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# The relationship between demographic and psychological factors and bottled water buying behavior in Eritrea

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**This study attempts to investigate the relationship between demographic attributes (gender, age, education, income, family size, and employment status) and psychological (beliefs and perceptions) factors and consumers buying decision behavior of bottled water. A survey was conducted among 540 respondents, and the findings of this study suggest that there is a minimal relationship between 'beliefs' and 'perception' of the consumers and their buying behavior of bottled water. However, no evidence was found demographic variables influence peoples' bottled water drinking behavior. Furthermore, the results of this study indicate that the more positive the perception of consumers, the more likely they believe the tap water quality is relatively higher, safer, and reliable in Eritrea. As the results show, the mean scores of tap water is higher than bottled water.**

**Key words:** Bottled water, psychological, demographic, developing country, Eritrea.

## INTRODUCTION

Bottled water demands thorough research with respect to consumer buying behaviour to serve as a guide to the present as well as future marketing activities. Some people drink bottled water as an alternative to other beverages; others drink it because they prefer its taste or think it is safer than their tap water. The demand for bottled water has consistently increased during the last decade (Durga, 2010). This trend has been observed worldwide, but the rates of increase vary accordingly to the country (ASDA, 2004). The consumption of bottled water has been substantially increasing all over the world during the last decade (Doria, 2006). The increase also included the countries where tap water is used as drinking water. The reasons could be attributed to a number of factors primarily concerned with safety and health benefits.

One of the factors that contribute to the consumption of bottled water is dissatisfaction with tap water organoleptics, that is, the water characteristics that affect the senses of taste, odour and sight. In this context, taste seems to be particularly relevant (Grondin et al., 1996;

Abrahams et al., 2000). However, Hrudey et al. (2006) reveal that safety does not mean the absence of any risk. The authors argue that demanding an absolute standard would mean that no water would ever meet this standard and thus no water could ever be considered safe.

In addition, Doria (2010) stated that risk perception, attitude towards water chemicals, contextual cues provided by the supply system, familiarity with specific water properties, trust in suppliers, past problems attributed to water quality and information provided by the mass media and interpersonal sources are also factors that influence perceptions of water quality and henceforth influencing consumption behavior.

There are a number of reasons for buying and using bottled drinking water. The reasons are different as identified by the different studies; however, most of the studies are mainly related to the quality of the water (Doria, 2006; Rodwan, 2009). Health consciousness is the main reason for using bottled water. For instance, Islam and Habib (2009) explain that in Bangladesh, people have

general and specific health beliefs about the bottled water. The general belief is that bottled water provides general health benefits than non-bottled water. There is less chance to contaminate if the water is bottled. In developing countries like Bangladesh, this belief is rather very strong where non-bottled water is not hygienic at all.

The Eritrean bottled water market is increasing, although there is no documented reliable data regarding market share. However, this can be justified by the fact that the number of bottled water firms has increased from about 5 in 2001 to 30 companies in 2018 (Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2018).

As indicated in the aforementioned discussions, the issue here is: do beliefs and perceptions really condition the bottled water market in Eritrea? What other factors determine the buying behavior of consumers toward bottled water in Eritrea? Kotler et al. (2008) argue that consumer purchases are influenced strongly by cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors. However, consumers' perception, beliefs, and buying behavior of bottled water in Eritrea are under researched. Since this study is the first to conduct in Eritrea, hence, it provides a new knowledge regarding the behavior, perceptions, and beliefs of consumers towards bottled water in Eritrea.

Based on the above notion, therefore, the main objective of this study is to investigate the demographic and psychological factors affecting consumer behavior in Eritrea. The specific objective of this study is to identify the factors that influence consumers' bottled water drinking behavior.

## Literature review

In Eritrea over the past decade there has been a remarkable increase in the bottled water market (Ministry of Trade and Industry, 2018). New bottled water companies are evolving at a higher rate with their own unique brand and the number of bottled water users is also increasing. Different people use bottled water for different reasons; such as quality and health reasons, others could be due to scarcity of the available clean tap water.

According to Doria (2006), many consumers in developed countries are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the quality of the tap water. Moreover, in communities that have serious problems with their tap water, bottled water consumption has often been high. These problems create new opportunities for bottled water producers and marketers, who package and present their products as 'pure', 'safe', and 'healthy' (Doria, 2006). Similarly, bottled water companies in Eritrea promote their products using the following slogans "drink your way to a better life", "drink for a healthy life", "nurture your life", and "healthy life....perfect taste" (Source: stickers posted in the bottled water and in company's distribution vehicles).

Rodwan (2009) argues that the bottled water industry is just taking advantage of the growing health and well-being consciousness of consumers. On the other hand, he stated that consumers in developed countries perceive bottled

water as a good alternative source as compared to other beverages, such as carbonated soft drinks and juices. Not only it is a way to achieve hydration for them, but bottled water is also healthy and thirst-quenching. In case of developing countries, Rodwan thinks bottled water serves as an alternative since these countries often have unsafe water, which contrary to Doria's (2006) argument.

There are other scholars, for instance, Phend (2009) who concur with earlier studies findings of perceived purity, safety, and taste as the main drivers for consumers to use bottled water. However, on the basis of a survey conducted in England, she argued that health is not a driving factor at all in bottled water consumption. Rather, convenience and taste are the factors that drive the use of bottled water. Ogbuji et al. (2011) in their study of branding in consumers choice in Nigeria, discovered that company-of-make and packaging play a greater role than brand name and brand mark, in influencing the consumer choice for bottled water.

In addition, preliminary studies conducted by Dasinaa and Delina (2015) reveals that there is a increasing pattern can be observed in bottled water consumption in the Eastern Province of Srilanka in the last few years. It shows that the consumption behavior of bottled water differs along with several factors in different geographical locations despite these locations are endowed with plenty of natural surface and ground water resources.

Kotler (2008), in his study of influencing factors of the consumer buying decision process of "demographic (personal) and psychological factors", concluded that both demographic and psychological factors are related to the buying behavior of bottled water.

In addition, past research also show that behavioral factors concerned with the dissatisfaction with tap water organoleptics (especially the taste), health risk, demographic aspects, perceived quality of the water source, trust in tap water companies are the factors that induce the users to use bottled water (Doria, 2006). Similarly, Ferrier (2001) and Doria (2006) in a separate study found that there is a relationship between bottled water consumption and perception of tap water quality including both safety and taste. The increased consumption trend of bottled water represents a change in ways of life. Also Viscusi et al. (2014) examined decisions to choose bottled water using a large, nationally representative sample. They showed that perceptions of superior safety, taste, and convenience boost consumption of bottled water. Those who had prior adverse experiences with tap water or had encountered water quality incidences tended to believe bottled water is safer or tastes better.

In a very recent study conducted among students on university campuses on Hong Kong, Macau, and Singapore Qian (2018) found that "safety and hygiene" and "convenience and availability" were the main factors influencing drinking water choice. Similarly, a study by Xiaowen and Carolyn (2018) investigating bottled water consumption intentions using the theory of planned behavior framework found that perception of bottled water benefits—including convenience, taste, and health

factors—positively influence purchase intention.

Hence, based on the aforementioned discussions it is of paramount importance to conduct a study to focus more on the consumers' perceptions, beliefs, and behavior towards bottled water consumption in Eritrea. This study aims to include several factors such as demographics, physical locations, education, and income. Thus, it includes groups of people with different environmental background, and then trying to identify what shapes their belief and perceptions towards the consumption of bottled water.

Therefore, based on the aforementioned reviews and discussions we propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Beliefs and perceptions positively influence consumers' frequency of drinking, reason for purchase, and purchase location.

Hypothesis 2: Demographic factors positively influence consumers' frequency of drinking, reason for purchase, and purchase location.

## METHODOLOGY

### Sample and Procedures

This study is mainly quantitative in nature. The study examines the influence of demographic and psychological factors on bottled water drinking behavior. In conducting this study, primary and secondary data have been used. Primary data were collected from individual respondents using survey questionnaire. A structured questionnaire has been adopted based on a study done by Durga (2010) using similar scale of measurement? According to Malhotra (2010), the minimum sample size for market research should be 200 to 500. However, for convenience reasons and to replace missing questions, researchers collected more data. The data were gathered from a sample of randomly selected 575 respondents between November 2017 to February 2018. The questionnaires were self-administered. Out of the total distributed questionnaire, researchers obtained 540 usable questionnaires, which contributed 94% response rate. Individuals were requested to give information related to their consumption of bottled water.

In this study, the dependent variable is bottled water buying behaviour. The dependent variable is explained through—frequency of purchase, purchase location, and reason for purchase. While various demographic and psychological factors (age, sex, education, income, family size, employment status, beliefs, and perceptions) which might influence bottled water drinking behaviour have been included as independent variables in the regression model.

A set of Likert type scales was used to measure pertinent constructs. Each of 'beliefs' and 'perceptions' category was answered using a five-point scale, where 1= strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree. A reliability test was run to determine the extent to which a construct of bottled water buying behavior as experienced by consumers was being

measured. The test results are for 'beliefs' (Cronbach alpha = 0.74), 'perceptions' (Cronbach alpha = 0.69), and buying behavior (Cronbach alpha = 0.55). The alpha for the buying behavior is relatively low. However, generally the survey as a whole was consistently measuring consumers' behavior towards an underlying construct.

## RESULTS

### Demographic characteristics

The demographic profile of the respondents' was presented in Table 1. Out of the total respondents, 293 (54.3%) are male, while 247 (45.7%) are females. Regarding age, most of them are in the range of 15-35 years old (combined 62.4%). In terms of education, the distribution is not equally distributed as 85.9% has received secondary and above (college level) education. As far as income of the respondents is concerned, most of the respondents' income is relatively low compared to the standard of living of the population.

In addition, 62% of the respondents (62%) use bottled water at least once a week or more, and the remaining respondents, that is, 14.3% use less than once in a week, 17.6% consume at least once a month, while 5.2% never used bottled water. Regarding the sources where they get bottled water, 67.4% purchase from shops, the other purchase locations are café's (18.5%), directly from the manufacturer (4.6%), at restaurants (4.4%) and others such as school and work (3.7%). The main reason to use bottled water varies, but the principal reason is health/safety concerns (71.5%). The second relatively notable (13.1%) use bottled water because it is thirst-quenching. There are also other respondents who stated that it tastes better than other drinks (7.4%) and it is convenient and easy to consume (6.3%).

Researchers used descriptive statistics to measure the independent variables beliefs and perceptions of the consumers. A nine-item questionnaire related to the variable beliefs, which possibly influence the buying behaviour, has been presented in Table 2. Table 2 shows the results of the respondents' beliefs about bottled and tap water. The mean indicates to what extent the respondents agree or disagree with the different statements. The higher the mean, the more likelihood the respondents agree with the statement; while the lower the mean, indicated the respondents disagree with the statement.

As can be seen from Table 2, respondents believe that there is no considerable difference between bottled and tap water in Eritrea (mean = 3.87; sd. = 1.10); tap water in Eritrea is safe (mean = 3.39; sd. = .90); the quality of tap water in Eritrea is reliable (mean = 3.35; sd. = 1.00); and that they are satisfied with the taste of tap water (mean = 2.98; sd. = 1.11). Besides, respondents disagree (low means) with the statements bottled water has higher quality standards than tap water (mean = 1.68; sd. = 0.79); bottled water is safer than tap water in Eritrea (mean =

**Table 1.** Respondents' background (n=540)

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
15-25 years	193	35.7
26-35 years	144	26.7
36-45 years	92	17.0
46-55 years	63	11.7
over 55	48	8.9
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	293	54.3
Female	247	45.7
<b>Education</b>		
Never attended school	26	4.8
Elementary	17	3.1
Junior	33	6.1
Secondary	177	32.8
College and above	287	53.1
<b>Income (Eritrean Nakfa)</b>		
0-200	170	20.7
201-600	29	17.0
601-1000	81	35.6
1001-2000	115	11.9
2001 and above	145	14.8
<b>Bottled water usage</b>		
Once a week or more	335	62.0
Less than once a week (till once a month)	77	14.3
Less than once a month	95	17.6
Never	28	5.2
<b>Main purchase location</b>		
Never	7	1.3
At shops	364	67.4
At cafés	100	18.5
At restaurants	24	4.4
From manufacturer	25	4.6
Other	20	3.7
<b>Main reason to use bottled water</b>		
Never	9	1.7
Tastes better than other drinks	40	7.4
Healthier/safer than other drinks	386	71.5
It is thirst-quenching	71	13.1
It is convenient and easy to consume	34	6.3

**Table 2.** Respondents' beliefs about bottled and tap water (n= 540)

<b>Items</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
Bottled water has higher quality standards than tap water	1.68	.79
Bottled water is safer than tap water in Eritrea	1.67	.75
Bottled water is healthier than tap water in Eritrea	1.76	.82
Bottled water is healthier than soft drinks	1.93	.92
The quality of bottled water in Eritrea is reliable	2.20	.91
The quality of tap water in Eritrea is reliable	3.35	1.00
Tap water in Eritrea is safe	3.39	.99
I am satisfied with the taste of tap water in Eritrea	2.98	1.11
There is no considerable difference between bottled and tap water in Eritrea	3.87	1.10
Overall mean	2.53	0.93

1.67; sd. = 0.75); bottled water is healthier than tap water in Eritrea (mean = 1.76; sd. = 0.82); bottled water is healthier soft drinks (mean = 1.93; sd. = 0.92); and that the quality of bottled water in Eritrea is reliable (mean = 2,20;

sd. = 0.91). In fact, these results are not surprising for two reasons. Firstly, about 80 percent of the populations living in the urban areas have access to pure water. Secondly, the bottled water companies have been using the tap water and

**Table 3.** Respondents' perceptions about bottled and tap water (n=540)

Items	M	SD
Bottled water is convenient and easy to consume	2.25	.99
Bottled water is good available in Eritrea	2.20	.94
Bottled water has a better taste than tap water in Eritrea	2.18	1.02
Drinking bottled water is refreshing	2.39	1.00
Drinking bottled water is socially accepted in Eritrea	2.60	1.06
Drinking bottled water suits my lifestyle	2.91	1.10
Drinking tap water suits my lifestyle	2.90	1.13
Drinking bottled water suits my diet	2.78	1.07
Bottled water is a good alternative to other drinks	2.02	.87
Bottled water is relatively cheap in Eritrea	3.34	1.16
Bottled water is a commercial business in Eritrea	2.06	.94
Bottled water generates more waste than tap water	2.61	1.19
Bottled water is more accessible than tap water	2.75	1.26
Overall mean	2.54	1.06

then add chemicals to purify the water that is already pure. Currently, the government issues a regulation stating that bottled water companies need to have their own source of water because they are taking advantage of the tap water that is clean and pure, which doesn't need any purification.

Generally, consumers believe that tap water is a better product than bottled water. They do not only believe that the quality of tap water is higher than bottled water's quality, but they also believe that tap water is safer and more reliable than bottled water. Moreover, 76% (mean 3.87) of respondents believes that there is no considerable difference between bottled and tap water in Eritrea. The current findings are contradicted with the findings of past studies in Africa and Asian countries (for instance, see Durga, 2010; Doria, 2006; Islam and Habib, 2009; Ogbuji *et al.*, 2010). Similarly, our results also do not support the validity of Rodwan's (2009) theory, who argues that the main driver of bottled water consumption in developing countries is that these countries often have unsafe tap water, which makes bottled water a good alternative. This is not the case as far as Eritrea's (a developing country) bottled water market is concerned, where tap water quality is assumed to be relatively high and reliable.

Regarding the independent variable perception, the results show that respondents' have positive perception (high means) with the statements that bottled water is relatively cheap (mean = 3.34; sd. = 1.16); drinking bottled suits my life style (mean = 2.19; sd. = 1.10); drinking tap water suits my lifestyle (mean = 2.90; sd. = 1.13); drinking bottled water suits my diet (mean = 2.78; sd. = 1.07); bottled water generates more waste than tap water (mean = 2.61; sd. = 1.19); drinking bottled water is socially acceptable in Eritrea (mean = 2.60; sd. = 1.06); and bottled water is more accessible than tap water (mean = 2.75; sd. = 1.26). There are also consumers who disagree (low means) with the statements that bottled water is convenient and easy to consume (mean = 2.25; sd. = 0.99) bottled water is good available in Eritrea (mean = 2.20; sd. = 0.94); bottled water has a better taste than tap water in Eritrea (mean =

2.18; sd. = 1.02); drinking bottled water is refreshing (mean = 2.39; sd. = 1.00); bottled water is a good alternative to other drinks (mean = 2.02; sd. = 0.87); and bottled water is a commercial business in Eritrea (mean = 2.06; sd. = 0.94). However, it can be said that despite the higher perception most consumers have of tap water, both bottled and tap water are highly consumed. This is noticed in the fact that the consumption of both types of water suit the lifestyle of many consumers. The difference in the outcome of these two types of cases is not significant (both score mean results almost similar) Table 3 provides the results.

### Inferential analysis

After observing the results using descriptive statistics, we also conducted further inferential analysis. We analyzed the two variables 'beliefs' (Table 4) and 'perception' (Table 5) using regression technique at 95% confidence interval. As can be seen from Table and Table 5, The significance value of less than 0.05 and F-values and R<sup>2</sup> values for the variables 'beliefs' and 'perceptions' shows that the model is significant enough to measure the relationship between variables.

As for the analysis of 'Belief' variables [shown in the column], we found the following: According to Table 4, 'Frequency of Purchase' variable had one statistically significant (Sig. p = .000 < .05) explanatory variable "tap water is reliable" where, the model is: Frequency of purchase = 1.638 -.191[Tap water is reliable]. Also, 'Purchase location' variable has one statistically significant (Sig. p = .010 < .05) explanatory variable "No difference" where, the model is: Purchase location = 1.779 - .111[No difference]. Furthermore, the variable 'Reason for purchase' had three statistically significant (Sig. p = .044, .014, and .000, respectively) explanatory variables 'Healthier than tap water', 'Healthier than soft drinks', and 'Satisfied with tap water', respectively. Generally, we can conclude that the results are influenced by the positive beliefs consumers have on tap water in Eritrea. Hence, the beliefs of bottled

Table 4. Results of the variable beliefs

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Frequency of purchase				Purchase location				Reason for purchase			
	Unstandardized Coefficients				Unstandardized Coefficients				Unstandardized Coefficients			
	B	Std. Err.	t	Sig.	B	Std. Err.	t	Sig.	B	Std. Err.	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.638	.282	5.814	.000	1.779	.303	5.877	.000	1.945	.201	9.690	.000
Higher quality	-.094	.069	-1.361	.174	.127	.074	1.707	.088	.077	.049	1.558	.120
Safer than tap water	.108	.075	1.448	.148	-.094	.080	-1.174	.241	-.008	.053	-.147	.884
Healthier than tap water	.113	.072	1.573	.116	-.113	.077	-1.466	.143	.104	.051	2.023	.044*
Healthier than soft drinks	.078	.047	1.669	.096	-.007	.051	-1.143	.886	-.083	.033	-2.473	.014*
Reliable	.103	.054	1.888	.060	.097	.058	1.667	.096	.014	.039	.360	.719
Tap water is reliable	-.191	.050	-3.801	.000*	-.034	.054	-.621	.535	.028	.036	.773	.440
Tap water is safe	.022	.051	.425	.671	.088	.055	1.595	.111	.065	.037	1.765	.078
Satisfied with tap	-.020	.041	-.486	.627	-.015	.044	-.342	.732	-.119	.029	-4.083	.000*
No difference	.019	.040	.481	.631	-.111	.043	-2.585	.010*	.020	.028	.699	.485
R <sup>2</sup>	0.12				0.04				0.04			
F-value	5.612*				1.863*				1.866*			

Note: \* p < .05

Table 5. Results of the variable perceptions

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Frequency of purchase				Purchase location				Reason for purchase			
	Unstandardized Coefficients				Unstandardized Coefficients				Unstandardized Coefficients			
	B	Std. Err.	t	Sig.	B	Std. Err.	t	Sig.	B	Std. Err.	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.385	.248	5.597	0.000	1.418	.272	5.216	.000	1.978	.184	10.738	.000
Convenient	.085	.045	1.867	0.062	-.006	.050	-.128	.898	.004	.034	.124	.901
Available	-.007	.049	-.148	0.883	.143	.054	2.642	.008*	.034	.037	.934	.351
Better	.055	.047	1.170	0.243	.001	.051	.025	.980	.037	.035	1.065	.287
Refreshing	.070	.049	1.434	0.152	-.022	.053	-.403	.687	.045	.036	1.241	.215
Acceptable	.029	.041	.712	0.477	.072	.045	1.621	.106	-.003	.030	-.100	.920
Suit	.055	.044	1.228	0.220	-.023	.049	-.478	.633	.026	.033	.775	.439
Suits lifestyle	-.160	.037	-4.302	0.000*	.011	.041	.271	.787	-.033	.028	-1.194	.233
Suits diet	.063	.045	1.382	0.168	.037	.050	.743	.458	.050	.034	1.481	.139
Alternative	.002	.051	.048	0.961	.030	.057	.537	.592	-.004	.038	-.106	.916
Cheap	-.052	.037	-1.400	0.162	-.076	.041	-1.842	.066	-.006	.028	-.211	.833
Commerce	.086	.046	1.843	0.066	-.006	.051	-.109	.913	-.075	.035	-2.166	.031*
Waste	-.092	.035	-2.669	0.008*	-.060	.038	-1.567	.118	-.001	.026	-.043	.966
Accessible	.048	.034	1.419	0.156	-.007	.037	-.188	.851	-.010	.025	-.377	.706
R <sup>2</sup>	0.07				0.03				0.08			
F-value	4.907*				1.692				4.995*			

Note: \* p < .05

**Table 6.** Results of demographic variables

Model	Frequency of purchase				Purchase location				Reason for purchase			
	Unstandardized Coefficients				Unstandardized Coefficients				Unstandardized Coefficients			
	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.115	.302	3.694	.000	1.403	.316	4.442	.000	1.969	.215	9.143	.000
Family size	.085	.057	1.508	.132	.112	.059	1.896	.059	.037	.040	.922	.357
Age	-.003	.034	-.076	.939	-.020	.036	-.558	.577	-.004	.024	-.184	.854
Income	.020	.033	.607	.544	.055	.035	1.585	.113	.035	.024	1.472	.142
Education	.057	.044	1.320	.187	-.033	.046	-.715	.475	.012	.031	.380	.704
Employment	.044	.032	1.379	.168	-.030	.033	-.905	.366	-.017	.023	-.757	.449

## One-Sample Test

T-test for sex	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
					Sex	59.839

water have no influence on the buying behavior.

Similarly, an analysis on 'Perception' variables leads to the following: as far as the relationship between the variable 'perception' and 'buying behavior' is concerned, three perceptions related to buying behaviour with respect to the three indicators are 'bottled water is good available in Eritrea' is related to 'purchase location' (sig-value of .008 < .05); 'bottled water is a commercial business in Eritrea' is related to 'reasons for purchase' (sig-value of .031 < .05); and 'bottled water generates more waste than tap water' as well as 'drinking tap water suits my lifestyle' are related to the 'frequency of purchase' (sig-value of .008 < .05 and sig-value of .000, respectively). These results in fact indicate that there is a small relationship between 'perception' and 'buying behavior'. This can be found again in the fact that respondents react positively on most of the statements regarding their perception of bottled water. The results are given in Table 5 above.

In addition, researchers attempted to analyze the relationship between certain demographic variables such as age, family size, income, employment status, and education and buying behavior. However, as can be seen from Table 6 there is no relationship between demographic variables and 'buying behaviour.' In this regard, our results partly concur with the findings of Durga (2010), who found that according to the results of her study there was no relationship between some of the demographic variables of consumers with consumers' buying behavior of bottled water.

Furthermore, since the variable 'gender' consists of only two groups, the t-test is carried out at this variable. The t-test shows that there is a positive relationship between 'gender' and 'bottled water buying behavior' (Sig. p = .000 < .05).

**CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

This paper attempts to investigate the relationship between demographic and psychological factors and bottled water drinking behaviour. Generally, the results of this study do not offer much empirical support for the existence of a relationship between bottled water drinking behaviour and demographic and psychological factors. However, there is a positive relationship between some of the variables of demographics, 'beliefs' and 'perceptions.'

The results of this study offer minimal empirical support to the assertion that beliefs and perceptions influence consumers bottled water drinking behaviour because the results of the descriptive statistics indicate that consumers have generally positive perceptions about bottled water and they believe that there is no considerable difference between bottled and tap water in Eritrea.

The most noticeable result of this analysis was that demographic variables (age, income, education, family size, and employment status) are not related at all to bottled water drinking behaviour. In a country where the standard of living of the population is low and the price of bottled water is expensive, it is surprising to see that income (high or low) doesn't influence bottled water buying behaviour. Normally, one would expect that the higher income people earn, the more they consume bottled water. The only demographic variable related to bottled water drinking behavior is gender of consumers.

To sum up, the findings of the present study raise some interesting questions that merit further study. Why age has no effect on bottled water buying behaviour despite the fact that bottled water is more popular among the young people? Similar questions also regarding employment

conditions in that the consumption of bottled water is expected to increase with an increasing income?

The work reported in this paper examines the relationship between beliefs, perceptions, and demographic factors and bottled water drinking behaviour. The findings of the present study offer important academic implications. This study intends to discover the potential factors that influence bottled water drinking behavior in Eritrea by taking survey of individual consumers. Thus, it makes some contribution to the existing knowledge gap particularly as far as Africa is concerned. To the practitioners, it provides ideas about the 'beliefs' and 'perceptions' of consumers of the current market status and to improve future performance to attract potential customers.

The empirical results of the analyses in this study suggest that the impact of demographic and psychological factors on bottled water drinking behaviour needs further study. Future research would benefit from including a large survey and more variables such as culture, lifestyle of consumers, profession of consumers, environment, and extending the coverage of the study even to the different cities of the country having different climate (where some of them are really hot during specific season of the year.

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