CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION AND DESIGN OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Consumers’ attitudes are a composite of consumer beliefs, feelings and behavioral intentions toward some object within the context of marketing, usually a brand or retail store. These components are viewed together since they are highly interdependent and together represent forces that influence how the consumer will react to the object. A consumer may hold both positive beliefs toward the object as well as negative beliefs. In addition, some beliefs may be neutral, and some may differ in valance depending on the person or the situation. It is clear that the beliefs that consumers hold need not be accurate, and some beliefs may upon closer examination be contradictory. Since a consumer holds many beliefs, it may often be difficult to get down to a bottom line of the overall belief about whether Packaged Drinking Water is good or bad.

Water is a prime natural resource, a precious national asset, a basic human need and the elixir of human, faunal and floral life. Experts have ranked water as second only to oxygen as essential. For life apart from aiding in digestion and absorption of food, water regulates body temperature and blood circulation, carries nutrient and oxygen to cells and removes toxins and other wastes. Water also cushions joints and protects tissues and organs including spinal cord from shock to damage. In short, one can live without food for many days but one can only survive for a few days without water. The availability of water however continues to remain the same. In fact, due to failure of monsoon and continued consumption for domestic and industrial purposes, the ground water table had been depleted in several parts of the country. This natural
resource is becoming scarce in many places and its availability is a major social and economic concern.

Competition is rife, in today's complex world, the aspect of considering the food as the prime concept has been eliminated in the fastest world, every person who lives in the fast growing complex world would like to consume food not by large but by mean. Hence the aspect of considering the leverage of mixing food items in to digestive component is determined by intake of drinking water. No matter where the water is procured viz., ground water, rain water, distilled water, purified water and by any other mean. It is recapitalized that the vitality of water is the need of any aspect of digestive function. Hence the intake of water has accumulated his necessity in the consumption of normal man. The failure of monsoon, non-availability of pure water has necessitated inventing packaged drinking water. Now the order of the day is to consume packaged drinking water which includes the aspects, quality, worth, affordable price and easy carrying. Today business world had accorded in large consumption of packaged drinking water as it eliminates diseases like dengue, cold, fever, metropolis attacks, dysentery and other viral infections. So, the manufacturers step in to the process of inventing packaged drinking water which is of sterilized, ultra violet treated, concrete absorption and cleaning of virus in nature.

India's huge and growing population is putting a severe strain on all the country's natural resources. Most water sources are contaminated by sewage and agricultural runoff. India has made progress in the supply of safe water to its people but still gross disparity exists in coverage across the country. Water is a priceless gift of nature. Without water, there is no life on earth. Water is the commonest liquid. But it is also the most wonderful and most useful liquid. It is the basis of all life. No one can deny that water is a friend to human race but it also acts as a foe by way of
harboring disease producing micro-organisms and containing some substances that may lead to ill health. The introduction of packaged drinking water for human consumption at recent times is a boon to mankind and more conveniences are realized. Whenever a common man purchases packaged water, he thinks that the quality is assured and it is safe. Such assurance should be given to consumer by each and every manufacturer of packaged mineral water and packaged drinking water. Keeping in view the utmost importance of quality, Bureau of Indian standards has, promulgated standards for packaged drinking water intended for human consumption.1

Water is a chemical compound consisting of two hydrogen atoms and one oxygen. The name of water typically refers to the liquid state of the compound. The containers in which water is packed shall be hygienic, completely clean and shall not cause any undesirable change in taste, odour or colour or quality of the water. It shall be packed in hermetically sealed containers of food grade materials to prevent contamination of bottled water. Filling and sealing operations of containers shall be done in an aseptic atmosphere so as to prevent any contamination.

1.2 TYPES OF BOTTLED WATER

The origin and processing of different types of bottled water actually make them quite different in content and taste. In fact, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-the federal agency that regulates all types of bottled water-has established guidelines called standards of identity that classify bottled water into several different water types.

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1.2.1 Spring Water

The ever-popular "spring water" is defined as spring water derived from an underground formation from which water flows naturally to the surface of the earth. To qualify as spring water, it must be collected only at the spring or through a borehole tapping the underground formation feeding the spring. If the collection process uses some type of an external force, the water must be from the same stratum as the spring and must retain the quality and all of the same physical properties of water that flows naturally from a spring to the surface.

1.2.2 Drinking Water

Drinking water is sold for human consumption in sanitary containers and contains no added sweeteners or chemical additives (other than flavours, extracts or essences). It must be calorie-free and sugar-free. Flavours, extracts or essences may be added to drinking water comprising less than one-percent-by-weight of the final product or the product will be considered a soft drink. Drinking water may be sodium-free or contain very low amounts of sodium.

1.2.3 Purified Water

This is a type of purified water that has been treated with processes such as distillation, deionization or reverse osmosis. Basically, this just means that the bacteria and dissolved solids have been removed from the water by some process, making it "purified." This type of bottled water is usually labelled as purified drinking water but can also be labelled for the specific process used to produce it, for example, reverse osmosis drinking water or distilled drinking water. Many bottled water brands are actually purified drinking water.
1.2.4 Mineral Water

Mineral water is the water that contains minerals. The minerals can be added artificially or it can naturally be in the water. It is believed that water is taken from a starting place (source) like lake, rivers, or wells, which are the only places where the rich minerals are available. Even water from other places is treated with minerals by artificially adding the nutrients in it. Mineral water is a good source of nutrients and it provides extra benefits during consumption. It does not give off any problems. It becomes expensive as the water undergoes many processes before it is bottled.

1.2.5 Sparkling Bottled Water

This type of water contains the same amount of carbon dioxide that it had when it emerged from its source. Sparkling bottled waters may be labeled as sparkling drinking water, sparkling mineral water, sparkling spring water, etc.

1.2.6 Artesian Water/Artesian Well Water

Artesian water comes from a well that taps a confined aquifer—a water-bearing underground layer of rock or sand—in which the water level is above the top of the aquifer.

1.2.7 Well Water

This one is pretty easy. Well water is exactly what it sounds like—water from a hole made in the ground that taps the water source.

1.2.8 Municipal/Tap Water

It's the type of water piped right into homes. While tap water is not regulated by the FDA, it must meet the strict standards of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Municipal tap water is generally of excellent quality, however, many people
prefer the taste and enjoy the convenience of bottled water, which, in most cases, undergoes additional processing and often retains the pleasant characteristics of its natural source.

1.2.9 Ground Water

Waters such as spring water, artesian water and well water originating from subsurface aquifers is called Ground water. Ground waters may be classified broadly as protected or unprotected water. Protected ground waters are not directly influenced by surface water or the surface environment.

1.2.10 Surface Water

Water open to the atmosphere such as streams, rivers, lakes, ponds and reservoirs.

1.2.11 Natural Water

"Natural Water" means bottled spring, mineral, artesian or well water which is derived from an underground formation and is not derived from a municipal system or public water supply.

1.3 PACKAGED DRINKING WATER

Packaging drinking water (PDW) means water derived from surface water or underground water or sea water which is subjected to here in under specified treatments, namely decantation, filtration, combination of filtration, aerations, filtration with membrane filter depth filter, cartridge filter, activated carbon filtration, demineralization, remineralization, reverse osmosis and packed after disinfecting the water to a level that shall not lead to any harmful contamination in the drinking water by means of chemical agent or physical methods to reduce the number of microorganisms.
organisms to a level beyond scientifically accepted level for food safety or its suitability. Sea water before being subjected to the above treatments, shall be subjected to desalination and related processes. In case of remineralization is part of the treatment process; the ingredients used shall be food grade quality and conform to the requirements of the Prevention of Food Adulteration act, 1954 and rules.

1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It is worth quoting here, The Rhyme of The Ancient Mariner, the old man says, “Water, water everywhere, but not a drop to drink” is perhaps a fitting description of the attitude of many consumers living in urban areas today who are increasingly looking towards bottled water as a means of meeting some or all of their daily requirements. As fresh water supplies are further stretched to meet the demands of many industries, agriculture and an ever-expanding population, the shortage of safe and accessible drinking-water will become a major challenge in many parts of the world. While bottled water is widely available in both developed and developing countries, it may represent a significant cost to the consumer. Consumers may have various reasons for purchasing packaged drinking-water, such as taste, convenience or fashion, but for many consumers, safety and potential health benefits are important considerations.

Clean drinking water is a basic need for people worldwide. Clean water availability is a major issue in developing countries. In the Asia and Pacific region, 700 million people are living without proper water supply system and this problem gets grave in rural areas. The drinking water source in rural areas of developing world is usually ground water and people use hand pump or turbine to draw ground water. However there can be more problems related to poor water quality. Aesthetic problem includes unpleasant taste or odour, precipitation of dissolved minerals and
calcification of taps and kitchen utensils. Perception of water quality plays an important role in determining the preventive measures against different water borne diseases. The perception risk and satisfaction of quality of drinking water are closely related. The perception of risk regarding drinking water is defined as subjective judgment of individual aesthetically and non-aesthetically.

Research and studies regarding consumers’ attitude of buying are usually a common approach in post-war marketing contexts in order to acquire an insight and knowledge to guide marketing activities regarding the buying attitude of individuals. It is complicated, but understanding buyer attitude is central to marketing management. Just as marketing ends with consumption, marketing management must begin with understanding the consumers’.

High awareness for safety and hygiene increases the sales of packaged drinking water in India. With an increase in the number of water borne diseases, consumers are concerned about safety and do not mind spending on packaged drinking water. In fact packaged drinking water has become a necessity while travelling.

The packaged water industry has literally created its own water culture. Just like any other consumer product, packaged drinking water requires thorough research regarding consumers’ buying attitude to guide present and future marketing activities. This is especially so, given the circumstances that the packaged drinking water market is considered as one of the fastest growing markets in the beverage category. In brief, both the global and local packaged drinking water market is becoming an essential part of the beverage market. This remarkable increase raises several questions and is therefore one of the drivers of this research.
This raised several questions which mainly focus on satisfaction on various factors of packaged drinking water and impact of satisfaction on attitude of buying the packaged drinking water. Consequent to this, “A Study on Consumers’ Attitude Towards Packaged Drinking Water in Tirunelveli District” is taken up by the researcher. The present study aims to analyze the socioeconomic status, usage profile, satisfaction on packaged drinking water, attitude of buying the packaged drinking water and the impact of satisfaction with the packaged drinking water on the attitude of buying the packaged drinking water. The results of the study would serve as a powerhouse for the development of marketing for the industries, companies and the wholesalers of packaged drinking water.

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of the study was to evaluate the consumers’ attitude towards packaged drinking water in Tirunelveli district. The following secondary objectives were also formulated to contribute to meet the main objective:

1. To find out the socioeconomic status and usage profile of the respondents
2. To analyze the satisfaction of the respondents on the packaged drinking water
3. To examine the attitude of buying the packaged drinking water of the respondents
4. To analyze the impact of satisfaction of the respondents with the packaged drinking water on their attitude of buying the packaged drinking water
5. To suggest measures to improve the condition based on the findings
1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study attempts to examine the socioeconomic status and usage profile of packaged drinking water of the respondents to understand the life span of the population in the study area. It examines the satisfaction of the respondents towards packaged drinking water in the study area based on their selected socioeconomic status. Further, it examines the attitude of buying the packaged drinking water among the respondents based on their selected socioeconomic status and also it analyses the association between their attitude of buying the packaged drinking water and their selected socioeconomic status. It also examines how far the satisfaction of the respondents towards packaged drinking water has impacted on their attitude of buying it. The present study is from the standpoint of the consumer attitude towards packaged drinking water among the people in the study area.

1.7 HYPOTHESES

To give a specific focus to the objectives, hypotheses have been formulated to test the objectives in clear terms using appropriate statistical tools. For testing purpose, some of the research questions of the study were converted into hypotheses. The study involves 15 hypotheses which are listed down, proved and explained in detail in the fifth and sixth chapters. Following null hypotheses are formulated for the study.

$H_1$: There is no significant difference between males and females in the Satisfaction with Quality, Satisfaction with Brand, Satisfaction with Price and Satisfaction with Availability towards packaged drinking water.
H2 : There is no significant difference between the age group in the Satisfaction with Quality, Satisfaction with Brand, Satisfaction with Price and Satisfaction with Availability towards packaged drinking water.

H3 : There is no significant difference between the levels of education in the Satisfaction with Quality, Satisfaction with Brand, Satisfaction with Price and Satisfaction with Availability towards packaged drinking water.

H4 : There is no significant difference between the occupations in the Satisfaction with Quality, Satisfaction with Brand, Satisfaction with Price and Satisfaction with Availability towards packaged drinking water.

H5 : There is no significant difference between the categories of monthly income in the Satisfaction with Quality, Satisfaction with Brand, Satisfaction with Price and Satisfaction with Availability towards packaged drinking water.

H6 : There is no significant association between gender and the attitude of buying the packaged drinking water.

H7 : There is no significant association between age and the attitude of buying the packaged drinking water.

H8 : There is no significant association between level of education and the attitude of buying the packaged drinking water.

H9 : There is no significant association between occupation and the attitude of buying the packaged drinking water.

H10 : There is no significant association between monthly income and the attitude of buying the packaged drinking water.

H11 : There is no significant impact of Satisfaction with Quality of the packaged drinking water on the Attitude of buying of the respondents.
H_{12} : There is no significant impact of Satisfaction with Brand of the packaged drinking water on the Attitude of buying of the respondents.

H_{13} : There is no significant impact of Satisfaction with Price of the packaged drinking water on the Attitude of buying of the respondents.

H_{14} : There is no significant impact of Satisfaction with Availability of the packaged drinking water on the Attitude of buying of the respondents.

H_{15} : There is no significant impact of Overall Satisfaction of the packaged drinking water on the Attitude of buying of the respondents.

1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology has to be robust in order to minimize errors in data collection and analysis. It explains the research objectives and a suitable methodology to achieve those objectives. Owing to this, various methods, procedures, and techniques were chosen for data collection. The methodology adopted in the present study includes the research design, the population and sampling, the data collection, data analysis strategy and ethical considerations.

1.9 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a plan which outlines how information is to be gathered for an assessment. It includes identifying the data gathering method(s), the instruments to be used/ created, how the instruments should be administered, and how the information should be organized and analysed.

The study uses a mixed approach of two research strategies; exploratory and descriptive research. Each of these strategies plays a distinct but complementary role
in order to get an answer to the research problems. Exploratory research is conducted into an issue or problem where there are few or no earlier studies to refer to. The focus is on gaining insights and familiarity for later investigation. Descriptive research describes phenomena as they exist. As regards data quantitative and qualitative statistics are applied. It is used to identify and obtain information on a particular problem or issue.

Firstly, exploratory research was carried out to gain insights and background information about the phenomenon of packaged drinking water, both globally and locally. By doing this, little academic research and literature was discovered. This helped to identify various variables of consumers’ satisfaction and attitude of buying towards packaged drinking water.

Thereafter, descriptive research was used to test and to answer the research hypotheses. This was carried out by a survey design and therefore consists of designing and administrating the questionnaire, constructing the sampling strategy and analysing the results.

The survey design is being considered as the most appropriate technique for descriptive research since the aim is to obtain primary data. Questionnaires (primary data) enable the researcher to identify and describe the opinion of the respondents more easily. Moreover, it is simple to administrate, provide relatively reliable data and is time limited. Because of the fact that every respondent was asked to answer the same set of structured and predetermined questions, coding, data treatment and interpretation was relatively easy.
1.10 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

Another crucial step in conducting the survey is to determine which subject shall be surveyed to obtain the appropriate information for the research objectives. A sample comprises the individuals selected from a larger group referred to as a population. The researcher was in search of people who were using the packaged drinking water in Tirunelveli district. The study population consisted of all people who were using packaged drinking water in Tirunelveli district.

The most appropriate sampling method for this study is convenience sampling, a form of non-probability sampling. Relying on available subjects such as stopping people at a street corner as they pass by is one method of sampling, although it is extremely risky and comes with many cautions. This method, sometimes referred to as a convenience sample, does not allow the researcher to have any control over the representativeness of the sample. It is only justified if the researcher wants to study the characteristics of people passing by the street corner at a certain point of time or if other sampling methods are not possible.\(^2\)

A convenient sample consists of subjects included in the study because they happen to be in the right place at the right time. A convenient sample of 600 subjects was selected from the population in the study area. Available subjects were entered into the study until a sample size of 600 was reached.

1.11 DATA COLLECTION

1.11.1 Data Collection Instrument

The data collection instrument used in this study was a questionnaire with sixty four questions. A questionnaire is a printed self-report form designed to elicit

\(^2\) http://sociology.about.com/od/Research/a/sampling-designs.htm
information that can be obtained through the written responses of the subjects. These questions were divided into four sections for the purpose of collecting the primary data for the study. The questionnaires consisted of sections A, B, C and D. Section A aimed at gaining the socioeconomic status of the people who responded in the study, and section B aimed at gaining the background of usage of packaged drinking water of the respondents. Section C aimed at determining the satisfaction of the people who responded towards the packaged drinking water, and section D aimed at knowing the attitude of buying of the people who responded towards the packaged drinking water. The questions in the section A and B were measured by the nominal scale, whereas the questions in the section C and D were measured by an ordinal scale (Five point Likert scale). The questionnaires consisted of closed-ended questions because they are easier to administer and to analyze. The questionnaires were drafted in English. The questionnaire so drafted was circulated among few research scholars for a critical review with regard to wording, format and sequences. It was suitably drafted in the light of their comments.

1.11.2 Reliability and Validity of Instrument

Before doing the actual data collection, the reliability and validity of the questionnaires were tested. In order to test the reliability of this questionnaire, a pilot test was carried out in Alangulam Block of Tirunelveli District prior to the field survey within a relatively small sample of fifty consumers of packaged drinking water in two separate occasions to identify and eliminate possible problems. Cronbach alpha was calculated to measure the internal consistency reliability of the instrument. If the value of cronbach’s alpha is greater than 0.7 then the instrument is considered reliable. The value of cronbach alpha came as 0.94 for part A, 0.92 for part B, 0.91 for part C and 0.96 for part D; thus, the instrument was considered reliable for the study.
Regarding this research, the validity was verified by the guide of this research, who looks into the appropriateness of questions and the scales of measurement.

1.11.3 Data Collection Procedure

Questionnaires were personally distributed by the researcher with the help of his students who were studying master degree in commerce to the respondents. The students were trained before they were involved in the data collection. This team was placed at several locations within the center of each Taluk of the district to distribute and collect the necessary informations through questionnaires. The researcher and the team helped the informants and filled in the questionnaires for those who couldn't read and write English. This team is also responsible, together with the researcher, to ensure that all questionnaires are completely answered and valid for data analysis. The data were collected over a period of six months from October 2013 to March 2014. As stated earlier, the researcher used the questionnaires for the collection of primary data from the consumers of packaged drinking water in Tirunelveli District. The completed schedules were checked and the omissions and commissions were rectified on the spot. All the data were computerized; consistency checks were made to ensure that data has been correctly entered, and that the entries were logically valid. Thereafter, the data were used for the final analysis. Secondary data were collected from books, journals, newspapers, periodicals, reports, websites, and unpublished Ph.D. theses.

1.11.4 Data Analysis Strategy

After the data were collected they were organized and analysed. The data were prepared by cleaning, coding and entering them on the computer at the end of each day. For analysis of closed-ended questions, a computer programme called Statistical
Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 21) and Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS 21) were used.

For analysing the socioeconomic status and usage profile of the respondents, descriptive statistical procedures, including frequency distributions and percentage analysis were used. Graphical illustration was also used to provide an apparent visual illumination on the socioeconomic status.

In order to identify the satisfaction factors that impact the attitude of buying, factor analysis was done to extract smaller number of linear combinations out of 15 items under the satisfaction with packaged drinking water. Principal component analysis (PCA) was the method of extraction and varimax was the rotation method. Four factors were extracted whose eigen values were more than 1. After factor analysis, loading of the variables was calculated in order to name each of the factors. In order to find out the level of satisfactions of the respondents towards the packaged drinking water, the following standardized formula \[\text{Score} > (\bar{x} + SD) \equiv \text{High Level}, \]
\[\text{Score} < (\bar{x} - SD) \equiv \text{Low Level} \quad \text{and} \quad (\bar{x} + SD) \quad \text{to} \quad (\bar{x} - SD) \equiv \text{Moderate Level}\] was used. In order to study how these satisfaction factors vary across the gender, age, level of education, occupation and monthly income of the respondents, Mann-Whitney U test and Kruskal-Wallis test were used.

Correlations were used to assess the relationship of the organizational climate dimensions and demographic characteristics with the project specific risk factors.

A cross-tabulation technique with the chi-square test was used to assess the association of the attitude of buying with the socioeconomic status, such as gender, age, level of education, occupation and monthly income of the respondents. In order

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3Gupta, S.P., Statistical Methods, Sultan Chand & Sons, New Delhi, 1991, pp.8-28
to find out the strength of the association between the attitude of buying and the gender, age, level of education, occupation and monthly income of the respondents, Phi (\(\varphi\)) and Cramer's V values were considered. Phi (\(\varphi\)) and Cramer's V values above 0.35 means strong association, values between 0.25 and 0.35 means moderately strong association and values below 0.25 means weak association between attitude of buying and the socioeconomic variables.\(^4\) The levels of attitude of buying the packaged drinking water of the respondents are calculated by appropriate formula 

\[\text{Score} > (\bar{x} + SD) \equiv \text{High Level}, \text{Score} < (\bar{x} - SD) \equiv \text{Low Level}, (\bar{x} - SD) \text{ to } (\bar{x} + SD) \equiv \text{Moderate Level}.\]

In assessing the impact of satisfaction factors on the attitude of buying, Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) technique was used. The Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) analysis was carried out by using popular statistical package AMOS 21 software in the maximum likelihood estimation.

1.11.5 Ethical Considerations

The conducting of research requires not only expertise and diligence, but also honesty and integrity. This is done to recognize and protect the rights of human subjects. To render the study ethical, the rights to self-determination, anonymity, confidentiality and informed consent were observed.

Respondents’ consent was obtained before they completed the questionnaires. Informed consent defined as the prospective subject's agreement to participate voluntarily in a study, and which is reached after the assimilation of essential information about the study. The respondents were informed of their rights to voluntarily consent or decline to participate, and to withdraw participation at any time.

\(^4\) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cross_tabulation
without penalty. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the study, the procedures that would be used to collect the data, and assured that there were no potential risks or costs involved.

Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained throughout the study. In this study anonymity was ensured by not disclosing the respondent's name on the questionnaire and research reports and detaching the written consent from the questionnaire.

When subjects are promised confidentiality, it means that the information they provide will not be publicly reported in a way which identifies them. In this study, confidentiality was maintained by keeping the collected data confidential and not revealing the respondents' identities when reporting or publishing the study. No identifying information was entered onto the questionnaires, and questionnaires were only numbered after data was collected.

The ethical principle of self-determination was also maintained. Subjects were treated as autonomous agents by informing them about the study and allowing them to voluntarily choose to participate or not. Lastly, information was provided about the researcher in the event of further questions or complaints.

Scientific honesty is regarded as a very important ethical responsibility when conducting research. Dishonest conduct includes manipulation of design and methods, and retention or manipulation of data. The researcher tried to avoid any form of dishonesty by recording truthfully the answers of those respondents who could not read or write. Manipulation of data could not be done as entered the data from the questionnaires into the SPSS computer software programme.
1.12 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The research on consumers’ attitude towards packaged drinking water is providing new insights and wisdom to the consumers as well as to the companies and wholesalers of packaged drinking water. The ultimate goal of the research is to help to the companies and wholesalers to improve their business of packaged drinking water by providing the socio economic condition, satisfaction with packaged drinking water and attitude of buying of consumers. The findings of this study will be of significance in the following ways.

1. The findings of the study may add to the existing fund of knowledge about the consumers with regard to the socioeconomic conditions, satisfaction with packaged drinking water and attitudes of buying towards packaged drinking water.

2. It may provide guidelines which will help the companies and wholesalers of packaged drinking water for preparing the marketing strategies and advertisement technique to develop the marketing of their packaged drinking water among the consumers.

3. It may help the companies and wholesalers of packaged drinking water to identify the cluster area to increase their marketing.

4. It may help the companies and wholesalers of packaged drinking water to remove the stumbling block for improving their marketing.

5. It may provide enough knowledge to the companies and wholesalers of packaged drinking water for developing the quality, brand, price and availability, which can be used to enhance their marketing.
6. It may act as a self-appraisal instrument to the companies and wholesalers of packaged drinking water to know themselves of what they are and where they are.

7. It may produce the global exposure about the packaged drinking water.

8. It may sow seeds to the researcher who has an interest in the packaged drinking water and to the research unit of the companies of packaged drinking water for further research.

1.13 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study takes into account only the consumers’ attitude towards packaged drinking water in Tirunelveli district. Therefore, the present study has certain limitations. They are,

1. The study was conducted only in Tirunelveli District. Hence the findings and conclusions of the study are applicable to this district only, and it may not hold good for other areas.

2. The result of the primary data duly depended upon the trustworthiness of the respondents.

3. The study was mainly based on convenience sampling method instead of census method. Hence the findings of the study cannot be generalized.

4. Regarding the attitude of consumers, the attitude of buying the packaged drinking water was only measured in the study.

5. The data was collected only from 600 respondents and not from all the consumers.
6. The primary data were collected through questionnaire method which is subjected to recall bias. However, sufficient care was taken at every stage to reduce the error through cross checks.

7. For statistical test \( p < 0.05 \) was taken as the significance level.

1.14 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

1.14.1 Consumer Satisfaction

Satisfaction is the fulfilment and gratification of the need for a stated consumer satisfaction and is closely linked to acceptance and preferences. Satisfaction is the fulfilment and gratification of the need for a stated good or service. The level of satisfaction is therefore determined by the perceived performance of a company or utility, which is an evaluation of the delivered good or service viewed in the light of the consumers’ need.

1.14.2 Consumer Acceptance

Acceptance describes consumers’ willingness to receive and/or to tolerate. For example, a customer might accept the occurrence of a certain number of yearly supply interruptions given a certain price. Consumer acceptance and satisfaction are related, as the first is a precursor of the latter. However, despite the fact that satisfaction and acceptance can be thought of as lying on a continuum; acceptance does not automatically lead to satisfaction. Acceptance is also used in the literature to mean an affirmative answer to a proposal. The distinction is subtle but there are occasions where consumers might not agree to a proposal yet accept the subsequent service in the sense of tolerating it, acceptance does not automatically lead to satisfaction good or service, here, water.
1.14.3 Consumer Preferences

This is used primarily to mean an option that has the greatest anticipated value among a number of options. This is an economic definition and does not tap into ‘wishes’ or ‘dreams’ (for e.g. that safe drinking water was free, that there should be world peace) but for all practical purposes is an appropriate definition. Preference and acceptance can in certain circumstances mean the same thing but it is useful to keep the distinction in mind with preference tending to indicate choices among neutral or more valued options with acceptance indicating a willingness to tolerate the status quo or some less desirable option.

1.14.4 Consumer Expectations

Consumer expectations mean what a customer is entitled to expect from a service provider. In any goods or service based industry, the Consumer has a fair idea of what they should be receiving for their money. A related but more technical use of expectation is to denote a more formal estimation of the probability of an event occurring.

1.14.5 Consumer Awareness

Consumer awareness is the level of knowledge about, in this case, water which includes the water company, regulatory framework, supply system and service, or the water itself. In most researches the adequacy or otherwise of this awareness is anchored against the service provider or regulator’s perspective on the supply. Where consumer awareness does not equate with this industry perspective this is often termed as consumer perception. However, it should be noted that there is a distinction between holding factually incorrect knowledge about the supply system (for e.g. that the water comes from a river when it comes from an aquifer) and differing perspectives on, say, the safety of the supply.
1.14.6 Consumer Attitudes

To understand consumer attitudes, marketers need to know how consumers develop beliefs about and preferences for brands based on the information they have processed. Marketers need to know what are consumers’ likes and dislikes. In simple explanation, these likes and dislikes are favourable or unfavourable attitudes of consumers. Attitudes help us understanding, why consumers do or do not buy a particular product.

1.15. CHAPTER SCHEME

The present study, “A Study on Consumers Attitude towards Packaged Drinking Water in Tirunelveli District” has been organized under seven chapters.


The Second chapter encompasses a brief summary of previous research and the writings of recognised experts which provide evidence that the researcher is familiar with what are already known and with what are still unknown and untested. It has been divided into three parts such as Introduction, Review of researchers and Chapter summary.

The Third chapter describes the overview of the consumer attitude, packaged drinking water and the Profile of Study area (Tirunelveli district).
The Fourth chapter deals with the analysis and interpretations of the socioeconomic status and usage profile of the respondents.

The Fifth chapter enlists the analysis and interpretations of the satisfaction of the respondents towards the packaged drinking water based on their selected demographic profile.

The Sixth chapter deals with the analysis and interpretations of attitude of buying of the respondents towards packaged drinking water. Further the impact of satisfaction of the respondents towards packaged drinking water on their attitude of buying the packaged drinking water was analysed and interpreted.

The Seventh chapter presents the summary of findings along with the conclusion and suggestions based on the analysis done.

1.16. CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, the features of the Study on consumers’ attitude towards packaged drinking water in Tirunelveli district have been elaborately discussed. Design of the study has also been framed in this chapter. It included the types of bottled water, packaged drinking water, Statement of the Problem, Objectives of the Study, Scope of the Study, Framed Hypotheses, Research Methodology, research design, population and sampling, data collection, Significance of the Study, Limitations of the Study, operational definitions and Scheme of the report.