

Factor Influencing Tea Consumer Behavior in China A Case Study of Fujian Province

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to identify the factors that influence consumer behavior toward Tea and provide recommendations for its development and marketing. The independent factors were Brand Healthiness, Perceived culture, Pecuniary condition, Education, and Price. The total sample size of 400 respondents was collected using the survey questionnaire in China: A Case Study of Fujian Province. Multiple Regression Analysis was applied to analyze the data.

The research results indicate that price, education, perceived culture, healthiness, and pecuniary condition positively impact consumer behavior towards tea.

Keywords: Chinese tea, Influence factor, Consumer behavior

Introduction

Tea culture is an essential part of Chinese tradition culture. Chinese consumers have long established traditions of drinking tea and have developed a unique lifestyle based on the consumption of tea (Lee & Liao, 2009). In the early 21st century, the global increase in upscale coffee shops and the subsequent introduction of coffee shops in China disrupted the Chinese tea drinking tradition. Starting in 1999, Starbucks, the pacesetter of the coffee chain industry, has opened over 3,000 outlets in China and is considering opening 2,000 more outlets by the end of 2021 (Hales, 2018). However, it is still too early to draw the conclusion that the coffee bean usurps the tea leaves' place for Chinese consumers. The tea culture among the modern Chinese consumers, especially millennials, is shifting into an industry that is similar to that of coffee shops in other countries, especially Western

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countries, but, with a broader offering of upscale and gourmet tea drinks. China's time-honored tradition of drinking tea is in transition from drinking traditional tea drinks, which focuses on the taste of tea leaves, to a new style of tea drink, a creamy, flavored milk tea drink (Ren & Jin, 2018). Unlike the earlier tea-drinks, which were simply made with milk tea powder, the new style tea drink is freshly brewed and provides a wide variety of tastes and characteristics. What's more, Chinese consumers' tea drinking habits are changing. Some younger consumers now perceive tea drinking not as a time-consuming traditional tea "ceremony" but as part of a cool and modern lifestyle (Li, 2018). According to Kantar Worldpanel, Chinese residents aged 15-45 buy 14.3 cups of made-to-order tea drinks a year, contributing to a market segment of 97.8 billion yuan (14.6 billion USD) in annual sales (Ren & Jin, 2018). The new style tea drink is a large and growing market and as such has garnered considerable attention from entrepreneurs, investors and coffee chain outlet operators.

In China, drinking tea has become an integral part of daily life, and it is currently the largest tea producer globally, boasting mature production technologies and processing systems (Liang, 2021). With the continuous improvement of living standards and heightened health awareness among Chinese consumers, the demand for high-quality tea is growing. China's tea production will reach 3.18 million tons in 2021, with an annual output of 8.5% (Report on the development of China's tea industry and consumer insight in 2022-2023 - Tea Friends Network (formerly China Pu'er Tea Network), 2022).

By identifying these factors, stakeholders can devise and implement effective strategies to enhance the industry's competitiveness and promote growth. This study presents a unique opportunity to solidify the position tea industry in the highly competitive Chinese tea market. The proposed study aims to provide an in-depth understanding of the primary drivers of tea consumption and help identify the challenges facing the industry in Fujian Province. Thus, the strategic importance of this study.

Research Questions

RQ1: What is the level of Consumer Behavior in China A Case Study of Fujian Province?

RQ2: What are the factors that affect Consumer Behavior in China A Case Study of Fujian Province?

Research Objectives

1) to study the level of Consumer Behavior in China A Case Study of Fujian Province.

2) to study the factors that affect Consumer Behavior in China A Case Study of Fujian Province.

Literature Review

1.Relationship between price and consumer behavior

According to Sumi and Kabir (2018), price is a crucial factor influencing tea

consumers' purchasing behavior, and health-conscious consumers are willing to pay a premium for healthy tea. However, among tea consumers, not all are willing to pay the associated premium. Instead, many consider the product's value and are highly price-conscious and interested in price flexibility. Zheng et al. (2021) provide evidence that price consciousness significantly moderates tea health product consumption behavior, Consumers who are more price conscious tend to prioritize price when making purchasing decisions. In addition to this, dynamic pricing has a positive impact on consumer behavior, with different pricing strategies tailored to different situations helping to increase consumer engagement (Motoaki & Shirk, 2017). Price elasticity and promotions can also have a positive impact on consumer behavior. Large price elasticities and promotions tend to increase consumer desire and the likelihood of making a purchase (Petricek et al., 2020).

2. Relationship between educational attainment and consumer behavior

In this study, education is the embodiment of knowledge, skills, values, beliefs, habits and time flexibility. For example, the perception and loyalty of health products and the management of time. It can be formal or informal. The relationship between educational attainment and consumer behavior has become a topic of mounting interest in recent years. Burghlea and Aceleanu (2014) have suggested that consumer behavior can be subject to the influence of the level of education achieved for consumption. Given that the consumer groups of tea exhibit

a diverse range of educational levels, exploring the impact of educational factors on tea consumption behavior has emerged as a key area of focus for this study.

As Joshi and Rahman (2015) argue, consumers with higher education levels seem to be predisposed to green consumption behaviors, such as consuming environmentally friendly products, and health products. Moreover, as Mehta et al. (2020) have discovered, brand loyalty is frequently demonstrated among young and educated customers. As Petroman et al. (2015) suggest, an educated consumer is an informed consumer. Furthermore, individuals with higher levels of education also tend to consume a greater proportion of nutritious foods and a smaller amount of unhealthy foods (Islam & Sim, 2021). Consequently, tea, as a healthy and environmentally friendly product, might prove to be highly appealing to educated consumers.

3. Relationship between Perceived culture and consumer behavior

The role of culture in shaping consumer behavior is of paramount importance and has a significant impact on consumers' perceptions, evaluations, and consumption decisions. Culture is widely recognized as one of the key drivers of consumer judgment and decision-making (Torelli et al., 2017). The intricate relationship between consumer behavior and cultural factors, including the culture of the buyer, subcultures, and social class, is complex and multifaceted (Gajjar, 2013).

4. Relationship between healthiness and consumer behavior

The subject of health is a matter that concerns all people and is known to be influenced by various factors, as reported by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2008. Health is affected by a conglomeration of elements, which are derived from social and economic circumstances, the physical environment, and individual characteristics and inclinations. The involvement of health-related considerations is, without a doubt, a fundamental aspect when it comes to making consumption choices

among consumers. This is a trend that has been gaining traction and is substantially influenced by health aspects, according to Rana and Paul (2017) and Wang et al. (2018). It has been recognized by Pechmann and Catlin (2016) that health-oriented communication can produce substantial and measurable effects on the recognition, emotion and behavior of consumers. Individuals are, indeed, becoming more cognizant of their well-being and paying increased attention to the health benefits that healthy beverages, such as tea, can provide (Oke et al., 2016). The tea culture in China has a profoundly rooted influence on the Chinese population, particularly with regard to the health functions of tea. Consequently, it has emerged as a general consensus among the Chinese people that tea consumption can lead to improved health or that tea is, in fact, a means of achieving good health.

5. Relationship between pecuniary condition and consumer behavior

The intricacies of consumption are fundamentally intertwined with the condition of one's pecuniary resources. As the levels of income fluctuate, it follows that the consumption patterns of consumers will inevitably undergo changes in response. It is crucial to note that the consumption structure is intimately connected to the level of income, as elucidated by Zhang's (2021) study. Gajjar's (2013) research similarly points to the fact that customers with higher incomes and savings are more inclined to purchase expensive items, whereas those with more limited resources prefer more affordable products. Therefore, when it comes to tea consumption in China, individuals with more affluent pecuniary conditions exhibit a greater willingness to invest in expensive tea products, while those in less privileged situations opt for cheaper alternatives. One cannot simply equate social class with income alone, for it is a multifaceted construct that considers other crucial factors such as education, occupation, and wealth (Gajjar, 2013). Moreover, the level of social class reflects one's economic prowess, and as such, those who belong to the upper echelons

of society are inclined to pursue more opulent, rarefied, and high-quality teas. Income level is a decisive factor in the consumer's decision-making process, as suggested by Ahmed et al. (2016). However, in the realm of tea consumption behavior, whether one has a high or low pecuniary status is not the sole determinant of their spending habits. Chinese consumers are avid tea enthusiasts who are unlikely to stop purchasing tea altogether, regardless of their pecuniary conditions. Instead, they savor tea in leisurely settings and participate actively in online tea communities. These studies offer valuable insights into the complex interplay between pecuniary conditions and tea consumption behavior in China. The evidence suggests that higher-income individuals are more likely to consume premium tea products, but the passion for tea remains ubiquitous across all strata of society. The consumption structure of tea products is profoundly influenced by one's economic status, and understanding these intricacies can help tea producers and marketers tailor their products to suit the preferences of different consumer groups.

Research Framework

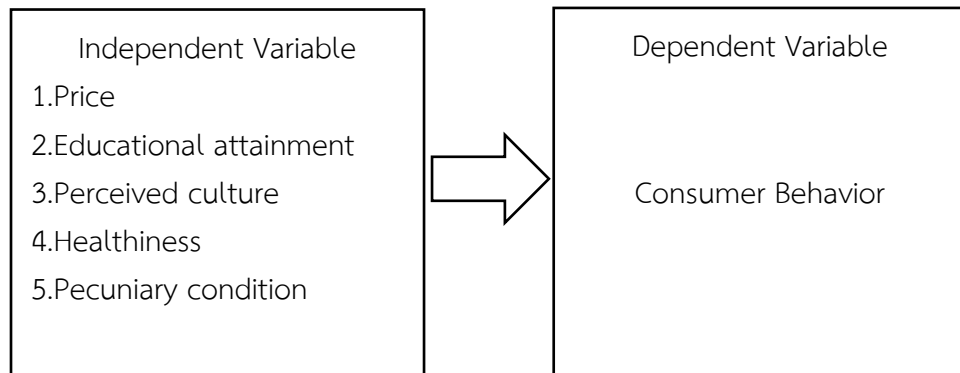


Figure 1 Research framework

Research Methodology

In this study, the primary objective was to examine the factors that influence the consumption behavior of tea. The researchers employed

both primary and secondary data sources to gather relevant information. Primary data was collected through a questionnaire that was administered directly to respondents. The questionnaire utilized a five-point Likert scale to assess various factors that influenced their consumption behavior. The primary data collection lasted for two month, and it was considered reliable as it was collected directly from individuals relevant to the research topic.

The study employed quantitative methods to analyze the collected data. SPSS analysis data was used, which included Cronbach's Alpha, descriptive statistics, and multiple linear regression analyses to confirm and demonstrate the relevance of the hypotheses. The data was also analyzed using a five-point Likert scale analysis. the data collection process can be summarized in four main steps: first, the researchers identified the research topic, conceptual frameworks, and variables. Second, the researcher selected 400 valid questionnaires from a total of 400 online questionnaires. Third, the researcher conducted a quantitative analysis of the 400 valid questionnaires. Finally, the researcher wrote and revised the research papers.

Population and sample

This study Sample is 400 tea consumer in Fujian Province. The size was determined by calculating (*W.G. Cochran* (1953)

IOC Validated for Questionnaire

Validated for Questionnaire prior to conducting the main study, eliminate confusion and ambiguities of wording. This study invited three experts to verify by using the Index of Congruency (IOC), to test congruency and content validity of questionnaire .

Evaluation criteria are used to check the consistency between objectives and test items, as follows:

+1 = the test item is considered to be consistent with the goal.

0 = the test item is considered neutral in terms of whether the test item is consistent with the goal.

-1 = the test item is considered to be inconsistent with the target.

For acceptable data, the Index of Congruency (IOC) follow:

IOC of Questionnaire between 0.67 – 1.00 higher than 0.5 all of questions.

Data collection

The selected methodology of this study is a survey that used the Google form to collect the data via an online channel. The researcher chose SPSS software to analyze the factors behavior of costumer after getting the results from 400 respondents.

Data Analysis

After collect the questionnaires, researcher will,

1. Editing by exclusion the incomplete data.
2. Bring complete questionnaire to code and analyze by statistical programing.

2.1 Descriptive Statistic to explain data about personal information by use percentage, mean and standard deviation from part1 of the questionnaire.

2.2 Inferential Statistic to prove hypothesis which is analyses by Pearson Correlation Coefficient and use Multiple Regression Analysis; MRA to study the influence of independent factors toward dependent factor in part 2, 3 of the questionnaire.

Findings

The highest mean for Price was found to be 4.11, which was obtained for the statement "Tea's prices are more flexible, and the variety of prices gives customers more choice." For the Education variable, the highest mean score was 4.19, which was obtained for the statement "Education makes me more loyal to health products." The perceive culture variable had the highest mean score of 4.20 for the statement "Consumption of tea is influenced by its culture." Regarding the variable of healthiness, the highest mean was 4.26, which was obtained for the

statement "Drinking tea makes me feel healthy." For the pecuniary condition variable, the mean score for the highest statement was 4.09, which was "If I am financially stable, I will be more willing to spend money on purchasing tea." Finally, the top mean score for consumer behavior was 4.33, which was obtained for the statement "The primary reason for my purchase of tea is due to its health benefits."

A multiple linear regression was performed to investigate the extent to which Price, Education, Perceived culture, Healthiness, and Pecuniary condition predict consumer behavior, and the results are presented in Table 4.3 The VIF values of all independent variables were less than 5, indicating no multicollinearity issues. The R-square value was .743 at a 95% confidence level, indicating that the independent variables (Price, Education, Perceived culture, Healthiness, and Pecuniary condition) account for approximately 74.30% of the variation in consumer behavior. The individual contributions of each predictor were examined, and it was found that price ($\beta = -.067$, $p < 0.05$), education ($\beta = .087$, $p < 0.05$), perceived culture ($\beta = .425$, $p < 0.05$) healthiness ($\beta = .491$, $p < 0.05$) and pecuniary ($\beta = .212$, $p < 0.05$) condition all had a positive and significant effect on consumer behavior by following equation

$$Y' = .491HN + .425PT + .212PC + .087EDU - .067PR$$

Discussion

The discussion of this study's intentions is to test the relationship between variables and the consumer behavior of Tea accurately. By discussing the position of tea in China's tea market consumption, this study aims to understand how tea attracts consumers' interest and demand. The ultimate goal is to provide suggestions for the development of Fujian Tea to improve its competitiveness and market position. Finally, through analyzing relevant data, this study aims to assist relevant tea enterprises and governments in formulating appropriate strategies.

The study considers various factor variables, including price, consumer behavior, education, perceived culture, healthiness, and pecuniary condition. The research questions guiding this study are as follows:

What are the factors that affect Consumer Behavior in China A Case Study of Fujian Province ?

(1) Does perceived culture have a positive influence on the consumer behavior of tea?

(2) Does education have a positive influence on the consumer behavior of tea?

(3) Does the healthiness of the product have a positive influence on the consumer behavior of tea?

(4) Does the price have a positive influence on the consumer behavior of tea?

(5) Does pecuniary condition have a positive influence on the consumer behavior of tea?

To achieve these research objectives, this study adopts a descriptive research design, focusing on consumers who live in Guangxi and drink tea.

1) Price and tea consumer behavior

The study findings reveal that the consumer behavior of tea is significantly influenced by the price. Specifically, consumers who are price sensitive are willing to pay more for healthy tea, while consumers who prioritize product value are interested in price flexibility. The results also show that reasonable dynamic pricing can stimulate consumers' desire to buy.

These findings are consistent with previous studies on this topic. For example, Sumi and Kabir (2018) found that price is the key factor affecting tea purchase behavior. Additionally, dynamic pricing has a positive impact on consumer behavior, and different pricing strategies formulated for different situations can help improve consumer participation (Motoaki & Shirk, 2017). Price elasticity and promotion also have a positive impact on consumer behavior. Large price elasticity and

promotion often increase consumers' desire and purchasing possibilities (Petricek et al., 2020). Similarly with the recent study, as the result stated that the unit price measure influenced the price-level perceptions of a product, and the unit price measure also affected customer's purchase intentions (Fecher et al., 2019). As the result showed that price perceptions had no significant effect on customer loyalty. The possible reason might be that these consumer groups tended to pay higher price for any product if that product fulfilled the requirements. And they might focus for value and worth with price rather than loyalty.

The results of this study are significant for enterprises selling tea. Companies can use the findings to develop pricing strategies tailored to different consumer groups. For example, the company can provide healthy tea to consumers who are willing to pay more for health benefits at a higher price, while offering price flexibility to attract consumers who prioritize product value.

According to the author's statement and summary, this study highlights the importance of price in the consumer behavior of tea. Companies selling tea can use the results of this study to develop effective pricing strategies for different consumer groups.

2) Education and tea consumer behavior

According to the study's results, there is a positive correlation between education and consumer behavior for tea. Consumers who have a better understanding of the health benefits of this tea are more inclined to consume it. This conclusion aligns with earlier research on the subject, such as Joshi and Rahman's (2015) claim that individuals with higher levels of education are more likely to adopt eco-friendly and health-oriented consumption patterns. such as consuming environmentally friendly products and health products.

In addition to motivation, education also seems to impact consumers' consumption patterns. Specifically, consumers who are more educated about health products are more active in their consumption of tea. This suggests that education not only affects consumers' attitudes

towards the product but also their purchasing and consumption behavior. Furthermore, education provides consumers with more flexible time to enjoy and pay attention to tea. This may be because educated consumers are more likely to prioritize their health and make time for healthy activities such as drinking tea.

According to the author's research, education have a positive impact on the consumer behavior of tea. Educating consumers about the health benefits of the product may encourage them to consume more, thus forming a more active consumption model. Future research can be based on these findings by exploring the potential mechanisms of the relationship between education and consumer behavior and resolving the limitations of this study.

3) Perceive culture and consumer behavior

The findings suggest that culture plays an important role in shaping consumer behavior towards tea, particularly in terms of its cultural heritage significance. The culture of tea is a major factor that affects consumers' consumption of it, as it has a profound cultural heritage that makes it unique compared to other types of tea. The intangible cultural heritage title of tea is also a motivation for consumers to consume it, indicating the importance of cultural recognition and appreciation. The act of drinking tea can also be seen as a recognition of collective culture, which may appeal to consumers who value cultural identity and community.

Therefore, the cultural aspect of tea should not be overlooked in marketing and promotion efforts. Education and awareness-raising campaigns that highlight the cultural significance of tea may attract more consumers and enhance their appreciation for the product. Additionally, the findings suggest that efforts to promote tea should not only focus on its health benefits but also its cultural heritage, which can be a significant motivator for consumption. Additionally, it is important to note that consumers' perception of culture is subjective and can vary based on their personal experiences and backgrounds. Therefore, understanding the

diversity of consumers' cultural perspectives is essential in developing effective marketing strategies for tea.

4) Healthiness and consumer behavior

The findings suggest that healthiness has a positive impact on consumer behavior of tea. The participants reported that drinking tea makes them feel healthy and brings out more healthy emotions in them. This implies that tea can be viewed not only as a beverage but also as a tool to promote health and wellness.

The health benefits of tea have been widely studied and documented, including its ability to reduce cholesterol levels, regulate blood sugar levels, and improve digestion (Ding et al., 2019). Therefore, it is not surprising that the participants in this study perceived tea as a healthy drink. Moreover, the participants' perception of their healthy reflection from the way they drink tea is useful. This indicates that the consumption of tea can have a positive impact on the overall well-being of the individuals, and may encourage them to adopt a healthy lifestyle.

According to the author's findings suggest that healthiness is an important factor influencing the consumer behavior of tea. The health benefits of tea should be emphasized in marketing and promotional activities, as it can attract health conscious consumers who are seeking natural and healthy products. Additionally, educating consumers about the health benefits of tea can enhance their awareness and appreciation of this traditional Chinese tea, leading to increased consumption and potentially even higher demand.

5) Pecuniary condition and consumer behavior

The study's results reveal that the consumer behavior of tea is positively affected by the pecuniary condition. This is evident in that respondents are willing to spend more money on tea when they are in a good financial situation. Furthermore, economic status appears to influence the frequency of consumption of tea, suggesting that individuals may be more likely to consume tea when they are financially well off. Finally, the amount of tea purchased was directly proportional to the income of the respondents.

The findings suggest that individuals may be more inclined to consume tea as a luxury item when the economy is stable. This finding highlights the importance of considering the economic status of consumers when promoting six-brewed tea. Marketers may benefit from targeting affluent consumers and emphasizing the luxury and high-end nature of tea in order to appeal to this demographic. However, the findings also suggest that the frequency with which people consume tea may change in lower economic situations. This highlights the need for tea producers and marketers to consider more affordable options for those with lower incomes in order to increase accessibility and expand the market.

Regardless, the findings suggest that pecuniary condition is an important factor to consider in tea consumer behavior. While this may lead to an increase in demand for the product among affluent consumers, it also highlights the potential limitations in accessing the product when people are in a poor financial situation.

Recommendations

Recommendations for implementing

1) Recommendations for Implementing

This study was aimed to explore the affecting factors of Price Educational attainment

Perceived culture Healthiness and Pecuniary condition trust that affected to Tea Consumer Behavior in China A Case Study of Fujian Province. As a result, it revealed that the positive factors that affecting towards consumer behavior to drink tea. Therefore, this study could provide the benefit for ready to drink tea industries or other beverage industries.

The results of our study have several implications for the marketing of tea. Our findings suggest that price, education, perceive culture, healthiness and pecuniary condition are key factors that influence the behavior of tea consumers. Therefore, marketers should consider the

significance of these factors in their marketing strategies. Furthermore, our research found that price elasticity and promotions increase consumer engagement while educating consumers about the health benefits of the product encourages more active consumption. In addition, the cultural significance of tea was found to motivate consumption, indicating the importance of cultural identity and appreciation in marketing efforts. The sense of wellness associated with drinking tea positively influenced consumer behavior, with participants reporting feeling healthier and promoting wellness. Another major factor that had a positive impact on tea was the pecuniary condition of consumers. Our findings revealed that consumers are willing to spend more on tea when they are financially well off. However, it is important to note that our study has some limitations, such as a relatively small sample size and regional variation. Future studies should address these limitations to confirm and expand on these findings. can explore the potential mechanisms of the relationship between education and consumer behavior and resolve the limitations of the study.

Thirdly, the cultural significance of tea plays a significant role in shaping consumer behavior towards it. Therefore, it is essential to comprehend the diverse cultural perspectives of consumers in order to develop effective marketing strategies for tea. Education and awareness-raising campaigns that highlight the cultural significance of tea may attract more consumers and enhance their appreciation for the product.

Fourthly, healthiness has a positive impact on consumer behavior towards tea. The health benefits of tea should be emphasized in marketing and promotional activities to attract health conscious consumers who are seeking natural and healthy products.

Finally, the pecuniary condition has a positive impact on the consumer behavior of Tea. Therefore, it is recommended that consumers in good financial standing be the primary target for quality products and promotions. In addition to this tea producers and marketers likewise need to consider offering more affordable options for those with lower incomes to increase accessibility and expand the market.

2) Recommendations for Further Study

Although this study provides some valuable conclusions about the marketing of tea, there are still some problems that need further study. First, our sample comes from a specific region, which limits the applicability and universality of our conclusions. Therefore, future research should consider expanding the sample size and conducting research in different regions to verify whether our conclusions have wider applicability.

Secondly, this study focuses on the consumer behavior and marketing of tea, but we have not studied the problems of producers. Therefore, future research should explore the strategies and practices of producers in order to understand the operation mechanism of the market more comprehensively.

Finally, although this study has considered the impact of price, education, perceived culture, healthiness and pecuniary condition on consumer behavior, there are other factors that may affect consumer behavior, such as brand image, product quality, brand trust, emotional value and sales channels. Therefore, future research should explore how these factors affect consumer behavior and marketing strategies.

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