



Food Preferences of Children in Goa

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**ABSTRACT**

This paper tries to examine which are the food and drinks preferred by children in the state of Goa. A two stage factor analysis was computed on 28 variables to arrive at the result. It was found that children liked to consume branded eatables, ordinary eatables, ordinary drinks, branded drinks and other snacks and sweets. It was further revealed that branded eatables, branded drinks and ordinary drinks were preferred by children the most.

**KEYWORDS :** Advertisements, eatables, drinks, children, fast food.

**Introduction:**

Children's food preferences are important determinants of food intake. Food preferences are influenced by parents and caretakers, peer pressure, media and fast food outlets. Television is an important media source of education for children, influencing them from a very young age. Television is pervasive with unique powers of persuasion and can be very effective method to communicate to children.

Branding is a fundamental aspect of fast food marketing. It is also a key component of marketing fast food especially to children because it plays an important role in ensuring customer retention based on loyalty (Terblanche, n.d.5)

Consumption of fast food has increased rapidly in this era. Many factors such as growing urbanisation, industrialisation, opening to western culture, lack of time to prepare food, the effects of mass media, advertisement and development of food industry have naturally led to development of fast food phenomena. As a result of these developments there have been changes in the eating habits of children over the past few decades.

**Literature Review:**

A number of reviews have examined the research on advertising to children and found that food advertising leads to greater preferences and purchase of the product advertised (Hastings et al, 2003, IOM, 2006, Story and French, 2004).

Research by Ross and Harradine, 2007 found that young children have a growing ability to collect more information regarding brands and use this information in their buying process.

**Objective of the study:**

This research was conducted to find out what type of eatables and drinks are preferred by children in the state of Goa.

To achieve this objective the following hypothesis were framed:

**Hypothesis:-**

- 1) H01: There is no significant influence of various eatables and drinks on children in the state of Goa.
- 2) H02: There is a significant influence of various eatables and drinks on children in the state of Goa.

**Research methodology:**

For the study, primary data has been collected from the field with the help of a questionnaire having 28 variables which uses likert scale for measuring the responses. A structured direct survey method has been followed for data collection. The number of respondent's surveyed were 1000, (500 from North Goa and 500 from South Goa). The sampling technique used was random sampling. The study was conducted

from August 2014 to October 2014. The likert scale used for the study is strongly disagree-1, disagree-2, neutral-3, agree-4, strongly agree-5.

Tools for the study: Factor analysis, percentage.

**Sample profile:**

The study focussed on children in the age group of 6-12 and included 563 boys and 437 girls using random sampling. 134 respondents were in the age group of 6-7 years, 388 were in the age group of 8-9 years and 478 respondents were in the age group of 10-12 years.

**Analysis and results:**

Table 1

Descriptive statistics for reliability	
Cronbach's Alpha	No. of items
.801	28

Table 1 shows the value of Cronbach Alpha to be .801, and as it comes out to be greater than 0.06, it implies that the data collected was reliable.

**Table 2**

**KMO and Bartlett's Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.855
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	7130.492
	df	378
	Sig.	.000

Bartlett's test of Sphericity shows that the relationship is significant among the variables that are used for factor analysis. As shown in table 2 the KMO measure of sampling adequacy is .855 which is more than the recommended value of 0.60, stated to be adequate while Bartlett's test of Sphericity reached statistical significance. (Approximate Chi-Square value=7130.492, Df=378 and significance=.000), which shows that the data was good for doing the factor analysis (Kaiser, H.F. 1963, Bartlett, M.S., 1950). The 28 items were subjected to principal component analysis (PCA) with varimax rotation to check whether the data is fit for factor analysis.

The objective at this point was to obtain minimum dimensions that showed the relationships among the variables that are related. Greater than one rule for Eigen value was implemented in identifying the number of factors. The variables that had a bigger loading on same

factors were put together. Initially there were 28 scaled variables that were measured. 23 of the variables were removed after factor analysis and 5 factors were created. These factors were F1:branded eatables, F2: ordinary eatables, F3: ordinary drinks, F4: branded drinks and F5:other snacks and sweets. The factor analysis produced a total of 5 factors with Eigen value greater than one. The cumulative percentage of variance explained was 45.953. These factors with respective loading levels are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3**  
**Factor extraction results from the items in component matrix**

Sr. no	Components	Factor Loads	Eigen Value	% of Variance
1	Branded eatables	.738	6.080	11.039
2	Ordinary eatables	.675	2.535	10.061
3	Ordinary drinks	.653	1.582	10.044
4	Branded drinks	.670	1.393	8.315
5	Other snacks and sweets	.649	1.277	6.494
	Total percentage of variance	45.953		

**Source: SPSS Output**

The study presents an exploratory factor analytic model to explain the advertised products influencing food and beverage preference of children. As shown in Table 3 factors have been identified namely branded eatables, ordinary eatables, ordinary drinks branded drinks other snacks and sweets. All the 5 factors are found to be highly influencing food and beverage preferences of children.

**Factor 1-** This factor consists of branded burgers, branded biscuits, ordinary burgers, branded chocolates, branded wafers and chips, noodles. The factors are positively loaded. Hence factor 1 is identified and named as 'branded eatables'.

**Factor 2-** This factor consists of ordinary wafers, ordinary chips, ordinary chocolates, ordinary biscuits and cakes. The factors are positively loaded. Hence factor 2 is identified and named as 'ordinary eatables'.

**Factor 3-** This factor consists of ordinary ice cream, ordinary soft drinks, and sugar sweetened drink. Hence factor 3 is identified and named as 'ordinary drinks'.

**Factor 4-** The fourth factor consists of branded drinks, branded ice cream, cornflakes, squash and branded health drinks. Hence factor 4 is identified and named as 'branded drinks'.

**Factor 5-** The fifth factor consists of oats, butter and cheese, popcorn and nuts. Hence factor 5 is identified and named as 'other snacks and sweets'.

**Table 4**  
**Overall frequency of consumption of eatables and drinks by children in the state of Goa**

	Less		Moderate		High		Total	
	frequency	%	frequency	%	frequency	%	frequency	%
Branded eatables	334	33.4	317	31.7	349	34.9	1000	100.0
Ordinary eatables	371	37.1	332	33.2	297	29.7	1000	100.0
Ordinary drinks	360	36.0	264	26.4	376	37.6	1000	100.0
Branded drinks	321	32.1	295	29.5	384	38.4	1000	100.0
Others snacks and sweets	398	39.8	237	23.7	365	36.5	1000	100.0

**Source: Primary data**

Table 4 shows the frequency of consumption of branded eatables and

drinks, ordinary eatables and drinks and other snacks and sweets by children. It has been found that in case of branded eatables the frequency of consumption is high (34.9%) while it is low (37.1%) for ordinary eatables. In case of soft drinks whether branded or ordinary the frequency of consumption is high (i.e. 38.4% and 37.6%), while consumption of other snacks and sweets is relatively less (39.8%). Hence we can see that children have a craze for soft drinks whether branded or ordinary and high preference for consuming branded eatables.

### Conclusion:

Advertisements have an intense impact on the minds of children. The various food and beverage advertisements are so attractive in its presentation that they create an urge in children to purchase them. They spend their pocket money or at times pester their parents to buy whatever is shown on television. From the above analysis it can be seen that children love to consume branded eatables, branded drinks and ordinary drinks in high proportion. This is none other than the influence of advertisements that are shown on television.

Branded eatables from KFC, Dominos Pizza, Buskin Robbins are very much preferred by children. Similarly different types of confectionery items, chips, chocolates, wafers are the most sought after food of children. Similar is the case with branded drinks. Children like soft drinks, health drinks, ice creams and other types of sweet drinks. They are very much influenced by their favourite celebrities in the ads. They are carried away by the taste, crispiness, popularity, cheapness, ease in handling and carrying of these products. On the other hand children in the rural areas prefer ordinary drinks as they are more cheaper and equally refreshing and tasty as the branded drinks. However it has been found that children's demand for various eatables and drinks are within controllable limits so as to safeguard their health and well being.

As a result it can be concluded that there is a significant influence of various eatables and drinks on children in the state of Goa and thus HO2 is accepted and HO1 is rejected.

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