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COMPETENCY AND MARKETING PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT OF SAUDI ARABIAN FOOD & DRINK PRODUCTS IN SAUDI ARABIA OF MIDDLE EAST REGION

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates and measures the competency and performance of food & drink products of various organizations of Saudi Arabia in the Middle East region. The study primarily uses organizations, past data and records, and, secondly, customer satisfaction surveys by applying a structured questionnaire. The areas of the research focus on a variety of food & drink products, customer satisfaction, Industry resources, and socio-economic impact on the country. The key findings of the study focus on the determination of distinguishing performances and customers' expectations. Measuring the performance of these products emphasize immediate and meaningful outcomes from the Industry and customer's preferences and expectations. The competency & performance of the food & drink products have evaluated with defined satisfaction criteria that show the opinion of the people about these varieties of products of Saudi Arabian companies. This study finds that customers are happy with the products. However, producers must further enhance product quality to meet and compete with new products entering the market.

Disciplinary: Business Management (Marketing).

1. INTRODUCTION

Competency and Performance measurement through the customer satisfaction concept has accepted by many organizations and competitors in the time of globalization is the key to success for them (Singh, 2016). Also, it has explained with the customer relationship and product quality & services, price & value of the products, customers' long term relationship with the product, and customers' expectations with product & services. Employee's competencies contribute to a firm's entire performance, so the firms need to enhance the employee's learning opportunities at their workplace to attain high performance along with competencies development (Osei & Ackah 2015). Competitors recognized customer satisfaction as a critical business strategy to profit growth and increase in market share (Singh, 2016). Consumer's high disposable income created Saudi Arabia as

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an inspirational destination and an attractive marketplace for investors seeking long-term growth (BMI, 2018). Promotion emphasizes brand strengths across segments, and an intensive distribution network has maintained locally, with new channels aimed in Middle Eastern as well as southeast Asian markets (Sadi et al., 2007). The findings of various past researches about customer satisfaction have used to sketch out the plan to emphasize companies' performance and target outcome (Singh, 2016). In a survey of 200 senior marketing managers, 71 percent agreed that the customer satisfaction metric is very useful in managing and monitoring their businesses (Farris et al., 2010). Many companies have policies to incorporate competency and performance measurement through customer satisfaction into their strategic vision and mission statement. Berry & Parasuraman (1991) have provided the basis to measure a gap between the customer expectation of performance and their perceived experience of performance. Eroglu et al. (1990) evaluated his research along with a seven-point scale, and within these, six items based on ATM services and ice cream restaurants.

1.1 SAUDI ARABIAN MARKET: A SNAPSHOT

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) is the largest market of high-value packaged and processed food in the Gulf region, with 33 million youth population having a large portion of expatriates (BMI, 2018). The market has high income-potential in the Arab world with a trade-oriented business environment. People 85% living in urban areas and around one-fifth of the Saudi population comprise expatriates. The KSA is divided into 13 regions, and Makkah is the holiest city in Saudi Arabia, over 7 million people, as it is the destination for *hajj* (pilgrimage) for all Muslims throughout the world. The strength of the Saudi market is the sheer size of the local population, as it constitutes 2/3rd of the total Gulf population in the Middle East region, which provides significant long-term growth opportunities for the retail sector. Non-alcoholic drink market-driven industry growth in Saudi Arabia has opened up more opportunities and broader growth for investors from 2018 onwards.

The country has an excellent infrastructure for international market players with a strong logistical network. It has established a significant market in the Middle East, Europe, Africa, and Asia and have very well facilitated with shipping, aviation, and transportation. Saudi Arabia is among the largest member facilitators of goods and services in Gulf countries. Vision 2030 and National Transformation Programme (NTP, 2020) initiated to achieve the goal of economic diversification in the country. The country's infrastructure has considered performing well, ranking 29th in the World (WEF, 2016-2017) with 2nd rank in MENA (Middle East, North Africa, Afghanistan, and Pakistan) region.

Regarding cross-border trade, KSA ranks 158th out of 190 (World Bank, 2017). KSA become a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2005. The official language is Arabic, while the English language has widely accepted and spoken in the country. Ramadan is a holy period for the Muslims, they have fasting during the period, and non-Muslims are supposed not to eat or drink in public places during the same period.

The considerable advantage for foreign investors and companies are in the tax system governance of the country. KSA has a high-value growth-driven market for food & drink products having a traditional culture and strong Islamic belief and value (Rahman, 2014). The Kingdom introduced an additional tax on unhealthy products, e.g., soft drinks and tobacco. The non-alcoholic drink industry is one of the dynamic industries in the Kingdom, and the use of alcoholic beverages has strictly prohibited inside the country (BMI, 2018). Only Halal meat has consumed, and Pork or Pork products have strictly banned throughout the Kingdom (EU, 2017). Agri-food production has constrained by climate conditions of the country, and production has limited for the products due to low water intensity. The Saudi Arabian General Investment Authority (SAGIA) encourages foreign investors and facilitates them. All foods, drinks, and edible agricultural products, whether locally manufactured or imported to Saudi Arabia, are required to comply with regulations and standards set by the SFDA (Saudi Food & Drug Authority) or the Gulf Standardizations Organization (GSO). The introduction of Value Added Tax (VAT) has shifted consumer preferences from energy drinks and Carbonated drinks to healthier products (BMI, 2018).

The Saudi dairy industry is booming with the growing population, and so is the high demand. It has the largest market for soft drinks in the Middle East, having the largest soft drink consumers in the world (DSM, n.d). The healthier products such as juice and other non-alcoholic drinks become popular among the consumers and are using as alternatives to carbonated beverages. Also, fresh meats, fruits, and vegetable consumption are increasing in the Kingdom due to rising health awareness among the people. Honey has been using for general and medicinal purposes. It has consumed for homeopathic remedies, teas, and other food and beverages. Olive's oil has also increased a better growth opportunity for processing food & vegetables in the country. Chocolate and consumption of confectionery products have dramatically increased over the past years. The consumption of wheat is high in the Kingdom, and most of the cereal grain consumption has based on wheat-based products (EU, 2017).

2. PERFORMANCE OF FOOD & DRINK PRODUCTS

As a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCCs) common market, Saudi Arabia provides a lower-cost export base than its neighbor countries. It is a right business place of entry for investors seeking long-term business growth. Saudi Arabia is the largest dairy industry in the Gulf region and is the market for high-value packaged and processed foods. The Saudi Arabian market becomes more secure for the investors due to the Middle East and North African political crisis comparatively with some other countries in the region, its customers are price-conscious, relatively than UAE, Kuwait, or Qatar. Increasing habits of health consciousness have increased the opportunities for food producers in this region also, the increased demand for organic foods. The food-processing sector of the country is also continuing to attract investors, particularly its key business segments, such as dairy products (BMI, 2014).

Saudi Arabia is the largest market in the Gulf region of the Middle East has a high per capita consumption of soft drinks dealing with bottled water, fruit juice, and carbonate segments. Tea and coffee consumption is also at a very high level as it is an integral part of the local Saudi culture. The taste and preferences of Saudi consumers towards the branded product is very high, and a large segment of the population is interested in new and innovative products. The Saudi Arabian economy remains attractive for the investors as they found it most secure place in the Middle East reason due to its high oil prices, government spending, and high customer confidence. The soft drinks industry has shown the promising value and an increasing trend in the growth in past years. Its major growing products are the bottled water and fruit juice segments. Besides, the energy drinks added continuing strength as the soft drinks in the business of drink products. The hot drink products such as teas, herbal tea, and fruit tea, become very popular and showing substantial growth opportunities in this region. The dairy industry of Saudi Arabia in the Gulf region is most competent, and the country leading company in this field is Almarai, the largest dairy company with a high market share. Also, the leading players in the fruit and Juice are Almarai, Alsafi; other market players are Hail Agricultural Development Company, AlsafiDanme, SADAFCO, Zamzam Cola (carbonate), and Red Bull (energy drink).

The historical data of food consumption shows that food sales have increased from Saudi Riyal (SR)144,946.6 million in 2015 to Saudi Riyal (SR)154, 633 million in 2017. While the percentage of growth year-over-year has decreased from 8.6% to 1.9% in 2018. On the other hand, the sales of drink products have increased from Saudi Riyal (SR) 12,862 million in 2015 to 13,733 million in 2017. While the percentage of growth year-over-year has decreased from 8.8% in 2015 to 1.9% in 2017 (BMI, 2018).

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Competency and performance of food & drink products have ultimately affected by customer satisfaction. It is because the company needs to take action to improve quality and create value among its customers through the product and services. Lucas et al. (2014), in his research, examined and evaluated the human performance benefits and potential harms associated with Energy drinks. Al-Islam and Fari (2014) examined a group of people for energy drinks consumption, related behaviors, and lifestyle factors. The findings of the survey reveal that energy drinks have consumed at a relatively high rate amongst adolescents and adults. Musaiger and Zagzoog, (2014) examined the knowledge, attitude, and intake of energy drinks among adolescents in Saudi Arabia through applying multistage sampling over 1061 school-children of age group 12-19 years using a survey questionnaire. The findings of the study reveal an alarming situation relating to energy drinks consumption among Saudi adolescents and their unawareness of its side effects. Ismaiel et al. (2014) analyze the significant factors that influence the consumption, expenditure pattern, and demand of honey in Saudi Arabia using the econometric model on primary data. The findings suggest that honey is an essential commodity in Saudi Arabia. Tamime et al. (2014), carried out a survey-based study of the of fermented milk products from many countries. Gillan (2014) highlighted the strong business opportunities for many different products and services in the KSA. Muhammad (2014) reviewed the challenges facing the Saudi Arabian Dairy Industry dominated by a few companies engaged in aggregation price war strategies. The study discussed the key player and the main drivers for milk production and consumption in detail. Diduch et al. (2013) described how various factors relating to treating water, how the finished product is stored, and transported might affect the quality of bottled water. The study emphasizes increasing contamination by organic compounds in bottled water. Samir (1998) focuses on nutritional problems in Arab countries due to changes in food consumption patterns.

Sadi and Henderson (2007), examined how Al-Marai and dairy food businesses use the strategy of market penetration to beat the competition by offering quality merchandise across the Middle East. Al-Otaibi and Robinson (2002) conducted a study on the dairy industry in Saudi Arabia to know the current situation of the industry and to know the prospects of the industry and business in the country. Grigg (1998), focused on the changing geography of world food consumption in the second half of the twentieth century. The socio-cultural factors such as religion, beliefs, food preferences, gender discrimination, education and women employment, all have a noticeable influence on food consumption patterns of the people of Saudi Arabia and Mass media (Musaiger, 1993).

This research assesses how well food & drink products are satisfying customer's needs and expectations in Saudi Arabia and identifies factors that contribute to customer's satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the Saudi Company's food & drink products.

4. RESEARCH DESIGN

The research uses content analysis and the primary data collected from customers of different age groups of both male & female from Saudi Arabia in the Middle East region. It uses secondary sources of data are various food & drink companies' published annual reports, published research papers, and published articles, the data collected from Hail and Qassim province of Saudi Arabia. The data collected through a structured questionnaire consists of various independent dimensions, with a five-point Likert scale, as strongly agree (5-1) to strongly disagree. With a total of 500 questionnaires random distributed to different age groups of the population, from January to June 2019, 330 respondents have returned the answers. This study reports a simple analysis.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents from the survey of this study

S.N.	Variables		Count	%
1.	Gender	Male	284	86.06
		Female	46	13.93
2.	Marital Status	Single	194	58.79
		Married	136	41.21
3.	Respondents	Customer	244	73.94
		Retailer	86	26.06
4.	Age (Years)	Less than 14	80	24.25
		15 -19	46	13.94
		20-24	53	16.06
		25-34	52	15.76
		35 -44	40	12.12
		45 -54	32	9.70
		55-65	27	8.18
		65 and Above	0	0.00
5.	Education	Up to Secondary	114	34.54
		Undergraduate	132	40.00
		Graduate and above	54	16.37
		Other Categories	30	9.09
6.	Income Level in Saudi Arabian Riyal(SAR)	Less than 3000 SR	31	9.39
		3000- 5000 SR	62	18.79
		5001-10000 SR	91	27.58
		10001 -20000 SR	102	30.91
		20001 and Above	44	13.33
7.	Source of Income	Parents	62	18.79
		Jobs	111	33.64
		Government and parents	113	34.24
		Any other	44	13.33
8.	Personal Expenditure	Less than 1000 SAR	54	16.37
		1001 -2000 SAR	153	46.36
		2001 -3000 SAR	83	25.15
		3000 and Above	40	12.12

5. FINDINGS

Table 1 shows the distribution of demographic characteristics of customers who were participants in the study. It is evident from the table that about 86% of respondents were males out of 330 of the total samples. The respondents who were less than 14 years of age are 24.25 %, and the majority of respondents (60%) were young (15-34 years old). Undergraduate participants were highest at 40%.

I.

More than 13% of respondents have their monthly income 20000SR and more. Only 9% of have their monthly income less than 3000SR. For personal income sources, the survey results show that more than 36% of the respondents were doing their job and are self-dependent, and 34% of respondents were dependent on the government and their parents. 19% were dependents on their parents only. The highest personal expenditure level in Saudi Arabia, 46.36% lies between 1000SR to 2000SR in a month and only 12% spend more than 3000SR in a month for their expense.

Table 2 describes the performance measurement of Saudi food products and, it depicts that 89% of respondents agreed with the price of food products is reasonable in Saudi Arabia, while 11% of respondents did not agree with it. On the other hand, 88% of respondents strongly agreed with the statement that the quality of food products is excellent in Saudi Arabia, and 10% of respondents did not agree with it. More than 66% of respondents agreed with the statement that food products are customized products in Saudi Arabia, while 26.67% did not agree with it, and 6.67% of respondents did not respond.

Table 2: Marketing performance measurement of food products.

S. No	Intake of Food Products	5	4	3	2	1	Count
1	Price of Food Products is reasonable in Saudi Arabia	219 (66.36)	75 (22.73)	0 (0.00)	32 (9.67)	4 (1.21)	330* (100)**
2	Food Products are quality products in Saudi Arabia	178 (53.94)	113 (34.24)	6 (1.82)	25 (7.58)	8 (2.42)	330 (100)
3	Food products are customized product in Saudi Arabia	123 (37.27)	97 (29.39)	22 (6.67)	62 (18.79)	26 (7.88)	330 (100)
4	Food products are health-conscious products in Saudi Arabia?	188 (56.97)	101 (30.61)	9 (2.73)	24 (7.27)	8 (2.42)	330 (100)
5	Food Products contain no vitamins?	37 (11.21)	36 (10.91)	4 (1.21)	129 (39.09)	124 (37.58)	330 (100)
6	Food products contain vitamins?	134 (40.61)	127 (38.48)	6 (1.82)	40 (12.12)	23 (6.97)	330 (100)
7	Do all the food products follow the standards?	124 (37.58)	98 (29.70)	23 (6.97)	54 (16.36)	31 (9.39)	330 (100)
8	Customer awareness of Saudi Food products is high compared to other nations' products in the Middle East region.	158 (47.88)	116 (35.15)	6 (1.82)	29 (8.79)	21 (6.36)	330 (100)
9.	Saudi Food Products have a higher sales volume than competitors in the Middle East region.	145 (43.94)	114 (34.55)	11 (3.33)	39 11.82	21 (6.36)	330 (100)
10	Saudi Food Products have created value through its Food products in the Middle East region.	131 (39.70)	124 (37.58)	14 (4.24)	30 (9.09)	31 (9.39)	330 (100)
	Average Intake of Food Products	**143.7 (43.55)**	**100.1 (30.30)**	**10.1 (3.03)**	**46.4 (14.06)**	**29.7 (9.00)**	**330 (100)**
11	**Reasons for the intake of Food Products**						
11a	Taste and flavor	176 (53.33)	94 (28.48)	14 (4.24)	33 (10.00)	13 (3.94)	330 (100)
11b	Provide strength to the body	141 (42.73)	134 (40.61)	22 (6.67)	22 (6.67)	11 (3.33)	330 (100)
11c	Save the times in preparation	145 (43.94)	139 (42.12)	3 (0.91)	22 (6.67)	21 (6.36)	330 (100)
11d	Save the money	67 (20.30)	76 (23.03)	37 (11.2)	85 (25.76)	65 (19.70)	330 (100)
11e	Part of Culture	93 (28.18)	104 (31.52)	19 (5.76)	43 (13.03)	41 (12.42)	330 (100)
	Average of Intakes of Energy Drinks	**124.4 (37.76)**	**109.4 (33.03)**	**28.59 (8.47)**	**41 (12.42)**	**30.2 (9.09)**	**330 (100)**

Source: Survey Questionnaire; ''=Count, '**'=Percentage (%)*

Concerning health consciousness, more than 87% of respondents agreed with the statement that food products are health-conscious, while approximately 10% of respondents did not agree with it, and 2.73% of respondents didn't answer. Asking about a negative relationship with food and vitamins', only 21% of respondents agreed with the statement that food Products contain no vitamins, while approximately 77% did not agree with it. Opposite to it, asking about positive relationships with food and vitamins' 79% of respondents agreed with the statement that food products contain vitamins, while approximately 19% of respondents did not agree with it. About the competency and performance standards of food products, 67% of respondents agreed with the statement that all the food products are standard while approximately 26% of respondents did not agree with it. Asking on consumer awareness, more than 85% of respondents agreed with the statement that customer awareness of Saudi food products is high comparatively than foreign food products in the Middle East region while approximately 15% of respondents did not agree with it. Also, more than 78% of respondents agreed with the statement that Saudi food products have higher sales volume than its competitors in the Middle East region, while approximately 18% of respondents did not agree with it. On value creation through Saudi food products, more than 77% of respondents agreed with the statement that Saudi food products had created value in the Middle East region while 18.5% of respondents did not agree with this statement.

Table 3: Performance Measurement Drink Products

S. No	Intake of Drink Products	5	4	3	2	1	Count
1	Prices of Drink Products are reasonable?	209 (63.33)	79 (23.94)	0 (0.00)	34 (10.30)	8 (2.42)	330* (100)**
2	Drink products are energy product in Saudi Arabia?	168 (50.91)	123 (37.27)	7 (2.12)	24 (7.27)	8 (2.42)	330 (100)
3	Drink products contain caffeine?	43 (13.03)	47 (14.24)	29 (8.79)	132 (40.00)	79 (23.94)	330 (100)
4	Drink products are quality products in Saudi Arabia?	178 (53.94)	103 (31.21)	5 (1.52)	26 (7.88)	18 (5.45)	330 (100)
5	Drink products are customized product in Saudi Arabia?	99 (30.00)	87 (26.36)	14 (4.24)	66 (20.00)	64 (19.39)	330 (100)
6	Drink products contain vitamins?	104 (31.52)	97 (29.39)	18 (5.45)	68 (20.61)	43 (13.03)	330 (100)
7	Energy drinks to be the same as soft drinks?	39 (11.82)	43 (13.03)	23 (6.97)	134 (40.61)	91 (27.58)	330 (100)
8	Level of Customer awareness of Saudi Drink products comparatively higher than other nations' products in Middle East region.	147 (44.55)	106 (32.12)	11 (3.33)	37 (11.21)	29 (8.79)	330 (100)
9	Saudi Drink Products have higher sales volume comparatively than other companies in the Middle East region.	149 (45.15)	119 36.06	10 (3.03)	33 (10.00)	19 (5.76)	330 (100)
10	Saudi Arabia has created value through its Drink products in the Middle East region.	141 (42.73)	114 (34.55)	16 (4.85)	29 (8.79)	30 (9.09)	330 (100)
	Average Intake Food products	**127.7 (38.70)**	**91.8 (27.82)**	**13.3 (4.03)**	**58.3 (17.67)**	**38.9 (11.79)**	**330 (100)**
	Reasons for Intake of Energy Drink Products						
a	Taste and flavor	196 (59.39)	77 (23.33)	8 (2.42)	36 (10.91)	13 (3.94)	330 (100)
b	Energize body	87 (26.36)	66 (20.00)	22 (6.67)	78 (23.64)	77 (23.33)	330 (100)
c	Build the body	33 (10.00)	36 (10.91)	19 (5.76)	146 (44.24)	96 (29.09)	330 (100)
d	Follow the friends/ Colleague	147 (44.55)	96 (29.09)	9 (2.73)	54 (16.36)	24 (7.27)	330 (100)
e	Just for Trial	94 (28.48)	89 (26.97)	29 (8.79)	77 (23.33)	41 (12.42)	330 (100)
	Average of Intakes of Energy Drink Products	**111.4 (33.76)**	**72.8 (22.06)**	**17.4 (5.27)**	**78.2 (23.70)**	**50.2 (15.21)**	**330 (100)**

Source: Survey Questionnaire; ''=Count, '**'=Percentage (%)*

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Table 3 is related to the Performance Measurement of drink products in Saudi Arabia in the Middle East region. The table results show that 87% of respondents agreed with this statement that prices of drink products are reasonable in Saudi Arabia, and 13% of respondents did not agree with it. Similarly, 88% of respondents strongly agreed with the statement that drink products are energy products in Saudi Arabia, while 10% of respondents did not agree with it. Further, 27% of respondents agreed with this statement that drink products contain caffeine, while 64% did not agree with it. About quality consciousness, more than 85% of respondents agreed with the statement that drink products are quality products in Saudi Arabia, while approximately 13% of respondents did not agree with it.

About product customization, 56% of respondents agreed with the statement that drink products are customized products in Saudi Arabia, while approximately 39% did not agree with it. About positive relation with drink products and vitamins, 61% of respondents agreed with the statement that drink products contain vitamins while 34% of respondents did not agree with it. Concerning energy drinks and soft drinks, only 25% of respondents agreed with the statement that energy drinks are the same as soft drinks, while 68% of respondents did not agree with it.

For consumer awareness, more than 77% of respondents agreed with the statement that the level of customer awareness about Saudi drink products is comparatively higher than foreign drink products in the Middle East region while 20% of respondents did not agree with it. Also, more than 81% of respondents agreed with the statement that Saudi drink products have higher sales volume than its competitors in the Middle East region, while approximately 16% of respondents did not agree with it. In terms of value creation through Saudi drink products, more than 77% of respondents admitted that Saudi drink products had created value in the Middle East region while 18% of respondents did not agree with it.

Figure 1: Food & Drink products and Customer satisfaction.

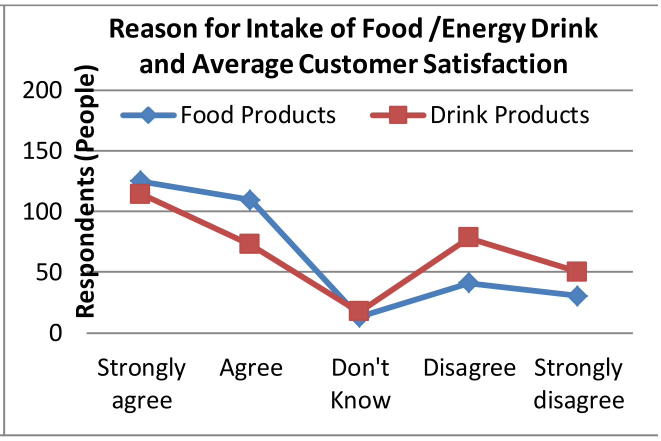

Figure 2: Reason for Intake of Food/Energy Drinks and Average Customer Satisfaction.

Figure 1 shows that on average, more than 74 % to 75% of respondents agreed that Saudi food & drink products are competent and performing substantially in the Middle East region while only a few of the respondents didn’t agree with it. Customer satisfaction is dependent on the competency and performance measurement of the products. It is to be measured by product quality, product price, health consciousness, taste and flavor, and product customization with the country culture.

Figure 2 shows that the respondents show a favorable response to the intake of food & drink products, and on average, customers get satisfied. The three reasons for taking/liking of food products are ‘Taste and flavor,’ ‘Provide strength to the body,’ and ‘Save the times in preparation.’ The data shows that 89% of respondents take food products due to its taste and flavor. 83 % of respondents take food products because these provide strength to the body and, 86% of respondents take these products as they think that these products save time in preparation/cooking. In continuance of these, there are two other reasons for taking food products; these are ‘Save the money’ and ‘Part of Culture.’ 43% of the respondents strongly agree with taking food products save their money while 45% disagreed for the same. On the other hand, 60% of the respondents take food products as they think these as a part of the culture while 25% disagreed with it (Table 2).

Also, the respondents show favorable responses on three reasons for taking drink products, and these are ‘Taste and flavor,’ ‘Follow the friends or colleagues,’ and ‘Just for Trail.’ It shows that 83% of the respondents take drink products due to their taste and flavor. 74 % of respondents take drink products because they follow their friends and colleges and, 55% of respondents take these drink Products Just for Trail. There are two other reasons for choosing these products as they ‘energize the body’ and ‘build the body.’ It shows that 46% of the respondents agreed strongly with taking drink products as they think these energies their body while 47% disagreed with it. About building the body, 21% of respondents use drink products as they believe these products help to develop their bodies, while 73% disagreed with it, (Table 3).

6. DISCUSSION

The findings of the study explain that males participated in more numbers comparatively than female participants. The majority of the participants in the survey were young between 15 to 34 years. Undergraduate participants were highest amongst the surveyed population. The participants of the middle income-level participated in more than other categories. One-third of the people have their income from the government job, and the additional one-third of the people doing their businesses and self-dependent, and the rest of one-third of people are dependent on the government and their parents. A high percentage of personal expenditure of the people in Saudi Arabia lies between 1000SR to 2000SR. Most Saudi Arabia people agreed on the price and quality of food & drink products are reasonable in the Kingdom. The study results show that food & drink products are satisfying the need of the customer, and products are customized; these are healthy and contains vitamins. There is well awareness among the people about the Saudi food & drink products comparatively foreign countries products. Because of it, Saudi food & drink products have high sales volume, creating value to the customer, and are competent & high performing in the Middle East Reason. The Saudi Arabian population agreed to drink products, and as per them, these products provide energy and strengths. Some people believe that these drink products contain caffeine, while most of them disagreed with it. Some people think that these products can save time and money while half of them don’t believe in it. Saudi Arabia people also believe that using drink products is part of their culture. The people take these drink products for taste, grouping with friends, and sometimes just for trials.

7. CONCLUSION

The competency and marketing performance of food & drink products of Saudi Arabia in the

Middle East region have placed a great value for the customers and the country together. The research shows that a large percentage of the population in Saudi Arabia is consuming these products showing great satisfaction. The Saudi Arabian food processing Industry has been increasing with considerable growth over the past decade. The government is imposing high tariffs on imports to reduce competition with local companies in the Industry. The Saudi Arabian soft drink industry comprises of 2/3rd volume of the whole market in the Gulf region. These include carbonates, bottled water, fruit juices, energy drinks/functional drinks, etc. Rising health consciousness among the people has a strong positive impact in the coming years, especially for fruit juices, bottled water, and energy drinks, which is a good sign for Industrial growth in the coming few years for food and drink products.

The survey outcomes reveal that huge populations experiencing better in consuming the food & drink products and like as are better than any other similar company in the Middle East region. Most of the people experiencing that the quality of food & drink products has following a reputed standard, and the services of these respective companies are excellent. Also, these products are satisfying the massive demand for Saudi Arabian food & drink products in the Middle East region. Even though for some local Saudi brands, quality innovation and transparency are critical hills to climb (Paul, 2012). The findings show that the values the customers receive from these products are overall satisfactory. The existing data also show that a large percentage of customers feel satisfied with a wide range of these food & drink products.

Despite these, the food imports of Saudi Arabia increased by 10% in 2018 compared to 2017 and expected to reach $35 billion in 2020 (GSA, 2018). Also, country Islamic value, country-culture, and people's health consciousness will allow the drink industry to grow only with non-alcoholic drink markets.

8. DATA AND MATERIAL AVIALABILITY

Information regarding this study is available by contacting the corresponding author.

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