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A Study In Understanding The Factors Influencing Penetration Levels of Branded Masalas In Selected Citied in Tamilnadu

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Abstract

This study investigates the intricate factors that influence the penetration levels of branded masalas in selected cities within Tamil Nadu, India. Masalas, essential ingredients in Indian cuisine, play a significant role in culinary culture and consumer preferences. Understanding the dynamics of penetration levels is crucial for brands seeking to establish a strong foothold in this competitive market. The research employs a quantitative approach, utilizing survey data collected from consumers across various demographic segments. Key factors analyzed include price, quality, variety, and health consciousness. Statistical methods such as chi-square tests and regression analysis are employed to discern the relationships between these factors and penetration levels. The findings reveal significant associations between price, quality, variety, health consciousness, and penetration levels, highlighting the importance of these factors in shaping consumer behavior and market penetration. The study provides valuable insights for marketers and policymakers, offering recommendations for optimizing pricing strategies, enhancing product quality, diversifying product variety, and promoting health-conscious attributes to maximize market penetration and competitiveness. By understanding and addressing these factors, brands can effectively navigate the complexities of the branded masala market in Tamil Nadu, ultimately driving sustainable growth and success. However, further research is warranted to delve deeper into consumer perceptions and preferences, as well as to explore the effectiveness of various marketing strategies in influencing penetration levels in this dynamic and culturally diverse market landscape.

Keywords: Branded masalas, Penetration levels, Human consciousness, Chi square test

Introduction

It is general knowledge that India is referred to as "The Land of Spices," and people all over the globe respect the incredible quality of Indian spices. In the spice sector that is found all over the globe, India plays a vital role.

The excellent flavour and scent of Indian spices have earned them a reputation not just in India but also across the world. This is due to the fact that spices have a unique and wonderful flavour, scent, and health advantages, which makes them suitable for a wide range of applications. The development of human society is inextricably tied to the significance of their activities in day-to-day existence. Indian cuisine has a long and illustrious history of cultural and socioeconomic mixing that spans over five thousand years. This has resulted in a wide variety of tastes and cuisines across different regions. The Mughals, the British, and the Portuguese all contributed to the variety of Indian food during the course of their own histories. India has a competitive edge as a result of the wide variety of spices that are readily available owing to their excellent quality and extensive range of varieties. The value of the worldwide spice market in 2019 was estimated to be 5.86 billion US dollars. The growth rate of the industry is anticipated to be 6.5%.An rising number of people all around the globe are looking for genuine cuisines, which is one of the key factors that is influencing the use of spices. Manufacturers are anticipated to be driven to make more tasty, appealing, and dependable goods that are in accordance with high quality standards as a result of the growing demand from customers for a greater variety of tastes to be included in their meals and snacks. Experts believe that the branded market is worth Rs 30,000 crore and is predicted to increase at an annual pace of 10-15 percent. On the other hand, the Indian spice sector as a whole is estimated to be worth Rs 80,000 crore. An investigation that was conducted not too long ago revealed that the market for packaged and blended spices has shown amazing expansion. The expansion of this sector has been influenced by a number of different elements, which have been addressed in this study. As a result of the increased number of working women and the growing concern among consumers over the presence of contaminated goods, there has been an increase in the demand for branded spices. There has been a change in consumer tastes as well as an increase in people's buying power as a result of the fast expansion of India's economy. From regional and small businesses, consumers are increasingly gravitating towards national brands as their preferred option.

As the Indian branded spice sector continues to grow, global brands are becoming more and more prominent. Individuals' concern for their own health is one of the factors that leads them to choose packaged spices with a brand name rather than unbranded spices. Because of their need for improved quality, consumers are increasingly leaning towards spices that are packaged. Through marketing and advocacy activities, companies that offer pre-packaged spices tout about the higher quality and purity of their goods' ingredients. The use of spices is an essential component in Indian cuisine. There have been a number of enterprises that have lately begun manufacturing masala powders, spice powders, pastes, and other products. As a result of the presence of a large number of well-known brands in the spice sector, the rivalry for marketing these items has been fierce. Businesses have the potential to improve their marketing strategies by gaining an awareness of the buying patterns of consumers in relation to processed spices, the variables that influence the purchases of processed spices, and the challenges that are associated with the utilisation of such items.

Review of Literature

Otterbring conducted research in 2021 to investigate the extent to which the presence or absence of peers and other customers impacted the degree to which consumers had access to famous brands within a certain product category. The results showed that customers are more likely to choose popular products when they are surrounded by peers rather than merely other consumers. This is because peers are more likely to have similar preferences. It is also possible for customers to be influenced by the presence of others to depend on shortcuts and to be more susceptible to notions such as popularity, which ultimately leads to their picking established businesses. Prior to making a choice while they were in the presence of other people, individuals took their time and investigated a number of different possibilities. The findings of this research have consequences for firms in the food industry who are interested in gaining insights into the preferences of consumers when it comes to buying household names. Tomar and Kaur (2020) decided to conduct a research with the purpose of investigating the patterns and difficulties that are experienced by the spice sector in India. It was stated that there was a considerable fall in exports as a result of increased concerns over health, an increasing desire for locally produced items, a reduction in funding for innovation, and harsher law enforcement regarding food.

An investigation of the elements that influence the brand preferences of consumers for fast meals was carried out by Huq and Sarker (2020) in the course of their research. According to the findings of the study, customers in Bangladesh were substantially more influenced by their cultural and religious views than consumers in Sweden were. Furthermore, while identifying producers of fast meals, it was essential to take into consideration the major influence that rapid meal manufacturers had on the health of consumers. In addition, customers in both nations were captivated by enterprises due to the visually appealing product packaging that they offered. According to the findings of a research conducted by Indumathi et al. (2020), the primary factors that influence customers to purchase branded spices include factors such as product quality, appealing packaging, and the reputation of the brand. A cross-sectional research strategy was used in the investigation that was carried out by Vijaya et al. (2020) in order to ascertain the elements that influence the decisions that consumers make with respect to a variety of food goods. Based on the data, it was determined that all four aspects—price, quality, flavour, and availability—were produced. The conduct of customers with respect to food goods was also influenced by demographic considerations, which had a contributing role.

During the year 2020, Zhu and his colleagues studied the purchase patterns, levels of knowledge, and accessibility of Umami Seasonings among Chinese consumers. Based on the findings, it was determined that customers had a limited understanding of UMS. Sixty-two point six percent of the participants believe that the usage of UMS does not have any adverse effects on one's health. The individuals claimed that they obtained the information via various means, including personal relationships, internet sites, and television. The grocery shop was their favoured location for purchasing UMS. Sixty-three point eight percent of people said that if they had access to specific and scientifically supported information on the utilisation of UMS, they would think about making a purchase in the future. With the help of this research, the worldwide seasoning sector could be able to provide clients seasoning items that are specifically crafted to meet their individual tastes and inclinations. In their research, Li and Jaharuddin sought to identify the most important aspects that influence

the choices and preferences of Chinese customers when it comes to purchasing organic food items. After doing the research, it was shown that there is a favourable correlation between attitude and both knowledge and subjective criteria. Furthermore, the research discovered that buy intention is positively connected with attitude, food therapy culture, and perceived behaviour control. Additionally, the study discovered that purchase intention plays a mediating role in the interactions between these characteristics.

Kavinkesinikethane et al. (2019) conducted a research that found that the key reasons that cause people to switch from using handmade spice powders to using branded spice powders are worries over the quality of the spice powders, as well as the limitations of time and skill that are necessary for production. The convenience of branded spices in portable packets was shown to be a factor that affected customer preference for these spices, according to the results of the study. An examination of the opinions of customers in Bangladesh about a variety of spice powders, including coriander, turmeric, cumin, chilli, and mixed spices, was carried out by Sattar et al. (2019). In addition to the preventative precautions they had taken, the team investigated the effects that improperly prepared spices had on the health of customers. Based on the findings, it was found that roughly 91 percent of the participants had the opinion that the spice powders were of low quality. Several distinct kinds of adulteration were also highlighted by respondents to the survey.

Methodology

Those who are in charge of conducting the research want to perform an exhaustive investigation of the subject matter. Through the use of convenience sampling, we chose a sample of around 132 persons to investigate whether or not they fulfilled the requirements of the research. When doing the analysis, we made use of both primary and secondary materials in conjunction with one another. The use of a closed-ended questionnaire that was especially designed to integrate a Likert scale was the main method that was utilised for the purpose of data collection. In addition, a wide range of secondary data sources, such as EBSCO, Google Scholar, and other pertinent web sites, are employed in order to get a full grasp of the research that has been done in the past on the topic. The SPSS data tool was used in the study process, which was carried out after the collection of data from 132 different people.

Objective of the study

- To investigate the extent price in influencing the penetration levels of branded masalas in selected cities in Tamil Nadu
- To analyse the role of quality of the products in influencing the penetration levels of branded masalas in selected cities in Tamil Nadu
- To explore the variety attributes in influencing the penetration levels of branded masalas in selected cities in Tamil Nadu
- To apprehend the impact of health consciousness in influencing the penetration levels of branded masalas in selected cities in Tamil Nadu
- To provide critical recommendations and suggestions based on the analysis.

Hypothesis

H0: There is no significant difference between price of the products in influencing the penetration levels of branded masalas

H1: There is a significant difference between price of the products in influencing the penetration levels of branded masalas

H0: There is no significant difference between quality of the products in influencing the penetration levels of branded masalas

H1: There is a significant difference between quality of the products in influencing the penetration levels of branded masalas

H0: There is no significant difference between variety attributes of the products in influencing the penetration levels of branded masalas

H1: There is a significant difference between variety attributes of the products in influencing the penetration levels of branded masalas

H0: There is no significant difference between health consciousness in influencing the penetration levels of branded masalas

H1: There is a significant difference between health consciousness in influencing the penetration levels of branded masalas

Analysis

Reliability of the study

While performing the reliability analysis it is noted that all the coefficients were above 0.700, hence the data indicates a high degree of reliability

Table 1: Reliability analysis

Variables	No. of items	Cronbach Alpha
Price	3	0.959
Quality	3	0.949
Variety	3	0.922
Health Consciousness	3	0.944
Penetration levels	3	0.971

In general, high Cronbach Alpha values for all three variables suggest significant item association within each construct. This indicates excellent internal consistency and that the related item sets consistently evaluate

these constructs. The reliability of these measurement scales improves data conclusions. This reveals all the factors possess Cronbach value of more than 0.700, hence the data is reliable and consistent

Demographic analysis

The next step is to summarise the demographic data using percentage rate method

Table 2: Demographic analysis

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	19	14.40
Female	113	85.60
Age groups	Frequency	Percent
Less than 25 years	41	31.10
25 - 29 years	44	33.30
30 - 34 years	16	12.10
35 - 39 years	31	23.50
Marital status	Frequency	Percent
Unmarried	87	65.90
Married	45	34.10
Area of living	Frequency	Percent
Metro City	92	69.70
Non-Metro	40	30.30
Type of Organisation	Frequency	Percent
Student	38	28.80
Working in private organisation	80	60.60
Working in government organisation	14	10.60
Monthly grocery purchase	Frequency	Percent
Less than Rs. 1,000	39	29.50
Rs. 1,001 - Rs. 1,500	30	22.70
Rs. 1,500 - Rs. 2,000	22	16.70
Rs. 2,001 - Rs. 2,500	9	6.80
More than Rs. 2,500	32	24.20
Popular brands	Frequency	Percent
Aachi	6	4.50
Shakti	12	9.10
Everest	16	12.10
MDH	36	27.30
Others	62	47.00

Total	132	100.00

The provided data represents the distribution and characteristics of a sample population across various demographic categories. Starting with gender, it is evident that females constitute the majority with 113 individuals, representing 85.60% of the sample, while males make up a smaller portion at 19 individuals, accounting for 14.40%. In terms of age groups, the largest proportion falls within the 25-29 years category with 44 individuals, making up 33.30% of the sample, followed by those under 25 years with 41 individuals, constituting 31.10%. The marital status distribution reveals that a majority of respondents are unmarried, comprising 87 individuals or 65.90%, while married individuals represent 45 individuals or 34.10%. Moving on to the area of living, a significant proportion, 92 individuals or 69.70%, reside in metro cities, whereas 40 individuals or 30.30% reside in non-metro areas. When considering the type of organization, the majority of respondents, 80 individuals or 60.60%, work in private organizations, followed by 38 individuals or 28.80% who are students, and a smaller proportion, 14 individuals or 10.60%, work in government organizations. Regarding monthly grocery purchase amounts, the data indicates that the largest proportion of respondents, 36 individuals or 27.30%, spend their grocery budget on MDH brand products, followed by 62 individuals or 47.00% who purchase other brands. Lastly, the provided data gives a comprehensive overview of the demographic composition and consumer behavior patterns within the sampled population, offering valuable insights for further analysis and decision-making processes.

Correlation analysis

Table 3: Correlation analysis

Correlations	Price	Quality	Variety	Health Consciousness	Penetration levels
Price	1	.896**	.844**	.861**	.831**
Quality	.896**	1	.858**	.871**	.848**
Variety	.844**	.858**	1	.836**	.761**
Health Consciousness	.861**	.871**	.836**	1	.813**
Penetration levels	.831**	.848**	.761**	.813**	1

The correlation matrix provided offers insights into the relationships between different variables, specifically Price, Quality, Variety, Health Consciousness, and Penetration Levels. Each cell in the matrix represents the correlation coefficient, ranging from -1 to 1, indicating the strength and direction of the relationship between the respective variables. Starting with the correlation between Price and other factors, we observe strong positive correlations ($p < 0.01$) with Quality (0.896), Variety (0.844), Health Consciousness (0.861), and Penetration Levels (0.831). This suggests that as the price of a product increases, there tends to be a corresponding increase in perceptions of quality, variety, health consciousness, and penetration levels.

Similarly, Quality demonstrates strong positive correlations ($p < 0.01$) with Price (0.896), Variety (0.858), Health Consciousness (0.871), and Penetration Levels (0.848). This indicates that higher perceived quality is associated with higher prices, greater variety, increased health consciousness, and higher penetration levels. Variety also exhibits strong positive correlations ($p < 0.01$) with Price (0.844), Quality (0.858), Health Consciousness (0.836), and Penetration Levels (0.761). This implies that products offering a wider variety tend to be associated with higher prices, better quality, increased health consciousness, and higher penetration levels.

Health Consciousness displays strong positive correlations ($p < 0.01$) with Price (0.861), Quality (0.871), Variety (0.836), and Penetration Levels (0.813). This suggests that products perceived as healthier are likely to have higher prices, better quality, greater variety, and higher penetration levels. Finally, Penetration Levels demonstrate strong positive correlations ($p < 0.01$) with Price (0.831), Quality (0.848), Variety (0.761), and Health Consciousness (0.813). This implies that products with higher penetration levels tend to be associated with higher prices, better quality, greater variety, and increased health consciousness

Regression analysis

The researcher intends to perform regression analysis between the independent variables (Price, Quality, Variety and Health Consciousness) with dependent variable (Penetration levels)

Table 4: Regression analysis

Model	**R**	**R Square**	**Adjusted R Square**
Regression	0.869	0.755	0.747

Regression	**B**	**P Value**
(Constant)	0.069	0.74
Price	0.292	0.01
Quality	0.417	0.00
Variety	-0.027	0.78
Health Consciousness	0.237	0.03
F	97.597	
Sig.	0.00	

The regression analysis results provided offer insights into the relationship between the dependent variable (not explicitly stated) and the independent variables: Price, Quality, Variety, and Health Consciousness. Starting with the constant term, the coefficient of 0.069 suggests that when all independent variables are zero, the dependent variable is expected to have a value of 0.069. However, the p-value of 0.74 indicates that this coefficient is not statistically significant at the conventional significance level of 0.05. Moving on to the independent variables, the coefficients represent the change in the dependent variable associated with a one-unit increase in each independent variable while holding other variables constant.

For Price, the coefficient of 0.292 indicates that a one-unit increase in price is associated with an increase of 0.292 units in the dependent variable. The p-value of 0.01 suggests that this relationship is statistically significant, implying that price has a significant impact on the dependent variable. Similarly, for Quality, the coefficient of 0.417 indicates that a one-unit increase in quality is associated with an increase of 0.417 units in the dependent variable. The p-value of 0.00 indicates that this relationship is statistically significant, highlighting the significant impact of quality on the dependent variable. Regarding Variety, the coefficient of -0.027 suggests that a one-unit increase in variety is associated with a decrease of 0.027 units in the dependent variable. However, the p-value of 0.78 suggests that this relationship is not statistically significant, indicating that variety may not have a significant impact on the dependent variable.

For Health Consciousness, the coefficient of 0.237 suggests that a one-unit increase in health consciousness is associated with an increase of 0.237 units in the dependent variable. The p-value of 0.03 indicates that this relationship is statistically significant, highlighting the significant impact of health consciousness on the dependent variable. The F-statistic of 97.597 with a p-value of 0.00 suggests that the overall regression model is statistically significant, indicating that at least one of the independent variables has a significant effect on the dependent variable.

Chi square analysis

The last part of the analysis delves around the testing of hypothesis using chi square analysis

H0: There is no significant difference between price of the products in influencing the penetration levels of branded masalas

H1: There is a significant difference between price of the products in influencing the penetration levels of branded masalas

Table 5: Cross tabulation between Price and Penetration levels

	Penetration levels					
Price	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Strongly Disagree	2	1	0	0	0	3
Disagree	6	9	0	0	0	15
Neutral	0	2	13	1	0	16
Agree	0	0	2	9	13	24
Strongly Agree	0	0	4	29	41	74
Total	8	12	19	39	54	132
Chi-Square Tests	Value	df	P value			
Pearson Chi-Square	194.300a	16	0.00			
Likelihood Ratio	154.793	16	0.00			

The provided table presents the cross-tabulation of Penetration Levels against Price, demonstrating the frequency distribution of responses based on the levels of agreement and disagreement. Each cell in the table represents the count of respondents falling into a particular combination of agreement levels for both Price and Penetration Levels. Upon examining the Chi-Square Tests section, we observe significant values for both the Pearson Chi-Square and Likelihood Ratio tests, with values of 194.300 and 154.793 respectively, both having 16 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.00. These results indicate a statistically significant association between Price and Penetration Levels. To interpret the table, we can analyze the distribution of responses across the different levels of agreement for both variables. Notably, as Price increases from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree, there is a visible trend in the distribution of Penetration Levels. Specifically, as respondents move from disagreeing with the price to agreeing and strongly agreeing, there is a corresponding increase in the frequency of respondents who report higher Penetration Levels. This suggests that there is a relationship between the perceived pricing of a product and its penetration in the market.

For instance, looking at the cells where respondents strongly agree with the Price and Penetration Levels, we see a relatively higher count of 41 individuals, indicating that when respondents strongly agree with the price of a product, they are more likely to perceive higher penetration levels for that product. Conversely, as we move towards disagreement with the price, the counts decrease, indicating a lower perception of penetration levels. Hence it can be stated that there is a significant difference between price of the products in influencing the penetration levels of branded masalas

H0: There is no significant difference between quality of the products in influencing the penetration levels of branded masalas

H1: There is a significant difference between quality of the products in influencing the penetration levels of branded masalas

Table 6: Cross tabulation between quality and penetration levels

	Penetration levels					
Quality	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Strongly Disagree	1	6	0	0	0	7
Disagree	7	4	0	0	0	11
Neutral	0	2	10	1	0	13
Agree	0	0	3	8	2	13
Strongly Agree	0	0	6	30	52	88
Total	8	12	19	39	54	132
Chi-Square Tests	Value	df	P value			
Pearson Chi-Square	208.308a	16	0.00			
Likelihood Ratio	154.105	16	0.00			

The presented table illustrates the distribution of responses regarding Penetration Levels across different levels of agreement with Quality. Each cell in the table represents the count of respondents falling into a specific combination of agreement levels for both Quality and Penetration Levels. Upon examining the Chi-Square Tests section, both the Pearson Chi-Square and Likelihood Ratio tests yield significant values, with respective values of 208.308 and 154.105, each with 16 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.00. These results indicate a statistically significant association between Quality and Penetration Levels.

To interpret the table, we can analyze the distribution of responses across the various levels of agreement for both variables. Notably, as respondents' agreement with Quality increases from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree, there is a discernible trend in the distribution of Penetration Levels. Specifically, as agreement with Quality increases, there is a corresponding rise in the frequency of respondents reporting higher Penetration Levels. This suggests that there is a relationship between perceived quality and the penetration of a product in the market. For instance, in the cells where respondents strongly agree with both Quality and Penetration Levels, there is a substantially higher count of 52 individuals, indicating that when respondents strongly agree with the quality of a product, they are more likely to perceive higher penetration levels for that product. Conversely, as agreement with Quality decreases, the counts diminish, suggesting a lower perception of penetration levels.. Hence it can be stated that there is a significant difference between quality of the products in influencing the penetration levels of branded masalas.

H0: There is no significant difference between variety attributes of the products in influencing the penetration levels of branded masalas

H1: There is a significant difference between variety attributes of the products in influencing the penetration levels of branded masalas

Table 7: Cross tabulation between variety and penetration levels

	Penetration levels					
Variety	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Strongly Disagree	3	4	0	0	0	7
Disagree	5	6	0	0	0	11
Neutral	0	1	12	1	2	16
Agree	0	1	1	19	22	43
Strongly Agree	0	0	6	19	30	55
Total	8	12	19	39	54	132
Chi-Square Tests	Value	df	P value			
Pearson Chi-Square	175.003a	16	0.00			
Likelihood Ratio	137.749	16	0.00			

The table provided depicts the distribution of respondents' perceptions of Penetration Levels across different levels of agreement with Variety. Each cell in the table represents the count of respondents falling into a

specific combination of agreement levels for both Variety and Penetration Levels. Upon examining the Chi-Square Tests section, both the Pearson Chi-Square and Likelihood Ratio tests yield significant values, with respective values of 175.003 and 137.749, each with 16 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.00. These results indicate a statistically significant association between Variety and Penetration Levels.

To interpret the table, we can analyze the distribution of responses across the various levels of agreement for both variables. Notably, as respondents' agreement with Variety increases from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree, there is a discernible trend in the distribution of Penetration Levels. Specifically, as agreement with Variety increases, there is a corresponding rise in the frequency of respondents reporting higher Penetration Levels. This suggests that there is a relationship between perceived variety and the penetration of a product in the market. For instance, in the cells where respondents strongly agree with both Variety and Penetration Levels, there is a substantially higher count of 30 individuals, indicating that when respondents strongly agree with the variety of a product, they are more likely to perceive higher penetration levels for that product. Conversely, as agreement with Variety decreases, the counts diminish, suggesting a lower perception of penetration levels Hence it can be stated that there is a significant difference between variety attributes of the products in influencing the penetration levels of branded masalas.

H0: There is no significant difference between health consciousness in influencing the penetration levels of branded masalas

H1: There is a significant difference between health consciousness in influencing the penetration levels of branded masalas

Table 8: Cross tabulation between health consciousness and penetration levels

	Penetration levels					
Health Consciousness	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Strongly Disagree	1	3	0	0	0	4
Disagree	7	7	0	0	0	14
Neutral	0	2	13	1	0	16
Agree	0	0	2	16	18	36
Strongly Agree	0	0	4	22	36	62
Total	8	12	19	39	54	132
Chi-Square Tests	Value	df	P value			
Pearson Chi-Square	195.620a	16	0.00			
Likelihood Ratio	155.406	16	0.00			

The provided table presents the distribution of respondents' perceptions of Penetration Levels across different levels of agreement with Health Consciousness. Each cell in the table represents the count of respondents falling into a specific combination of agreement levels for both Health Consciousness and Penetration Levels. Upon examining the Chi-Square Tests section, both the Pearson Chi-Square and Likelihood Ratio tests yield

significant values, with respective values of 195.620 and 155.406, each with 16 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.00. These results indicate a statistically significant association between Health Consciousness and Penetration Levels.

To interpret the table, we can analyze the distribution of responses across the various levels of agreement for both variables. Notably, as respondents' agreement with Health Consciousness increases from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree, there is a discernible trend in the distribution of Penetration Levels. Specifically, as agreement with Health Consciousness increases, there is a corresponding rise in the frequency of respondents reporting higher Penetration Levels. This suggests that there is a relationship between perceived health consciousness and the penetration of a product in the market. For instance, in the cells where respondents strongly agree with both Health Consciousness and Penetration Levels, there is a substantially higher count of 36 individuals, indicating that when respondents strongly agree with the health consciousness associated with a product, they are more likely to perceive higher penetration levels for that product. Conversely, as agreement with Health Consciousness decreases, the counts diminish, suggesting a lower perception of penetration levels. Hence it can be stated that there is a significant difference between health consciousness in influencing the penetration levels of branded masalas.

Recommendations

Based on the study focusing on understanding the factors influencing penetration levels of branded masalas in selected cities in Tamil Nadu, several recommendations can be proposed regarding the factors of price, quality, variety, and health consciousness:

Price Strategy Optimization: Conduct a thorough analysis of competitors' pricing strategies within the branded masala market segment in Tamil Nadu. Based on this analysis, consider adjusting pricing strategies to align with consumer preferences and market demand. Additionally, explore the possibility of offering discounts, promotions, or bundle deals to attract price-sensitive consumers without compromising on perceived value.

Quality Assurance and Improvement: Continuously monitor and ensure the quality of branded masala products through rigorous quality control measures and adherence to industry standards. Invest in research and development to innovate and improve product formulations, packaging, and manufacturing processes to maintain a competitive edge in terms of product quality. Communicate the commitment to quality through labeling, certifications, and transparent information to build consumer trust and loyalty.

Product Variety Expansion: Diversify the product portfolio by introducing new flavors, blends, and packaging sizes to cater to diverse consumer preferences within the target market. Conduct market research and consumer surveys to identify emerging trends and demand patterns, thereby guiding decisions regarding

product assortment and variety expansion. Additionally, consider offering customizable options or limited-edition releases to appeal to niche market segments and enhance brand differentiation.

Health Consciousness Promotion: Capitalize on the growing trend of health consciousness among consumers by emphasizing the nutritional value, organic ingredients, and health benefits of branded masala products. Incorporate clear and informative labeling regarding nutritional content, allergens, and certifications such as organic or non-GMO to resonate with health-conscious consumers. Engage in marketing campaigns and social media initiatives focusing on the health aspects of the product, highlighting its contribution to overall well-being and healthy lifestyle choices.

Consumer Education and Awareness: Develop educational resources and content to educate consumers about the importance of quality ingredients, proper usage, and storage of branded masalas. Organize cooking demonstrations, workshops, or online tutorials to showcase the versatility of the products and inspire consumers to experiment with new recipes and culinary experiences. Foster a sense of community and engagement by encouraging user-generated content and testimonials, thereby fostering brand advocacy and word-of-mouth referrals.

Distribution Channel Expansion: Explore opportunities to expand distribution channels and enhance market penetration by collaborating with retailers, supermarkets, online platforms, and specialty stores catering to ethnic cuisine. Ensure efficient supply chain management and logistics to maintain product availability and timely delivery to meet consumer demand across different geographic locations and customer segments.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study sheds light on the factors influencing penetration levels of branded masalas in selected cities in Tamil Nadu. Through an analysis of variables such as price, quality, variety, and health consciousness, valuable insights have been gained into consumer preferences and market dynamics within the branded masala segment. The findings highlight the significance of these factors in influencing consumer purchasing decisions and ultimately shaping market penetration levels. By understanding and strategically addressing these factors, brands can effectively enhance their market presence, cater to diverse consumer needs, and drive sustainable growth in the competitive landscape of Tamil Nadu's masala market. Further research and continuous adaptation of marketing strategies will be crucial for brands to remain responsive to evolving consumer trends and preferences, thereby maintaining a competitive edge and fostering long-term success in the dynamic marketplace.

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