

CONSUMERS' PERCEPTION AND SATISFACTION TOWARDS SAKTHI MASALA PRODUCTS

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ABSTRACT

Mastering masala blending is both an art and science. Given the diversity of culture and the wide variety of distinctive cuisines and taste preferences, prevalent across the length and breadth of India, it is a skill that needs perfection and it's not easy. So, numerous companies involved to producing variety of spices to attract the domestic and international market including Sakthi Brand of Masala Products. The present research is an attempt to analyze the consumers' perception and satisfaction towards the Sakthi Masala Products. The study has been made by collecting the responses of consumers through structured interview schedule. A total 200 valid responses were collected to assess the spices preference among the consumers, influencing factors on buying decision and their satisfaction towards Sakthi Masala Products. Findings of the research shows that Turmeric and Chilli Powder is the most preferred pure spices, Mutton and Chicken masala is the preferred spice blends, Tamarind and lemon rice powder as well as bajji-bonda mix are the preferred spice mixes of Sakthi Masala Products. Accessibility aspects, product specialty, brand reputation and better quality with reasonable price are the main factors that influencing buying decision of Sakthi Masala Products. Chi-square analysis reveals that there exist a significant association towards Sakthi Masala Products among various age groups and place of living of the Consumers.

Keywords: Sakthi Masala Products, Consumer, Spices category, Perception and Satisfaction

I. INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTION OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Spices constitute an important group of agricultural commodities, which are considered indispensable for culinary purposes and for flavouring food. India is known as the "Home of Spices" and produces a large variety and quantity of spices. About sixty-three varieties of spices are grown in the country, which includes Pepper (King of Spices), Cardamom (Queen of Spices), Chillies, ginger, turmeric, coriander, cumin and many others. As most spices grow under specific climatic conditions, annual production level and India's share of spices in the world market has varied considerably in the recent years. Only about 7% of the total produced spices exported to 130 countries in the world and the rest is demanded in the domestic market. There are tons of Indian companies manufacturing a variety of masalas. Sakthi Masla is one brand came into existence in 1997 from Erdoe District of Tamil Nadu state and is serving the society through Sakthi Devi Charitable trust. Sakthi brand one of the largest producers of branded spices in Southern India. Currently, this brand manufactures over 50 varieties of Spice and Masala powders, varieties of Pickles, Flour varieties, Appalams, Ghee and Sunflower Oil. The company has bagged with ISO 9001:2008 certification from Bureau of Indian Standards, New Delhi. Presently, Sakthi

Masala Products are marketed to United States of America, United Kingdom, Singapore, Kuwait, Australia, New Zealand, Hongkong, France, South Korea, Muscat and Canada after fulfill the needs of Indian Community. Sakthi Masala gives value addition to the agricultural products which helps and encourages the farming community to market their produces. Furthermore, they generate a lot of employment opportunities to the agricultural labours and rural people. The Company employs mostly women and differently abled persons from the rural areas and makes them to lead an honorary life.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

For the speedy life culture among the Indians, packaged masala products are basic requirement for day-to-day life. But choosing the right masala brand is very essential those who need easy and quick cooking solutions. It is completely depends on the past experience and others reference. This study concentrated consumers' perception and satisfaction towards Sakthi Masala Products. Sakthi Masala Products is one of the familiar brand in the market. Even though, existence of many competitive brands in the market the Sakthi brand needs to assess the market perception regularly for the intention of its long-term survival.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

- To find out demographic factors of consumers of Sakthi Masala
- To find out consumers' preference of Sakthi Masala Products
- To explore the influencing factors on buying decision of Sakthi Masala Products
- To assess and analyze the consumers' satisfaction level towards Sakthi Masala Products across demographic factors

1.4 Hypotheses of the Study

- H_{01} : Majority of the consumers of Sakthi Masala Products having lower level of satisfaction.
- H_{02} : There is no significant association towards Sakthi Masala Products among various groups of the consumers.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURES

Rana Pratap (2018) assessed retailers' opinion towards packed spices of Karani Brand with respect to packaged size, frequency of purchase, Quality, price, promotion programs, trade discount, nearest competitor and new product line in Warangal city of Telangana state. **Noor et al. (2017)** in their study analyze the consumers' preference and acceptance of branded spice powder in Sadar Upazila of Mymensingh District in Bangladesh. This study reported that a little more 2/5th of the consumers preferred only branded spice powder. Based on the consumers' perception 98% of them are used powder form and rest used paste or mashed form of brands. Most of the consumers are giving much more attention to the popular bra

nd at globe level which is produced in Bangladesh. **Kumthekar and Sane** identified that Katdare, Pravin and then Everest brand of spices are mostly preferred by the consumers in Maharashtra. Branded spices are used only for taste than its price. The factors namely taste and convenient packaging size of masala products considered while choosing a brand. **Poonam Begal (2015)** in her study involved to identify the consumer buying behaviour and the level of satisfaction

towards Everest Masala. This study reported that quality, size, availability, brand reputation, attractive packaging, promotional activities, price and reference group are mainly influenced to buying decision of Everest brand. Regarding satisfaction, majority of the consumers are highly satisfied with Everest branded masala. **Sreekumar (2015)** studied consumer behavior analysis of curry powders in Kerala and concluded that Brand awareness of curry powders is mainly influence to choosing the items. Further, Eastern and Nirpara brand is widely accepted by the customers with respect to cost beneficial, availability, quality, company standard and packing design.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This descriptive study was conducted 200 interviews among the consumers with the help of grocery shop owners and employees of organized retail stores. Interview schedule covers four different parts. They are demographic profile, preference of Sakthi Masala Products (ranking form), influencing factors on buying decision and satisfaction level (five-point Likert scaling type). Convenience sampling method is adopted to sample selection and the primary data were collected during the period from November’ 2018 to January’2019. Theoretical parts of the study collected from journals, websites and other published sources. Inference of the study derived from application of % analysis, Garrett’s Ranking technique, factor analysis and chi-square test (χ^2).

IV. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Demographic profile of the Consumers

Distribution of the sample consumers based on their selected demographic factors is given in the table below.

Factor	Character	No. of Consumers	Percent
Age group (in years)	Upto 25	23	11.5
	26 - 40	81	40.5
	41 - 60	67	33.5
	Above 60	29	14.5
Gender	Male	78	39
	Female	122	61
Marital Status	Married	167	83.5
	Unmarried	33	16.5
Occupation	Employed	79	39.5
	Own business	46	23
	Professionals	41	20.5
	Service	23	11.5
	Homemaker	11	5.5

Family income (Rs. per month)	Upto 10,000	48	24
	10,001 - 20,000	73	36.5
	20,001 - 30,000	28	14
	30,001 - 40,000	51	25.5
Place of Living	Rural	49	24.5
	Semi-urban	68	34
	Urban	83	41.5
Source: Field Survey			

Table 1 shows that majority (40.5%) of the consumers belongs to the age group of 26 – 40 years. More number of female consumers is participated in the study than the male consumers. This is followed by 83.5% of the consumers are married category and the remaining 16.5% of them unmarried category. Moreover, majority of the consumers belongs to employed category (39.5%), middle income groups (36.5%) and urban areas (41.5%).

4.2 Consumers' Preference towards Sakthi Masala Products – Garrett's Ranking Analysis

This technique was adopted, where the respondents were asked to rank their preference according to the magnitude of the particular attribute among the several attributes. This part has been discussed consumers' preference of different categories of Sakthi Masala Products namely pure spices, spice blends and spice mixes and flour categories in order to find out which spices attract more the respondents in each category. The orders of merit given by the consumers were converted into ranks by using the following techniques.

$$\text{Percent position} = 100(R_{ij} - 0.5) / N_j$$

Where,

R_{ij} = Rank given for the i th sources by the j th respondents

N_j = Number of sources ranked by the j th respondents

The percentage position of each rank thus obtained was converted into scores according to the rule of Hengry Garrett. Then for each spice product of the scores of individual consumers are added together and divided by the total number of respondents for whom the scores were added. These mean scores for all the sources is to consider for the purpose of finds High to Low mean scores and inferences were drawn.

4.2.1 Pure Spices of Sakthi Masala Products – Consumers’ Preference

Table - 2: Pure Spices Category - Consumers’ Preference				
Pure Spices	Garrett’s Score	No. of Consumers	Mean Score	Preference
Turmeric Powder	11588	200	57.94	II
Chilli Powder	12020	200	60.1	I
Coriander Powder	10282	200	51.41	III
Pepper Powder	9348	200	46.74	V
Cumin powder	9404	200	47.02	IV
Pepper Powder	7358	200	36.79	VI

Source: Field Survey

Table – 2 shows that Garrett’s ranking analysis as regards consumers’ preference of Sakthi Masala Products under pure spices category. It is concluded that Chilli powder, turmeric powder and coriander powder are most preferred pure spices among the consumers of Sakthi Masala Products.

4.2.2 Consumers’ Preference towards Spice Blends of Sakthi Masala Products

Table - 3: Spice Blends Category - Consumers’ Preference				
Spice Blends	Garrett’s Score	No. of Consumers	Mean Score	Preference
Sambar powder	10480	200	52.4	V
Rasam powder	10700	200	53.5	III
Pulikulambu	9856	200	49.28	IX
Kulambu chilli powder	10179	200	50.895	VII
Curry powder	10504	200	52.52	IV
Garam masala	9710	200	48.55	X
Biriyani masala	8689	200	43.445	XI
Egg guruma masala	10128	200	50.64	VIII
Chicken masala	10739	200	53.695	II
Chilli chicken 65	7929	200	39.645	XII
Fish curry/fry masala	10330	200	51.65	VI
Mutton masala	10756	200	53.78	I

Source: Field Survey

Table – 3 shows that Garrett’s ranking analysis as regards consumers’ preference of Sakthi Masala Products under spice blends category. It is reported that Mutton masala, Chicken masala, Rasam Powder, Curry Powder and Sambar Powder are most preferred spice blends among the consumers of Sakthi Masala Products. On the other hand, Chilli chicken 65, Briyani masala and Garam masala are the least preferred spice blends among the consumers.

4.2.3 Consumers' Preference towards Spice Mixes and Flour Category

Table - 4: Spice Mixes and Flour Category - Consumers' Preference				
Spice Mixes & Flours	Garrett's Score	No. of Consumers	Mean Score	Preference
Lemon rice powder	12725	200	63.63	II
Tamarind rice powder	12796	200	63.98	I
Bengal gram powder	9250	200	46.25	VII
Chiily chutney powder	7166	200	35.83	IX
Curry leaf rice powder	8584	200	42.92	VIII
Dhall Rice powder	9560	200	47.80	V
Ragi flour	10024	200	50.12	IV
Garlic rice powder	9298	200	46.49	VI
Bajji-Bonda mix	10397	200	51.99	III
Source: Field Survey				

Table – 4 shows that Garrett's ranking analysis as regards consumers' preference of Sakthi Masala Products under spice mixes & flour category. It explains that TarMARIND RICE powder, lemon rice powder, Bajji-Bonda mix, Ragi flour and Dhall rice powder are the most preferred spice mixes and flour category of Sakthi Masala Products. On the other hand, Chilli chutney powder, Curry leaf rice powder, Bengal gram powder and Garlic Rice powder are the least preferred spice mixes & flour category.

4.3 Influencing Factors on Buying Decision of Sakthi Masala Products among the Consumers

As per the recommendation of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy value 0.708, which represent for all thirteen items together as well as Bartlett's Test of Sphericity approxi. χ^2 value 1662.607 significant at one percent level, indicating further proceeds principal component method of factor analysis with varimax rotation. Table - 5 shows that the selected eigenvalue of different factors and indicates that there are four major factors that mainly influencing buying decision of Sakthi Masala Products among the consumers. Further, it is understood that all four factors together possess 76.44 per cent of the characteristics of the actual data.

Table -5: Factor Loadings on various attributes of Sakthi Masala Products					
Opinion	1	2	3	4	Communalities
X1	.396	.094	.510	.521	.697
X2	.063	.083	.068	.929	.879
X3	-.184	.868	-.075	.193	.830
X4	.175	.749	.304	-.234	.738
X5	.401	.562	.579	-.054	.815

X6	-.031	.060	.815	.125	.685
X7	.760	.348	.354	-.025	.824
X8	.691	.453	.032	-.012	.684
X9	.682	.097	.448	.181	.708
X10	.445	-.031	.767	-.114	.800
X11	.325	.711	-.053	.333	.726
X12	.740	-.235	.307	.096	.706
X13	.736	.072	-.238	.492	.846
Eig. Value	3.300	2.553	2.430	1.654	9.937
% of Vari.	25.386	19.635	18.696	12.725	76.441
Cumu. % of Vari.	25.386	45.021	63.717	76.441	
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis					
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization					
Source: Field Survey					

Table – 6: Responsible Factors on Buying Decision of Sakthi Masala Products		
Factor – I (25.386%)	X7 - Availability of convenient packaging size	.760
	X12 - Regular availability	.740
	X13 - Reasonable Nutritional content	.736
	X8 - Variety of spices	.691
	X9 - Attractiveness of packaging	.682
Factor – II (19.635%)	X3 - Freshness	.868
	X4 - Good taste	.749
	X11 - Good aroma	.711
Factor – III (18.696%)	X6 - Speciality of Brand	.815
	X10 - Family members' preference	.767
	X5 - Retailers' suggestion	.579
Factor - IV (12.725%)	X2 - High quality	.929
	X1 - Lesser price	.521
Source: Field Survey		

It is observed from the table 6 that the loadings of X7, X12, X13, X8 and X9 grouped into accessibility aspects of Sakthi Masala Products and accounts 25.386% of the total variance. The loadings of X3, X4 and X11 constituted product specialty of Sakthi Masala and accounts

19.635% of the total variance. The loading of X6, X10 and X5 grouped into brand reputation of Sakthi Masala Products and accounts for 18.696% of the total variance. Finally, the loadings of X2 and X1 constituted into the factor of better quality with reasonable price and accounts for 12.725% of the total variance.

4.4 Consumers' satisfaction level towards Sakthi Masala Products

Distribution of the sample consumers based on their satisfaction level is given in the figure – 1. It reveals that 62.5% of the consumers are in the satisfied group, 29% of them dissatisfied group and the remaining 8.5% are in neither satisfied nor dissatisfied group.



Source: Field Survey

4.5 Consumers' Satisfaction level among various Demographic factors - χ^2 Analysis

Ho: There is no significant association between age group gender, marital status, occupation, family income, place of living of the consumers and their satisfaction level towards Sakthi Masala Products.

Table - 7: Relationship of Demographic factors and Satisfaction level towards Sakthi Masala Products				
Demographic factors	χ^2	Table value	df	Result
Age group (in years)	30.171**	26.22	12	Reject Ho
Gender	6.361 ^{NS}	9.49	4	Accept Ho
Marital status	3.268 ^{NS}	9.49	4	Accept Ho
Occupation	18.750 ^{NS}	26.30	16	Accept Ho
Family income (Rs. Per annum)	6.288 ^{NS}	21.03	12	Accept Ho
Place of living	15.752*	15.51	8	Reject Ho
** Sig. at 1%; * Sig. at 5%; NS – Not Sig. at 5% level				
Source: Field Survey				

It is observed from the table – 4 that the calculated value of $\chi^2 \{ \sum (O - E)^2 / E \}$ between gender, marital status, occupation and family income comes out lesser than table value at five percent

significant level.. So, Accept Ho and it is concluded that there is no significant association of consumers' satisfaction level towards Sakthi Masala Products among various group of gender, marital status, occupation and family incomes. Moreover, there exists significant association between age group, place of living of the consumers and their satisfaction level towards Sakthi Masala Products because calculated value of $\chi^2 \{ \Sigma(O - E)^2/E \}$ greater than the table value for the said demographic variables. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

V.CONCLUSION

This study concluded that a little more 2/5th of the consumers are highly satisfied with Sakthi Masala Products. So, the Sakthi brand should be asked to improve various promotional activities by the means of giving more offers with reduced maximum retail price. Further, exclusive stores can be opened to attract new customers and facilitate availability of all masala products under one roof. The company could be giving more incentive to the retailers in order to retain existing customers and compete with other brands in masala product market.

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