

Tea Consumption Behavior of Undergraduates in Uva Wellassa University: The Theory of Planned Behaviour Approach

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Introduction

Sri Lanka has a history of more than 150 years of tea production and consumption. The country produces tea mainly for exportation and in year 2012 Sri Lanka has produced about 320 million kilograms of tea and about 6 million had been consumed locally. The consumption of tea has taken a momentum in the world market with the widespread dissemination of novel findings about the functional benefits of teas so that it is perceived as a healthy beverage. However, there have been many other beverages available in the market today including soft drinks dominated by the cola drinks, coffee and hard drinks which are severely competing with the tea in the beverage market. Tea as a beverage has been slowly modifying its versatility to best suit with the changing needs of the present day consumers. That has been a greater disadvantage when it comes to compete with other beverages which are very readily changed its characteristic to best suit the need of the consumers. The trend of consuming beverages other than tea is wide spreading and it is significant among the youth that would definitely affect the tea market significantly in times to come. If it is to consolidate the demand for tea, it is very important to promote the tea among youngsters. Considering the timely need of promoting tea among youth, this study was designed to identify the determinants of tea consumption behavior among youngsters which is paramount important in developing propaganda activities to promote tea. There are number of theories and models have been developed to understand the consumer behavior and each of those theories and models are accompanied with its own merits and demerits. Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) proposed by Ajzen (1975) was used in the study considering its validity and strength to unveil the consumer behaviour more comprehensively. The TPB framework explains that attitudes, subjective norm and perceived control belief influence behavioral intention which in addition to actual control influences subsequent behavior. Attitude reveals the degree to which a person has favourable or unfavourable evaluation of the behaviour in question. Then the subjective norm uncovers the belief of other people concerning how the individual should behave in a given situation and perceived behavioural control construct summarizes the factors, either internal or external that can help or hinder the performance of the behaviour. Accordingly, the intention toward the tea consumption behavior is measured by gauging the Attitude, Subjective Norm and the Perceived behavioral control.

Methodology

The Theory of Plan Behavior questionnaire was developed and pretested. Uva Wellassa University was selected as the study area and 250 undergraduates were interviewed using the structured questionnaire. Hypothesis of the study was that the Attitude, Subjective norm and Perceived behavioral control don't not have significant influence on the behavioral intention of consuming tea. Multiple linear regression was deployed to test the stated hypothesis and descriptive statistics were used to summarize the characteristics of sample population.

Results and Discussion

The sample was attributing according to several demographic and socio economic characteristics. It was found in the study that 98% of respondent were tea drinkers and only 2% of the responders were non tea drinkers. The female tea drinkers accounted for 66% and male tea drinkers was 34% (mean age = 23.26, SD = 1.261).

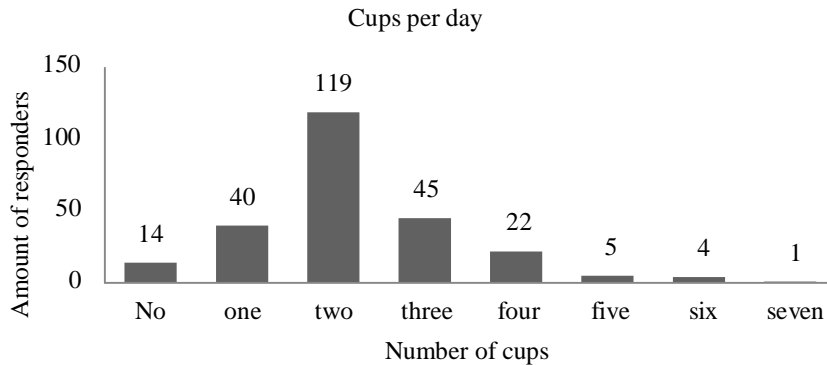


Figure 1. Cups per day of amount of responders.

As depicted in the Figure 1, the highest cups of tea per day were recorded as two cups. The lowest amount of responders was accounted for seven tea cups per day.

Table 1. Regression analysis include variables.

	Model	Coefficient	Standardized coefficients	T	p value
1	(Constant)	3.83	23.5	0.16	0.871
2	Attitude	0.17523	0.04975	3.52	0.001
3	Subjective	0.11349	0.05375	2.11	0.036
4	Control	0.10940	0.05295	2.07	0.040
5	Gender	-10.983	2.031	-5.41	0.000

The outcome of the regression analysis emphasized that the model use in this research is significant. However, the recorded Adj R square value (31.3%) suggested that the items identified in the questionnaire to measure the independent variables are capable only to explain the dependent variable (intention of drinking tea) to about 31%. Further the subjective norm, attitude, and perceived behavioral control and gender were significantly influenced the tea consuming behaviour at 95 percent confidence level.

Conclusions

As per the findings of this research, majority of the responders drink tea which accounted as 98%. The intention towards the consuming at least two cup of teas per day was 47.6%. The attitude, subjective norm and the perceived behavioral control has a significance effect on the tea consumption behavior. Hence if the knowledge of people about tea increases they are more concerning the tea drinking rather than moving for various instant drinks available in the market. Further, creation of positive attitude towards tea consumption would be important to increase the tea consumption behaviour. Factors that control the tea consumption like availability, quality and peer influence are also important to determine the tea consumption.

References

Ajzen, I., 1991. The theory of plan behaviour. *Organizational Behaviour and Human Decision Process*, 50, 179-211.