming less than once a week, it was found that branded chocolates were consumed by only 24% children and ordinary chocolates were consumed by 36.5% children. Though chocolates are the most wanted food product of children it can be seen from the analysis that the consumption of this product has been quite less and within controllable limits.

In case of wafers we find that maximum consumption is 1-3 times a week with more demand for branded wafers i.e 38% while there is 30.5% demand for ordinary wafers. On the other hand we notice that around 32% children consume wafers less than once a week whether branded or unbranded.

If we take a look at chips we find the maximum consumption to be less than once a week with 35% children consuming branded chips and 39% consuming ordinary chips. This is followed by sizeable number consuming chips only 1-3 times a week i.e 30% children consuming branded chips and 27% children consuming ordinary chips. Only a small percentage of children consume chips everyday and 4-6 times a week. There are a large number of children who have never tasted or eaten branded and ordinary chips.

Taking a look at ice creams and soft drinks we find that consumption by children is less than once a week in case of ice cream i.e 51% in case of branded ice cream and 49.5% in case of ordinary ice cream. While in case of soft drinks children's consumption is 1-3 times a week i.e 31% in case of branded soft drinks and 38% in case of ordinary soft drinks.

Hence overall we can see that consumption of each of these branded and unbranded (ordinary) products are found to be within controllable limits. Taste is the main driving force for purchase of these products. Health consciousness is the main factor for not purchasing many of the food products. However with awareness being generated through learning and parental restriction there

has been less consumption of these products in the state. Similarly with the existence of mid-day meal provided to all school children by the government the emphasis is more on

eating healthy food which would prevent obesity, cholesterol, diabetes, cancer and other harmful diseases.

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