

The Efficacy of Quality Factors on Satisfaction of Tea Customers in Iran

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Abstract: *Iran's tea industry has a special significance among economic activities in terms of production and employment, particularly in the northern regions of Iran (Gilan and Mazandran). Increasing production and improving the quality of the agricultural product processing industry are related to self-sufficiency in the economic and national goals, because this industry compared to other industries has less dependent on foreign countries and can play a crucial role in the economy, employment and business activity so, it's necessary to carry out some measures in improving tea quality and productivity. This article is about investigation the quality and impact of its dimensions to achieve consumer satisfaction in the area of marketing, the main purpose of this article specifically is the impact of the tea quality (flavor, aroma) on consumer's satisfaction in Iran. Therefore, this research has been prepared to distinguish gaps and commissioning of improving the quality of its tea to act out with the identification of existing bottlenecks according to the related information and careful planning to revive industry. Analysis of gathered data in this study illustrate that tea quality factors have a great impact on consumers satisfaction.*

Keywords: *Tea, Tea quality, Consumer's satisfaction.*

I. Introduction

Today's marketing activities not only effect on consumers but also other stakeholders and have become sweeping changes in society. Considering that marketing mix* includes (product, price, place, promotion) and each one of them is considered as a stimulus for buyers. Meanwhile quality is one of cases with various dimensions that lies within each product and can be affected on consumers' decisions and their satisfaction in any commercial activities. On the other hand, discovering consumers' demands and applying scientific methods of production due to advanced technology leads to increasing manufacturers and financiers' hopes to survival and profitability and by using effective and consistent methods measure customer' satisfaction and endeavor to improve the understanding of effective factors.

Tea is one of the agricultural production which should have favorable quality, regarding to definition of the tea proposed in tea world marketing book, tea quality includes aroma, flavor and color. Firstly, the quality of black tea depends on young and soft leaves excising into tea bushes and also some factors such as maintaining soil fertility through the use of plant and chemical fertilizer, using original and high quality seedlings in the ground, keeping active the plant by implementing the correct and principles pruning, Proper irrigation, and the most important step is follow scientific principles picking leaves, knowledge, experience and skills in production management, and finally the use of production technology during different stages of tea making are considered as effective factors in tea quality [1,2].

Iranian tea is Chinese and Assame and the main part of tea cultivation and production is located in northern regions of Iran (Gilan and Mazandaran), since no additives will not be added to the product during the production process, Iranian tea is considered as the purest and healthiest tea in the market [3]. Generally, tea as a strategic commodity in agricultural sector is considered as the most important consuming goods in food industry in Iran and main part of the Iranian economy is dependent on this industry [4].

Tea processing operations are carried out by the official method (Orthodox) during four phases in factories in Iran, but firstly raw materials should be provided by picking green and tender shoots and leaves from tea gardens. Picking leaves is done during the six months of the year in Iran and harvesting is done in the three major picking periods in Spring, Summer and Autumn and after transferring to the factories during different phases includes Withering, Rolling, Fermentation and drying green leave will be turned to black tea [5].

According to the above, unfortunately tea current market, due to lower product quality than the quantity of production is facing with lack of welcoming domestic consumers and also lack of competitiveness with foreign tea. According to research, most of the tea bushes have unfavorable conditions in Iran and due to the aging their economic efficiency along with reducing quality has taken a downward trend which should be done appropriate measures gradually to change the current situation by replacing the new situation based on a corrective-educational operations and relying on advanced technology, because reducing the quality of the product were causing problems in this industry such as [6]:

low economic efficiency – lack of consumer satisfaction of domestic tea–unemployment in different sectors of tea industry - reducing the market share that all pointed to the importance and necessity of research.

Accordingly, the efficacy of quality factors (flavor, aroma) on consumers satisfaction has been studied and investigated in this study.

Based on the above, in order to achieve an acceptable economic feasibility, Investigations and researches according to experts view points and consumers opinions are done, It seems if corrective action takes at various stages of cultivation and production, effective steps can take to eliminate bottlenecks and problems in the tea industry and can hope to consumer satisfaction and economic development [7, 8].

II. Theoretical Foundations Of Subject

Different views relating to new definition of quality and its dimensions include the following concepts: Quality is the degree of a product that is adapted to customers' expectations and characteristics presented [9]. It means the factor that balances among the needs of customers and employees and financial goals [10]. Quality includes different dimensions such as performance, design, compliance, reliability, stability and responsible to answer the service and reputation. These dimensions are partially independent and therefore, a product can be produced at a very high dimension, but can be the medium or weak in other aspects, complete superiority in all aspects of a product rarely happens [11]. Some of the research that is directly or indirectly linked to the subject has been given [12, 13, 14, 15].

Objectives that are pursued include:

1. Finding the ways to increase the quality of produced tea according to the correct application of removing the existing constraints and barriers.
2. Increasing the quality of tea can enhance the competitiveness of domestic tea with the foreign ones.
3. Increasing the quality of tea production and thus enhancing market share and sales make the economic boom, development of tea gardens and increased production.

Research Methods

The research method is analytical- descriptive and the dependent variable is explained by the independent variables and to describe the characteristics of variables library and field study such as questionnaires, interviews and observation are used and how the quality factors (flavor, aroma) influence on consumers satisfaction in Gilan and Mazandaran provinces have been studied.

Research tools that are used to collect data include questionnaire that its questions are designed by the whole five-item Likert and tea quality factors (flavor, aroma) are measured by designed questions on the questionnaire with regard to consumers' response. On the other hand, some interviews carried out with experts of tea industry who are working in the factories and companies in these two provinces (Gilan and Mazandaran) and to analyze the gathered data was used the software SPSS.

Population and samples of studied:

- population
It includes tea consumers and experts in the northern provinces of Iran (Gilan and Mazandaran)
- sample
Gilan sample includes consumers and experts in Langrood, Lahijan, Rasht and Anzali cities
Mazandaran samples includes consumers and experts in Tonekabon, Chalus, Babol and Sari cities
Since, selected cities of two provinces have been included the most amount of consumption of tea and experts so are considered as example in this research.

III. Research Hypothesis

First hypothesis:

H_0 : The efficacy of tea aroma isn't different on consumers satisfaction

H_1 : The efficacy of tea aroma is different on consumers satisfaction

Table 1: Distribution of the effects of tea aroma

option	Frequency	Percentage	Percentage of reliability	The cumulative percentage
Very low	1	.6	.6	.6
low	26	14.6	14.6	15.2
middle	59	33.1	33.1	48.3
high	77	43.3	43.3	91.6
Very high	15	8.4	8.4	100.0
total	178	100.0	100.0	

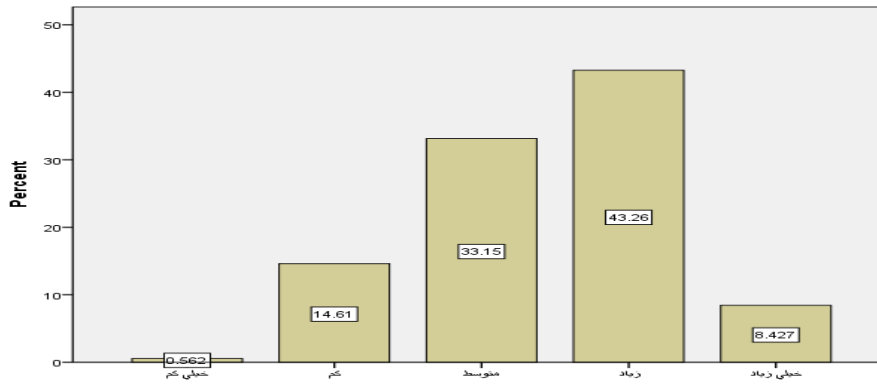


Figure 1: Distribution of the frequency of the effect of the tea aroma

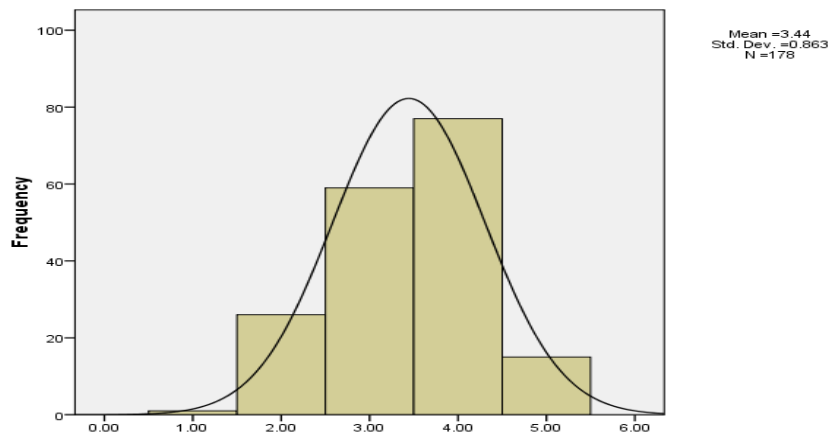


Figure 2: Histogram the effect of aroma tea

Table 2: Statistical indexes of first hypothesis

first hypothesis	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Low	25	3.4800	.87178	.17436	3.1201	3.8399	2.00	5.00
middle	105	3.2952	.84266	.08224	3.1322	3.4583	1.00	5.00
high	42	3.6905	.84068	.12972	3.4285	3.9524	2.00	5.00
Very high	6	4.1667	.75277	.30732	3.3767	4.9567	3.00	5.00
Total	178	3.4438	.86337	.06471	3.3161	3.5715	1.00	5.00

Table 3: Statistical results of first hypothesis

ANOVA					
Tea aroma	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	8.041	3	2.680	3.764	.012
Within Groups	123.897	174	.712		
Total	131.938	177			

Second hypothesis:

H₀: The efficacy of tea flavor isn't different on consumer satisfaction

H₁: The efficacy of tea flavor is different on consumer satisfaction

Table 4: Distribution of the effects of tea flavor

option	Frequency	Percentage	Percentage of reliability	The cumulative percentage
low	2	1.1	1.1	1.1
middle	65	36.5	36.5	37.6
high	95	53.4	53.4	91.0
Very high	16	9.0	9.0	100.0

total	178	100.0	100.0	
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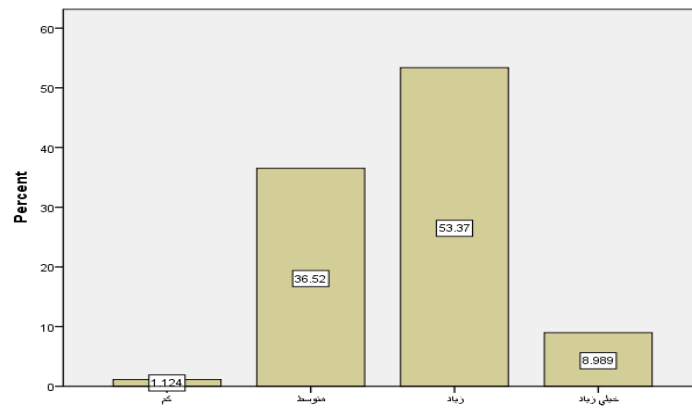


Figure3: Distribution of the frequency of the effects of tea flavor

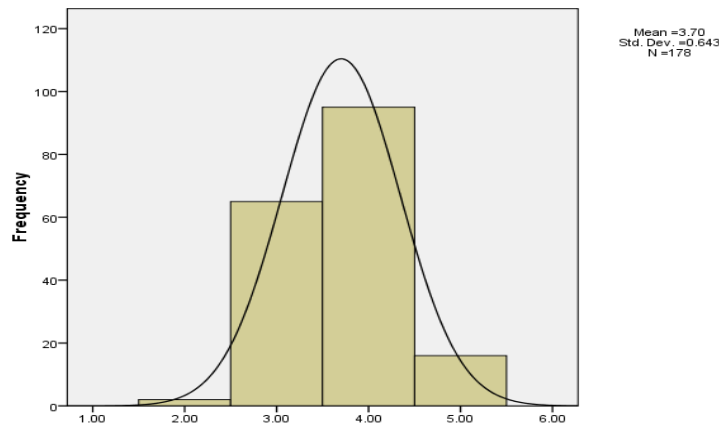


Figure 4: Histogram of the effects of tea flavor

Table 5: Statistical indexes of second hypothesis

second hypothesis	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Low	25	3.5600	.50662	.10132	3.3509	3.7691	3.00	4.00
middle	105	3.6667	.61498	.06002	3.5477	3.7857	2.00	5.00
high	42	3.7857	.75015	.11575	3.5520	4.0195	3.00	5.00
Very high	6	4.3333	.51640	.21082	3.7914	4.8753	4.00	5.00
Total	178	3.7022	.64317	.04821	3.6071	3.7974	2.00	5.00

Table6: Statistical results of second hypothesis

ANOVA					
second hypothesis	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3.321	3	1.107	2.756	.044
Within Groups	69.898	174	.402		
Total	73.219	177			

IV. Results And Decision

1. Our study believes that there is the necessity of doing similar studies to compare with foreign brand of tea.
2. Since the taste of consumers determines the favorable quality of tea, it is recommended that enough research carry out on the use of essence and permitted flavors in accordance with the taste and consumer satisfaction.
3. Investigation and scientific research do on different types of tea bushes as influencing factors on quality.
4. Investigation and scientific research do in the field of tea quality from harvesting this product in the tea garden to the processing phases with regard to the technical points of tea production.

According to the obtained data from the table 1 that has been prepared using a range of five options Likert, the answers to the first hypothesis are presented as follows:

0.6 percent of participants selected very low, 14.6 percent of them low, 33.1% of those average option, 43.3 percent high option and 8.4% chose very high, as a result, the high option showed the highest rate selection by 43.3 percent.

In table 2, 3, the results obtained significant amounts of data ($\text{sig} = 0.012$) which is smaller than assumed significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). So the null hypothesis is rejected at the level of 5% error. In other terms can be said there is a significant difference at the average efficacy of tea aroma on consumers satisfaction. Therefore, it can be claimed that the average impact of tea aroma is different on consumer satisfaction.

According to the obtained data from the table 4 that has been prepared using a range of five options Likert, the answers to the second hypothesis are presented as follows:

1.1% low option, 36.5 percent moderate option, 53.4 percent high and 9 percent selected very high options that as a result, the high option by 53.4 percent has the highest rate of selection by responders.

In table 5, 6, the results obtained significant amounts of data ($\text{sig} = 0.044$) which is smaller than assumed significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). So the null hypothesis is rejected at the level of 5% error, in other terms can be said there is a significant difference at the average efficacy of tea flavor on consumers satisfaction. Therefore, it can be claimed that the average impact of tea flavor is different on consumer satisfaction.

V. Conclusion

The results of the research indicate the theoretical and functional importance in the production and productivity of the tea product, because the results of the analysis of qualitative factors and other affecting factors illustrate that each of them according to the existing opportunities can be effective way to consumer satisfaction and improve economic opportunities of tea. It is found that there is a significant relationship between the Operation management system and the quality of produced tea in the country.

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