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Consumer perception towards social media promotion of millet-based ready-to-eat products: Evidence from Hyderabad

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Abstract

The demand for Ready-to-Eat (RTE) products made from millet is rising as people become more conscious of the need of eating healthily. Social media platforms are crucial for advertising these goods and influencing the purchasing decisions of customers. This study looks at how consumers in Hyderabad feel about millet-based RTE items being promoted on social media. A structured survey was used to gather primary data from 120 customers, and descriptive statistics and Henry Garrett's ranking method were used for analysis. The results show that the majority of respondents are graduates from nuclear households and fall into the 40-50 age range. Millet biscuits (40%) were the most popular RTE millet product, followed by millet laddu (27%) and millet murukku (33%). When it comes to influencing customer purchase behaviour, Facebook came in first, followed by YouTube and Instagram. The most important social media elements influencing consumer perception and purchasing decisions were found to be user reviews and educational content.

Keywords: Social media marketing, consumer perception, digital promotion, millet based ready-to-eat products, purchasing behaviour

Introduction

Food is a basic human need that supplies vital nutrients needed for development, growth, and general health. Consumer preferences have clearly shifted in recent years from traditional staple foods to more nutrient-dense and healthful options. Due to their high nutritional content, climate resistance, and possible health benefits including treating diabetes and cardiovascular diseases, millets also known as ancient grains have attracted increased attention. Millet-based Ready-to-Eat (RTE) products including cookies, snacks, and traditional foods are becoming more and more popular among consumers due to expanding urbanization, hectic lives, and increased health consciousness.

At the same time, social media has become an effective marketing instrument that allows businesses to advertise goods, increase brand recognition, and sway customer purchase decisions. Businesses can interact directly with customers with visual material, reviews, and educational posts on social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube. In this regard, companies that promote millet-based RTE goods must comprehend how consumers view social media promotion. Thus, this study looks at how

Hyderabad consumers feel about millet-based RTE items being promoted on social media.

Materials and Methods

The study required collection of data from Hyderabad, Gachibowli and Sainikpuri localities, as the selected firm is keen on expanding its market in these areas, in which the products are premiumly placed. About availability of various brands of RTE products, six supermarkets and 10 retailers were selected for collecting the data based on convenient sampling method from Gachibowli, Sainikpuri, Chengincherla, Nampally and Uppal areas. Primary data was collected from retailers and supermarkets and major social media platforms. The relevant secondary data was collected from research papers, articles, books, journals, websites, newsletters and government records.

Results and discussion

The research results provide important insights into the respondents socioeconomic profile and how social media influences consumers perceptions of millet-based Ready-to-Eat (RTE) products.

Table 1: Demographic information of the respondents in the study area

Particulars	Categories	No. of respondents (120)	Percentage
Age	10-20	9	7.5
	20-30	31	25.83
	30-40	26	21.67
	40-50	40	33.33
	50-60	10	8.33
	Above 60	4	3.33
Sex	Male	63	52.5
	Female	57	47.5
Education	Illiterate	8	6.67
	Primary	11	9.17
	High school	17	14.17
	Intermediate	28	23.33
	Graduate	48	40
	Doctorate	9	7.5
Family type	Joint	21	17.5
	Nuclear	99	82.5
Family size	Small (below 5)	99	82.5
	Medium (5-7)	15	12.5
	Large (more than 7)	6	5
Food habit	Vegetarian	48	40
	Non-vegetarian	72	60
Family Income (annually) Rs	< 5 L	8	6.67
	5L to < 8 L	12	10
	8L to < 10 L	37	30.83
	>10 L	63	52.5
Occupation	Student	16	13.33
	House wife	17	14.17
	Government employee	21	17.5
	Private	49	40.83
	Business	15	12.5

Social media platform influence on consumer, for selected firm's millet based RTE products

To analyze influence of online platforms on consumers purchasing behaviour, for millet-based RTE products, the data has been gathered from 120 consumers of selected firm.

Table 2: Influence of online platforms on consumers purchasing behaviour, for millet-based RTE products

S.No	Factors	Score	Rank
1	Facebook	55.95	1
2	Instagram	54.26	2
3	Youtube	51.38	3
4	Google	46.56	4
5	LinkedIn	43.82	5

Table 3: Social media content influence on consumer, for selected firms millet based RTE products

S.No	Factors	Score	Rank
1	User Review	53.96	1
2	Informative content/Infographics	51.76	2
3	Quality of content	51.18	3
4	Visual Appeal	46.88	4
5	Frequency of posts	44.23	5

The research results provide important insights into the respondents socioeconomic profile and how social media influences consumers perceptions of millet-based Ready-to-Eat (RTE) products.

According to the demographic analysis Table 1, a significant percentage of respondents (33.33%) are between the ages of 40 and 50, followed by those between the ages of 20 and 30 (25.83%). This suggests that middle-aged customers are comparatively more accepting of millet-based products, perhaps as a result of their heightened health knowledge and vulnerability to lifestyle-related diseases. Because of the virtually equal gender distribution, both male (52.5%) and female (47.5%) viewpoints are represented.

Higher educational levels are favourably correlated with awareness and acceptability of millet-based RTE products, as evidenced by the fact that 40% of respondents are graduates. Convenience and time-saving food options are chosen in metropolitan areas, as evidenced by the prevalence of nuclear families (82.5%) and small family sizes (82.5%).

52.5% of respondents belong into the high-income category (> ₹10 lakh), according to the income distribution, indicating that millet-based RTE items are seen as luxury or health-focused goods. This tendency is further supported by occupational statistics, which shows that working professionals have a need for quick and wholesome food, with private sector employees making up the largest portion (40.83%).

An analysis on table 2 shows the influence of online platforms on consumers purchasing behaviour, for millet-based RTE products. Henry Garrett's ranking method offers more in-depth understanding of how social media platforms affect consumer behaviour. Facebook took first place with a

score of 55.95, followed by YouTube (51.38) and Instagram (54.26). These platforms rate higher because of their interactive features, visual appeal, and extensive use, all of which increase consumer exposure to and interaction with promotional content.

User reviews score highest in terms of affecting consumer perception, according to additional research of content-related criteria (53.96). This emphasizes how important electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) is for lowering perceived risk and boosting confidence in millet-based products. Infographics and informative content rank second (51.76), indicating that customer views are greatly impacted by the broadcast of information about nutritional benefits. Decision-making is influenced by clarity, credibility, and presentation standards, as demonstrated by the importance of content quality (51.18).

On the other hand, Table 3, which presents the influence of social media content on consumers for selected firms millet-based RTE products, gives visual appeal (46.88) and post frequency (44.23) obtained comparatively lower rankings, indicating that aesthetic components by themselves are insufficient in the absence of substantial and reliable content. This demonstrates how urban consumers are moving from superficial participation to knowledgeable consumption behaviour.

Millet cookies (40%) are the most popular product, followed by millet murukku (33%) and millet laddu (27%), according to a product preference analysis. This pattern suggests that consumers are less resistant to dietary change when they choose goods that combine health benefits with familiar consumption patterns.

Conclusion

The study comes to the conclusion that social media has a big impact on how consumers see and buy ready-to-eat goods made from millet. Social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube are important factors in consumer decision-making, as are user reviews and educational information. The results show that the main adopters are middle-aged, educated, and wealthy consumers. Therefore, to increase acceptance and successfully sell millet-based products, marketers should concentrate on trustworthy, educational, and customer-focused digital tactics.

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