

**Czech University of Life Sciences Prague**  
**Faculty of Economics and Management**  
**Department of Economics**



## **Bachelor Thesis**

**Consumption of Bubble Milk Tea in Cambodia**

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# **BACHELOR THESIS ASSIGNMENT**

Chanvireak Chou

Economics and Management

Thesis title

**Consumption of Bubble Milk Tea in Cambodia**

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## **Objectives of thesis**

The aim of the bachelor thesis is to determine and to evaluate the consumption of bubble milk tea and consumers behaviour in Cambodia.

The aim will be fulfilled based on the partial aims. Then, several hypotheses will be defined and verified. Based on the results of empirical analysis the final conclusions will be introduced.

## **Methodology**

The bachelor thesis will cover both, theoretical and empirical part. Theoretical part will contain theoretical background of the selected topic as well as the methodological framework. Scientific literature will be used to prepare the literature overview. Based on the empirical analysis the results will be presented and some recommendations will be suggested.

The aim of the thesis will be fulfilled based on own survey of consumers' behaviour and hypothesis testing.

## The proposed extent of the thesis

40 – 50 pages

## Keywords

Consumption, consumers behaviour, bubble milk tea, Cambodia.

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## Recommended information sources

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## **Declaration**

I declare that I have worked on my bachelor thesis titled "Consumption of Bubble Milk Tea in Cambodia" by myself and I have used only the sources mentioned at the end of the thesis. As the author of the bachelor thesis, I declare that the thesis does not break any copyrights.

In Prague on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2023

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**Chanvireak Chou**

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# Consumption of Bubble Milk Tea in Cambodia

## Abstract

Bubble milk tea, also known as boba tea, is a popular beverage in Cambodia that has gained popularity in recent years. As a relatively new and trendy beverage, bubble milk tea is particularly popular among younger Cambodians, with bubble milk tea shops appearing in various urban areas across the country. Despite the increasing popularity of bubble milk tea in Cambodia, research on consumer behaviour in this area remains very limited. Therefore, the objective of this study is to investigate the behaviour of bubble milk tea consumers from different genders and regions in Cambodia. To achieve this, we will administer questionnaires to a sample of participants from various part of Cambodia. The objective of this research is to identify the various factors that impact consumer's decision-making and consumption patterns. By gaining insights into these factors, we aim to assist bubble milk tea brands in devising more effective strategies to engage and appeal to their target audience, and better cater to their preferences and demands.

**Keywords:** Bubble milk tea, Cambodia, consumers behaviour, consumption, decision-making process.

# Spotřeba bublinkového čaje v Kambodži

## Abstrakt

Bublinkový čaj s mlékem, známý také jako boba tea, je v Kambodži oblíbeným nápojem, který si v posledních letech získal popularitu. Jako relativně nový a módní nápoj je bubble milk tea oblíbený zejména mezi mladšími Kambodžany, přičemž obchody s bubble milk tea se objevují v různých městských oblastech po celé zemi. Navzdory rostoucí popularitě bubble milk tea v Kambodži zůstává výzkum spotřebitelského chování v této oblasti velmi omezený. Cílem této studie je proto prozkoumat chování spotřebitelů bublinkového mléčného čaje různého pohlaví a z různých regionů Kambodže. Za tímto účelem budeme zadávat dotazníky vzorku účastníků z různých částí Kambodže. Cílem tohoto výzkumu je zjistit různé faktory, které ovlivňují rozhodování spotřebitelů a jejich spotřební vzorce. Získáním poznatků o těchto faktorech chceme pomoci značkám bublinkového mléčného čaje při navrhování účinnějších strategií, jak zaujmout a oslovit jejich cílovou skupinu a lépe uspokojit její preference a požadavky.

**Klíčová slova:** Bublinkový mléčný čaj, Kambodža, chování spotřebitelů, spotřeba, rozhodovací proces.

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# 1 Introduction

In present day, milk tea is one of the hottest trends and most popular beverages. There is no doubt that a lot of consumers are attracted to milk tea since in addition to its health advantages, it also has a distinctive flavour and blend. Milk and tea are combined to make this beverage, which can also have a variety of other flavours and components added to it. There is a selection of options available for customers to pick from. Customers of newer generations fell head over heels in love with this cutting-edge product trend. Likewise, milk tea from China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, including KOI, AnCha, Gong Cha, Chatime and so forth, were first introduced in our country approximately 5 years ago. There are numerous varieties of milk tea, but the one that is most well-known in Cambodia is what is referred to as bubble tea or pearl milk tea which was found in 1980s and afterwards.

The bubble milk tea market in Cambodia has grown rapidly in recent years, driven by the high level of consumption among young workers under 30 and students. This demographic is particularly attractive to business owners, as they tend to have a disposable income and a willingness to spend on premium products that offer unique and trendy experiences. The proliferation of bubble milk tea shops in major cities has made the beverage much more accessible to consumers. What was once considered a rare and exotic treat has now become a staple in the local food and beverage scene, with many shops offering a wide variety of flavours and toppings to choose from. This has created a competitive market, with business owners seeking to differentiate themselves by creating unique and distinctive products that stand out from the rest. In addition, to providing a tasty beverage, bubble milk tea shops have also become popular social hangout spots for young people. These stores offer a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere where people can gather to socialize, study, or simply pass the time.

Under such circumstances, analysing the consumption situation and consumer behaviour of bubble milk tea in Cambodia will help both entrepreneurs as well as the customers themselves. On one hand, it will help entrepreneurs figuring out the purchasing behaviour of the customer which will enhance the customer satisfaction in order to minimize the cost and maximize the profit. On the other hand, customer could experience much better drinks from the bubble milk tea shop since they understand clearly what the customers' needs and wants.

## **2 Objectives and Methodology**

### **2.1 Aim of the thesis**

The main aim of this bachelor thesis is to determine and evaluate the consumption of bubble milk tea and consumer's behaviour in Cambodia. Specifically, the study seeks to explore the prevalence, trends, and patterns of bubble milk tea consumption among Cambodian consumers, as well as the factors that influence their decision-making process when choosing and purchasing bubble milk tea. The study also aims to identify the key drivers and barriers of growth in the Cambodian bubble milk tea market, as well as to provide insights and recommendations for businesses seeking to enter or expand in this market.

The partial aims of this paper are:

- To review and synthesize the existing literature on bubble milk, consumption, consumer behaviour, and other relevant contexts, in order to develop a conceptual framework for the study.
- To develop a robust survey questionnaire that will collect relevant data on Cambodian consumers' bubble milk tea consumption, and consumer behaviour, including their age, occupation, education, income and other factors, using appropriate sampling techniques and research methods.
- To propose and test 8 relevant hypotheses related to Cambodian consumer's bubble milk tea consumer behaviour, based on the literature review and research data, using appropriate statistical methods and significance tests. These hypotheses will cover a range of individual and contextual factors that may affect consumers' preferences, attitudes, and behaviours towards bubble milk tea, including age, gender, income, education, occupation, price, marital status, and taste.

### **2.2 Methodology**

This bachelor's thesis consists of five chapters:

The first chapter, known as the introduction, presents the research context and purpose, highlights its significance, and expands upon the research scope and structure.

The second part is the research objective and method. The purpose and methodology section in a research article is essential in outlining the research objectives, questions, and methodology used to address the research problem. This chapter includes a clear description of the research inspiration and rationale, the research design, data collection techniques, and data analysis.

In the third chapter of the bachelor's thesis, a comprehensive literature review is presented. It commences by providing a basic overview of the Kingdom of Cambodia, followed by an overview of bubble milk tea. The section also includes the concept and characteristics of consumption, and the definition and influential factors of consumer behaviour. After examining the literature, the scope of the research is determined, and the hypotheses are presented.

The fourth part of the thesis is practical research. The research study gathered primary data on how Cambodian consumers perceive bubble milk tea and the factors that affect their decision to purchase it. This was achieved by conducting a questionnaire survey, which is the best approach to investigating subjective attitudes towards consumption motivation. Afterwards, the collected questionnaires were organized and analysed using a statistical software SPSS to validate the research hypotheses and draw reliable empirical conclusions. Based on the responses received from a survey conducted between 1<sup>st</sup> February and 25<sup>th</sup> February 2023, which garnered a total of 141 respondents, it is possible to propose eight hypotheses regarding the self-awareness and purchase desire of individuals, in addition to other external influences. Here are the eight hypotheses in the proposal:

*H0: There is a significant difference between gender and bubble milk tea consumption*

*H0: There is a significant difference between age and bubble milk tea consumption*

*H0: There is a significant difference between education level and bubble milk tea consumption*

*H0: There is no relationship between marital status and bubble milk tea consumption*

*H0: There is no relationship between income and bubble milk tea consumption*

*H0: There is no dependency between occupation and bubble milk tea consumption*

*H0: There is no dependency between price and bubble milk tea consumption*

*H0: There is no dependency between taste and bubble milk tea consumption*

The fifth chapter of this research paper presents the concluding remarks and discussion, which are comprised of two key elements. The first is a summary of the research

findings discussed earlier, while the second is a set of recommendations for Cambodian bubble milk tea market and bubble milk tea shop based on the study's conclusions.

### **2.2.1 Categorical Data Analysis (CDA)**

“A categorical variable has a measurement scale consisting of a set of categories” (Agresti, 2002). The necessity to examine research data collected in the social and biomedical sciences prompted the development of methodologies for categorical variables. Categorical variables that have only two categories are commonly referred to as *binary variables*. These two categories are often labelled as “success” and “failure” for ease of interpretation. Examples are, gender (male or female), bubble tea consumption (bubble tea drinker or non-bubble tea consumer), and so on.

Categorical variables that have more than two categories are classified into two types of categorical scales. On a nominal scale, variables with categories that lack a natural order are measured and referred to as *nominal variables*. Examples are educational level (high school, bachelor, master, doctor), ethnicity (Asian, White, Black, Latino), etc. The order in which the categories of a nominal variable are listed does not have any bearing on the statistical analysis of the variable. Therefore, the order of categories is considered irrelevant when analysing nominal variables. On the other hand, there are ordered categories for many categorical variables. *Ordinal variables* are categorical variables that possess ordered categories and are measured on an ordinal scale. Examples are income level, age category, customer satisfaction rating, etc. (Hlavsa & Pacakova, 2022).

A contingency table, sometimes called a cross-tabulation table, is a statistical tool that summarizes and displays the relationship between two or more categorical variables. It illustrates the distribution of one variable in relation to another by tabulating their various combinations. Each cell of the table represents a distinct combination of categories from the two variables being evaluated, and the numbers within each cell indicate the frequencies or percentages of observations belonging to each combination. In statistics, contingency tables are commonly used to study the relationship between variables, identify patterns in the data, and test hypotheses regarding the relationship between variables. Two forms of contingency table exist: Two-way contingency table (2x2) and classical contingency table (2x3, 3x3, etc). This bachelor's thesis will utilize both the two-way contingency table (2x2) and the classical contingency table to conduct an analysis for the data.

### 2.2.2 Test of independence in two-way contingency table (2x2)

To examine the relationship of categorical variables in a two-way contingency table (2x2), here are the steps:

1. State the null and alternative hypotheses: the null hypothesis (H0) is that there is no relationship between the two variables, while the alternative hypothesis (HA) is that there is a significant relationship between them.
2. Determine the critical value or p-value. The critical value or p-value can be used to determine whether the observed association is statistically significant. The significance level is  $\alpha = 0.05$  is the most frequently utilized level.
3. Calculate the expected frequencies: Under the assumption of independence, the expected frequency of each cell is the product of the row total and column total divided by the grand total.

Table 1 Two-way Contingency Table (2x2)

Var A/Var B	B1	B2	Total
A1	a	b	a+b
A2	c	d	c+d
Total	a+c	b+d	n

Source: (Jackson, 2023)

**Calculation formula of expected frequencies:**

$$a_0 = \frac{(a+b)(a+c)}{n}$$

$$b_0 = \frac{(a+b)(b+d)}{n}$$

$$c_0 = \frac{(c+d)(a+c)}{n}$$

$$d_0 = \frac{(c+d)(b+d)}{n}$$

4. Calculate the test statistic: Depending on the sample size and assumptions, either chi-squared test or Fisher's exact test can be used to calculate the test statistic. The test statistic measures the discrepancy between observed and expected frequencies, and its distribution can be used to calculate the p-value.
5. Decisions: if  $p\text{-value} > \alpha$ , then  $H_0$  is failed to reject so there is no relationship between 2 variables. If  $p\text{-value} < \alpha$ , then  $H_0$  is rejected so there is a significant relationship between these 2 variables.

### 2.2.3 Test of dependency in classical contingency table

To examine the relationship or dependency of categorical variables in classical contingency table, here are the steps:

1. State the null and alternative hypotheses: the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is that there is no relationship between the two variables, while the alternative hypothesis ( $H_A$ ) is that there is a significant relationship between them.
2. Determine the critical value or p-value. The critical value or p-value can be used to determine whether the observed association is statistically significant. The significance level is  $\alpha = 0.05$  is the most frequently utilized level.
3. Calculate the expected frequencies: Under the assumption of independence, the expected frequency of each cell is the product of the row total and column total divided by the grand total.

*Table 2 Classical Contingency Table*

<b>Var A/Var B</b>	<b>B1</b>	<b>B2</b>	<b>...</b>	<b>Bj</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>A1</b>	<b>n11</b>	<b>n12</b>	<b>...</b>	<b>n1j</b>	<b>n1.</b>
<b>A2</b>	<b>n21</b>	<b>n22</b>	<b>...</b>	<b>n2j</b>	<b>n2.</b>
<b>...</b>	<b>...</b>	<b>...</b>	<b>...</b>	<b>...</b>	<b>...</b>
<b>Ai</b>	<b>ni1</b>	<b>ni2</b>	<b>...</b>	<b>nij</b>	<b>ni.</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>n.1</b>	<b>n.2</b>	<b>...</b>	<b>n.j</b>	<b>n</b>

Source: (Jackson, 2023)

**Calculation formula of expected frequencies:**

$$n_{oj} = \frac{n_{.j} \cdot n_{i.}}{n}$$

$$n_{oi} = \frac{n_{.1} \cdot n_{1.}}{n}$$

4. Calculate the test statistic: Depending on the sample size and assumptions, either chi-squared test or Fisher's exact test can be used to calculate the test statistic. The test statistic measures the discrepancy between observed and expected frequencies, and its distribution can be used to calculate the p-value.
5. Decisions: if p-value  $> \alpha$ , then  $H_0$  is failed to reject so there is no relationship between 2 variables. If p-value  $< \alpha$ , then  $H_0$  is rejected so there is a significant relationship between these 2 variables.



## **3 Literature Review**

### **3.1 Introduction of Cambodia**

Cambodia or officially known as The Kingdom of Cambodia, receiving independent from France in 1953 (Introduction: Conflict in Cambodia, 1945-2002, 2010), is located in Indochina peninsula in Southeast Asia. Cambodia is bordered by Vietnam to the east, Lao PDR to the north and Thailand in the northwest with Phnom Penh as the capital. This country occupies an area of 181,035 km<sup>2</sup> with the population of 16.59 million (Bank, 2021).

In the past ten years, Cambodia has seen rapid economic growth; GDP increased at an average annual rate of over 8% between 2000 and 2010 and over 7% since 2011. The majority of growth was concentrated in the tourist, apparel, building and real estate, and agricultural industries. As a lower middle-income country, Cambodia was officially classified as such by the World Bank in 2016 as a result of its sustained and strong economic growth over the previous few years. When Cambodia no longer qualifies as a low-income country, it will be harder for it to receive foreign aid, and the government will have to look for alternative funding sources. The Cambodian government has been collaborating with bilateral and multilateral donors, such as the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, and IMF, to solve the nation's numerous urgent needs; in 2018, donor support will account for more than 20% of the government budget. The creation of an economic climate in which the private sector can generate enough jobs to address Cambodia's demographic imbalance will be a major economic challenge for the country over the coming ten years (CIA.gov, 2023).

### **3.2 Bubble Milk Tea**

Bubble tea is a Taiwanese drink that was discovered in the early 1980s. Although there is no clear-cut history, it is widely believed that Ms. Lin Hsiu Hui created bubble tea when she combined an iced tea beverage with the traditional Taiwanese dessert Fen Yuan, a sweetened tapioca pudding (Chew Shuhui Eunice and Ng Shi Han, 2014). Either black tapioca pearls or a wider category of chunky beverages known as "Boba" can be referred to by the term "Boba." Examples of the former include fresh juice loaded with fruity bits and iced tea with tapioca pearls, while examples of the latter include boba. Zhenzhu naicha (珍珠奶茶) is the name given to the pearl milk tea that is popular in Taiwan. The same beverage

can be referred to by a variety of names, including boba tea, bubble tea, and pearl milk tea; however, these names might vary depending on where you are and the tastes of the person drinking the beverage. Whatever name you call it, the drink's most basic components are black tea, milk, ice, and chewy tapioca pearls. These ingredients are shaken together like a martini and served with that fabledly fat straw to fit the tapioca pebbles that collect at the bottom of the cup (Nguyen-Okwu, 2019).

Tea is an effective beverage for dieters because it helps boost metabolic processes and is consumed alone. Despite adding calcium and protein, milk may make the beverage less healthy in terms of fats and sugars. However, the milk does not necessarily have to be dairy. Standard boba, however, has a lot of sugar and starch. Numerous vendors provide sugar-free options in recognition of this. Bubble tea can be produced at home; however, Taiwanese commonly purchase it from tea shops or street vendors as an after-school or after-work treat. (Bubble Tea, 2022). It is also said that bubble tea gives the body a small number of essential vitamins and minerals like manganese, zinc, copper, and selenium. Bubble tea has been around for a long time in a lot of countries, and both younger and older generations enjoy it (Nguyen Do and Anh Nguyen, 2020).

### **3.3 Definition and characteristics of consumption**

The term "Consumption" was originally derived from the Latin word *Consumere* which consists of two basic definitions: "using up of food, candles, and other resources including body" and "using up, wasting away, and finishing". (Trentmann, 2016). Consumption is the act of using, eating, or drinking anything, or the quantity used, etc., as well as the act of purchasing and consuming commodities, or the quantity purchased and consumed. (Cambridge, 2022). J. M. Keynes first coined the term "consumption function" in 1936 to describe the relationship between household planned consumption expenditure and all the forces that determine it. Based on such a study, we should be able to derive a simple relationship between consumption and income. This relationship is called the consumption function by J. M. Keynes and is expressed by:  $C = f(Y)$ , where C is consumption and Y is income. This relationship implies that consumption depends on income or is a function of income. If there is a change in any other variable that affects consumer spending, then there will be a change in the consumption function. (Consumption Function: Concept, Characteristics and Possibility) Consumption function is, in economics,

the relationship between consumer spending and the various factors that determine it. Regarding households or families, various factors can influence their financial situation, such as their income and wealth, their expectations regarding future income or wealth and the associated risks, the prevailing interest rates, their age, level of education, and the size of the family. Consumer function is also influenced by consumer preferences (for example, patience or the willingness to delay gratification), consumer attitudes toward risk, and the willingness to leave a legacy. consumer property.

The characteristics of the consumption function are important to many questions in both macroeconomics and microeconomics. Consumption functions are used to track aggregate consumption expenditures in macroeconomic models. For the sake of simplicity, consumption functions are supposed to depend on a basic subset of characteristics that economists regard to be essential at the household level. Consumer spending analysis is important for understanding short-term fluctuations (the business cycle) and for examining long-term issues such as interest rates and the size of capital reserves (number of homes, machinery, and reproducible assets useful in the production of goods and services). In principle, the consumption function provides answers to both short-run and long-run questions. In the long run, because income has not yet accumulated to be saved, the responsiveness of households to any fiscal policy (such as those aimed at stimulating aggregate saving and raising capital) reserves) will depend on the structure of the consumption function, which in particular explains how saving responds to interest rates. In the short run, the success of tax cuts or other income-enhancing policies (such as those targeted at boosting a sluggish economy) will depend on the consumption function, which indicates how much consumers spend. This is because tax cuts and other income-enhancing policies tend to have a multiplicative effect on income. Spending and saving money can be enjoyable ways to supplement your income. At the level of the microeconomy, the structure of the consumption function is not only interesting in and of itself, but it also has a significant impact on a wide variety of other sorts of economic behaviour (Britannica, 1998).

### **3.3.1 Global bubble tea consumption**

Global localisation is a practice that stems from a desire to connect with one's cultural roots, allowing residents of various countries to recognize and appreciate the acknowledgement those of other countries and societies. This practice has the power to bring

people around the world closer together while preserving the unique characteristics of each region.

Bubble tea became one of the most popular menu items alongside coffee after being introduced to Taiwanese markets in the 1980s. Since then, it has disseminated to other countries in Asia as well as other nations on other continents. Customers who are unable to consume coffee or who do not enjoy the bitter taste of coffee can opt for bubble tea as an alternative beverage. (Lan, 2014)

One of the most important aspects that is producing a good outlook for the market is the substantial increase that has been seen in the global food and beverage industry. Fast food, fast food and casual restaurants and cafes are increasingly experimenting with the flavours of bubble teas to offer consumers creative variations of the drink. In addition, the growing health consciousness of the masses and the growing awareness of the benefits of regular consumption of bubble tea are driving the growth of the market. In this context, the changing consumer preference towards tea and coffee as a delectable drink among students and working professionals is also contributing to the growth of the market. These drinks have a minimal number of calories and have demonstrated the ability to enhance an individual's focus, memory, drive, and aptitude for acquiring knowledge. In addition, various product innovations such as launching of bubble teas with exotic flavours and aesthetic packaging are driving the growth of the market. Additional factors, such as increased consumer purchasing power and the emergence of social media and retail e-commerce platforms, are anticipated to propel the industry upward (imarc, 2022). The total value of the worldwide bubble tea market was estimated to be \$2.1 billion in 2019, and it is anticipated that it would expand at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 8.9% from 2020 to 2027. Tea consumption and coffee rising as nootropic beverage among students and population is the main driver for market growth.

Furthermore, one significant trend in the bubble tea industry is the introduction of new flavours. Vendors of bubble tea have brought in a variety of tastes, ranging from sweet flavours like peach and strawberry to other flavours like almond and chocolate, providing customers with a wide range of options. The introduction of a variety of flavours is assisting in luring customers who enjoy various flavours.

Young people and millennials are experimenting with new flavours of bubble tea, which has inspired vendors to be more innovative to come up with new flavours. Retailors of bubble tea are developing their own unique tea formats which will allow them to alter the

bubble tea's composition in response to consumer demand. The expansion of the global bubble tea market is predicted to be boosted during the period covered by this research thanks to the aforementioned factors.

### **3.3.2 Bubble tea consumption in Cambodia**

According to a study that was published on August 16, the increasing popularity of bubble tea throughout Southeast Asia has contributed to the industry's growth to a staggering US\$3.7 billion (131 billion Baht) in 2021. This figure accounts for the amount of money spent on bubble tea as well as other beverages classified as "new tea.". Although the bubble tea industry in the region has been mostly controlled by Taiwanese and local brands, the market may see a shift as several Chinese brands make their way into the southern markets of Asia and Southeast Asia. Despite this, it is unlikely that consumers' passion for bubble tea will diminish, and they will continue to support their preferred brands with their purchasing decisions (Times, 2022).

Cambodian tea market reached USD 87.60 million (at retail price) in 2015. By 2025, the Cambodian tea market is expected to reach USD 196.62 million (at retail price), growing at a CAGR is 7.79 % per year. year for the period 2020-2025. This is down from the roughly 9.16 % annual growth recorded between 2015-2019.

Per capita consumption value reached USD 5.74/person (in retail price) in 2015. Over the next 5 years, it grew at a CAGR of 7.48 % per person. In the medium term (to 2025), the index is expected to slow down and increase at a CAGR of 6.35 % per year.

The tea market has grown significantly over the past few years in response to changing consumer behaviour. Currently, tea enthusiasts are seeking out premium products that come with a compelling narrative and offer health benefits, leading to a surge in demand for plant-based herbal blends that promote wellness. Additionally, the perception of tea has evolved among younger consumers who view it as a delightful and sensorial beverage. (Research, 2020).

## **3.4 Consumer behaviour**

### **3.4.1 Definition of Consumer Behaviour**

*Consumer behaviour* encompasses all the choices made by individuals or groups over time when it comes to obtaining, consuming, and disposing of goods, services, experiences, activities, people, and ideas. These choices are made by human decision-making units and reflect their behaviours and actions in the marketplace (Wayne D. Hoyer, 2012). Consumer behaviour is a field of study that explores the processes and behaviours individuals use when selecting, utilizing, and discarding products and services. This includes an analysis of the emotional, mental, and behavioural responses of consumers. Consumer behaviour draws upon concepts from a range of scientific disciplines, such as psychology, biology, chemistry, and economics, to gain a better understanding of consumer decision-making processes (Radu, 2022). While there are various definitions of consumer buying behaviour, they all share the same underlying view that it involves the selection, purchase, and organization of goods and services based on consumers' needs and desires. However, researchers and academics generally agree that this process is not fixed and can evolve over time as consumers' purchasing characteristics are influenced by their changing physical and psychological needs.

### **3.4.2 Influence Factors of Consumer Behaviour**

Consumer's behaviour can be influenced by a multitude of factors. Four primary factors that have a significant impact on consumer behaviour include cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors. Personal characteristics such as age, occupation, personality, and lifestyle can play a key role in shaping consumer behaviour. Additionally, psychological factors such as motivation, perception, learning, beliefs, and attitudes can also significantly influence consumer behaviour.

#### **Cultural characteristics**

Culture is the set of core values, perceptions, desires, and behaviours that a member of a society learns from their family and other important institutions. It is a critical factor in shaping the desires and behaviours of individuals in a society. The impact of culture on

consumer behaviour can vary significantly from one country to another. Therefore, marketers must be cautious and sensitive when analysing the cultural nuances of diverse groups, regions, or even countries, to ensure they develop appropriate marketing strategies that resonate with their target consumers.

The best example is McDonald's, which has devised an excellent strategy to enter the country's market despite being aware of the cultural differences. McDonald's places a strong emphasis on global strategy. Its primary adverb is "Think Global, Act Global" implying that it must adapt their products to specific geographic customers while preserving the worldwide brand (McDonald's Success Story in India, 2014). In the United States, the United Kingdom, and India, the same McDonald's offers a variety of burgers, and China will also be different since they have their own taste of food. McDonald's would not have been able to expand beyond the United States if it had maintained the same taste in all of these nations (Bhasin, 2020).

### **Social characteristics**

Social is among the most significant factors that impact customer purchasing behaviour. The group, social network, internet community network, and family or friend of a person are all elements of the social factor. Word of mouth is another social factor and a strongest factor that affects customer purchasing decisions. Family and friends are more likely to have an impact on a person than other people, such as salesperson, etc. A person places more faith in their relatives and friends than in strangers, and the individual is more likely to heed the advice of family and friends compared to that of another person since family is the most prominent element of anyone's life. More than anybody else, a person places their confidence in their family so that family's judgements or proposals are more crucial in a person's life. The failure and success of a product is often because of the impact practiced by these individuals. Moreover, reference group can be used as direct or indirect sources of a comparison or reference in establishing a person's behaviours or attitudes. Additionally, people these days spend more time on social media sites online, which helps them build their social networks. Social media sites, blogs, and other online social networks are all examples. In this case, Facebook, Twitter, and other social networking sites are some examples. In order to reach their customers targets, the businesses are increasingly relying on online social media (Del I. Hawkins and David L. Mothersbaugh, 2010).

## **Personal characteristics**

Personal factors can also influence consumer behaviour. Personal factors such as age, occupation, personality, and lifestyle can significantly impact consumer behaviour. These factors are the result of a combination of various direct and indirect influences on an individual's decision-making process when it comes to consumption. The company ought to concentrate on the individual aspect, which typically applies to both specific products and daily products (Factor Affecting Consumer Buying Behavior : A Conceptual Study, 2020).

**Age** – The purchasing decisions made by consumers are always fluid and shift depending on their age, life stage and relationship status. At various ages, a person's taste in what they buy shifts (Factor Affecting Consumer Buying Behavior : A Conceptual Study, 2020). Lifestyles, experiences, and education all fall under this category. For instance, a forty-year old's beverage preferences differ from those of an eighteen-year-old in terms of price, taste, and other factors like packaging of the product. Throughout a person's life, individuals always change for new goods and services. Age is frequently linked to preferences for food taste, clothing, furniture, and leisure activities.

**Occupation** – is a part of personal factor which influences the consumer buying behaviour because individual's occupation affects the purchase of goods and services (Factors Affecting Consumer Behavior, 2013). An individual usually purchases things which are appropriate to his/her profession. For example, a doctor or gym trainer would buy beverages that has low calories and contains low sugar level since it helps them getting fitter body and health, whereas the construction workers prefer energy drink which has high level of sugar and bring more energy for them which is very suitable for their profession.

**Personality** – Kotler claims that “personality” refers to “the distinctive psychological traits that set a person or group apart”. A consumer's personality is reflected when they favour a particular branded product over another branded product. Also, a brand has its unique personality. When analysing consumer behaviour in relation to specific brands or products, personality may be very useful. Consequently, the majority of marketers develop strategies to persuade consumers to purchase their products or services by focusing on the personality of the customer (Philip Kotler, Gary Armstrong, Lloyd C. Harris, Nigel F. Piercy, 2017). For instance, coffee marketers have observed that individuals who prefer strong coffee typically exhibit high levels of sociability. Consequently, coffee shops like Starbucks have developed



spaces where people can relax and socialize while sipping on their coffee to appeal to potential customers (Pozos-Brewer, 2015).

**Lifestyle** – A person's lifestyle is their unique way of living, shaded by their habits, behaviours, and attitudes towards various aspects of life such as work, shopping, sports, food, family, recreation, social issues, and business products. Lifestyle is a reflection of an individual's interests and opinions, and it projects a distinct image onto society. When customers purchase a product, they are not just buying the product itself, but also the associated lifestyle. Therefore, understanding consumer lifestyles is crucial for businesses, as it helps in developing effective marketing strategies and producing products that appeal to the target audience. Conducting research into customer lifestyles enables businesses to tailor their products and marketing efforts to better align with their customers' preferences and needs (Factor Affecting Consumer Buying Behavior : A Conceptual Study, 2020).

### **Psychological characteristics**

The consumer buying behaviour is influenced by four key psychological factors, namely motivation, perception, learning, beliefs, and attitudes.

**Motivation** - is one of the main factors in psychological. It determines and expresses the human needs. Every person has unique needs, starting with those that are most fundamental. In this case, Maslow's theory is a well-known explanation of human motivation offered by Abraham Maslow. In Maslow's hierarchy of needs, it illustrates from the highest to the least important needs of human. Maslow's Needs are as follows:

- Physiological needs: basic needs such as air, food, and water.
- Safety needs: security and protection.
- Belongingness: the need to feel loved and accepted by others.
- Ego needs: to accomplish something and have some status among others.
- Self-actualization: feeling self-fulfilment.

According to the hierarchy of requirements, a person must first meet their physiological needs, which include access to food, drink, shelter, and air. The second need, "safety," is desired after the first need has been met. For instance, if a person is hungry, he will likely choose to eat rather than seek protection from the police. The person moves on to the third phase, falling in love with someone, and so on after having their safety requirement

met. In essence, the person acts in the sequence of greatest need to least need (Philip Kotler & Kevin Lane Keller, 2016).



Figure 1 Maslow's Hierarchy needs

Source: (Factor Affecting Consumer Buying Behavior : A Conceptual Study, 2020)

**Perception** – refers to the process through which individuals choose, arrange, and interpret information to construct a unified understanding of their environment (Philip Kotler and Gary Armstrong, 2010). According to (A Theoretical Approach To The Role Of Perception On The Consumer Buying Decision Process, 2011), individuals can form varying interpretations of identical stimuli because of three perceptual mechanisms: selective attention, selective distortion, and selective retention. The average person is bombarded with a large number of stimuli on a daily basis, with over 1500 advertisements alone vying for their attention. As a result, it is challenging for individuals to attend to all of these stimuli (Teixeira, 2015). Kotler, in his book, has noted that selective attention permits consumers to disregard the majority of the information they encounter. As a result, advertisers must exert a significant amount of effort to capture the attention of potential customers (Philip Kotler and Gary Armstrong, 2010).

**Learning** – Individuals acquire knowledge through their actions. Learning is the process that clarifies how a person's behaviour changes based on their experiences (Learning about learning, 1979). According to learning theories, a person's behaviour is acquired through learning. For example, a customer learns from past encounters that non-branded products have a shorter lifespan, prompting them to opt for branded items (How phenomenology can help us learn from the experiences of others, 2019). Learning modifies an individual's actions through exposure to knowledge and experiences. Consequently, if a brand wants to

enhance customer behaviour regarding its products, it must provide customers with novel information (Factors Affecting Consumer Behavior, 2013).

**Beliefs and Attitudes** - are influenced by their experiences and education, this can have an impact on their purchasing decisions (Attitudes and Normative Beliefs as Factors Influencing Behavioral Intentions, 1972). Beliefs can be described as an individual's perception towards something, and it can influence how they feel about it. Purchasing behaviour can vary significantly depending on the item being considered, whether it's a toothpaste, a book, a camera, or a new house. Attitudes are developed through interactions with others and personal experiences, and they can also influence a person's beliefs and purchasing behaviour.

In addition to moulding people into who they are, all of these factors also affect their habits, judgment, and way of thinking. Each of these elements works together to influence the choice to buy. Brands may better satisfy the expectations, demands, and, most importantly, contentment of their customers by comprehending and incorporating these characteristics into their marketing strategies. One of the most crucial considerations is whether or not customers are satisfied, as this will influence if they make additional purchases and develop into devoted customers (Philip Kotler, Hermawan Kartajaya, Iwan Setiawan, 2016).

### **3.4.3 Decision-Making Process of Consumer Behaviour**

The process of how consumers make decisions regarding the products and services they choose, use, and dispose of can be challenging and significant for both consumers, marketers, and policymakers. Therefore, the examination of consumer decision-making process has been a primary focus in the study of consumer behaviour (Constructive Consumer Choice Processes, 1998). Before buying any product, each customer typically goes through a decision-making process consisting of five stages: stage 1- problem recognition, stage 2- information search, stage 3- evaluation of alternatives, stage 4- purchase decision, and stage 5- post purchase behaviour (Factors influencing consumer behaviour, 2014).

#### **Stage 1: Problem Recognition**

Problem recognition arises from the comparison between two key elements: the desired state and the actual state. The desired state represents how a person wants their needs

to be fulfilled, while the actual state indicates the extent to which their perceived needs are being met. When a substantial discrepancy occurs between these two states concerning a specific desire or requirement, problem recognition occurs (Problem Recognition: The crucial first stage of the consumer decision process, 1988). It takes place while the customers deliberate carefully over their requirements. A need can be triggered either by an internal stimulus, such as hunger or thirst, or by an exterior stimulus, which is also known as a signal or a cue. Needs can be induced by either type of stimulation. The individual will make an effort to fulfil the unmet need because of the perspective power that need possesses. One illustration of this would be people who frame their desire as one of hunger in order to justify their purchase of food. Nevertheless, because of this low level of involvement, there is no search for knowledge and no evaluation of different solutions. When considering the purchase of an expensive brand, such as vehicle, tablet computer, or mobile phone, among other things, these customer decision-making processes are seen as being of the utmost importance (Lautiainen, 2015).

## **Stage 2: Information Search**

After acknowledging their requirement, the customer endeavours to acquire relevant information to meet their needs. The stage of seeking information has the greatest likelihood of causing frustration and overwhelm for prospective customers, particularly if they are unable to locate the appropriate product or solution or feel incapable of making a decision (Okoli, 2023). Throughout this stage of the consumer decision-making process, the process of evaluating options and gathering information continues to evolve constantly. As buyers seek to fulfil their needs, they may require more and more data about products, services, and solutions. This information can be obtained from a variety of sources, including feedback from individuals who have prior experience with similar products. By continually seeking out and incorporating new information, buyers can refine their decision-making process and make more informed choices that better meet their needs (Destination image: Do top-of-mind associations say it all?, 2014). During this stage, consumers tend to prioritise understanding risk management and creating a list of specific brand attributes. This is due to the fact that most consumers aim to avoid regretting their purchase decisions. By identifying the features and benefits that are most important to them, consumers can reduce the perceived risk associated with making a purchase and increase their confidence in their decision. This is a natural part of the consumer decision-making process, as people want to

feel secure in their choices and minimize the potential for disappointment or dissatisfaction (Modeling regret effects on consumer post-purchase decisions, 2011).

### **Stage 3: Evaluation of Alternatives**

After gathering relevant information, the consumer moves on to the stage of alternative evaluation, where they use this information to assess and compare the different brands or options within their consideration set (Nicasio, 2022). During the stage of alternative evaluation, the consumer assesses the various options available in the market and considers the product lifecycle. Once the customer has a distinct notion of what can satisfy their requirement, they will immediately begin hunting for the most suitable choice (Schwartz, 2004). It has been proven that consumers utilize a variety of comparison strategies when deciding between objects with many attributes. Consumers utilize models such as the Expectancy model, the Lexicographic method, and others to evaluate alternative decision-making processes (Multiattribute Approaches for Product Concept Evaluation and Generation: A Critical Review, 1979). In the expectancy model, consumers assign weights to different attributes of products or services, and then calculate a preference ranking for each alternative by multiplying the attribute ratings with their corresponding weights (Motiwala, 2005). On the other hand, the lexicographic procedure is a decision-making approach that consumers use to compare alternatives. This approach involves identifying the most important attribute and evaluating the values of all alternatives on that attribute. Consumers then select the alternative that has the best value on the most important attribute. In cases where two alternatives have equivalent values on the most important attribute, the second most important attribute is evaluated, and so on, until the tie is broken and a final selection is made (Consumer Decision Making, 1991).

### **Stage 4: Purchase Decision**

This stage refers to the fourth step in the consumer buying decision-making process, where the consumer has completed their information search, evaluated different alternatives, and decided on the specific product and place of purchase. At this point, the consumer selects the brand or product that they ranked the highest during the evaluation stage. However, the purchase decision can also be influenced by external factors, such as the surrounding environment (Consumer Buying Decision Process Toward Products, 2019). Although theories on need recognition, information search, and evaluation provide the fundamental

basis for making purchase decisions, there are instances where none of these processes are involved. This phenomenon is referred to as impulse buying, which happens when consumers buy products based solely on their emotions and sudden impulses (Longitudinal comparison of Finnish and US online shopping behaviour among university students: The five-stage buyingdecision process, 2006).

### Stage 5: Post Purchase Behaviour

Once the consumer has completed the product purchase decision stage, they will move on to the fifth and final stage, which is the post-purchase behaviour stage in the traditional consumer decision-making process. During this stage the consumer will evaluate the performance of the product by comparing their expectations with their perceptions of the actual product performance. Post-purchase behaviour refers to the actions and behaviours exhibited by consumers after they have purchased and consumed a product and up until the time of its disposal (An Adapted Model for Consumer Decision Making Process of Hand Sanitizer Products in COVID-19 Scenario, 2020). If consumers are satisfied with a product, they are likely to make a repeat purchase or become a loyal customer who influence potential buyers through positive word-of-mouth. Conversely, if the consumer has a negative experience with the product or service, they may not only refrain from making future purchases but also share negative reviews with other, which can deter potential buyers from making a purchase (Philip Kotler, Hermawan Kartajaya, Iwan Setiawan, 2016).

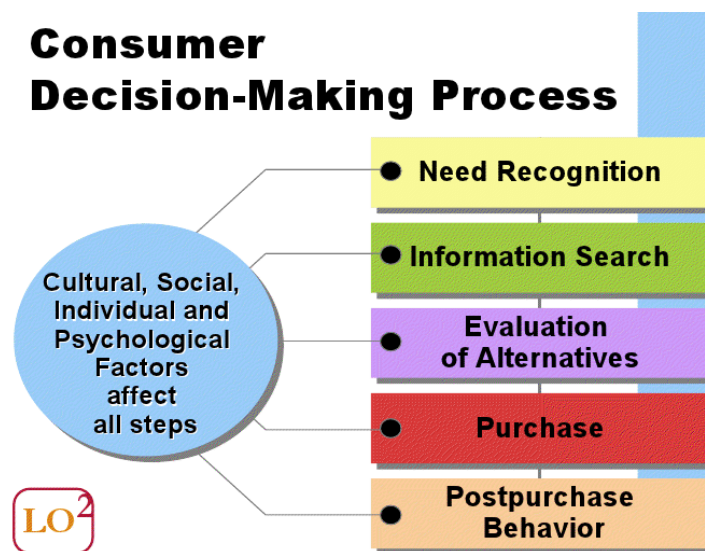


Figure 2 Consumer Decision-Making Process

Source: (Consumer Buying Decision Process Toward Products, 2019)

## **4 Practical Part**

### **4.1 Evaluation of survey**

This questionnaire survey is used to identify the factors which influenced the behaviour and decision making of bubble milk tea of both male and female. There is no restriction regarding age, occupation, or education of the respondents. The questionnaire was designed to survey 120 Cambodian respondents in order to investigate consumer behaviour and consumption patterns of bubble milk tea in Cambodia. However, the final number of respondents exceeded the original target, with a total of 141 respondents completing the questionnaire. The survey was designed using a Google Form and disseminated online via social networking websites, email, and communication applications including Facebook, Instagram, etc. Following the study, a summary table was created with all the data. The survey was distributed between 1<sup>st</sup> February until 25<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

The questionnaire design contains two parts. The first part is designed to gather broad demographic data, including age, gender, education level, occupation, income, price. The second part of the survey questionnaire corresponds to the topic which is discussed in this thesis: key factors influencing bubble milk tea consumer behaviour.

Understanding the demographics of bubble tea consumers is crucial for businesses and marketers in the bubble tea industry. This information is valuable for businesses and marketers in the bubble tea industry, as it highlights the target market for this product. By understanding the demographics of their consumers, businesses can develop marketing strategies and product offerings that are more likely to resonate with their consumers.

According to figure 3, there are a total of 141 respondents who participated in the survey. Out of these 141 respondents, 94 of them identified as women, which represents 66.67 % of the total respondents. The remaining 47 respondents identified as men, which represents 33.33 % of the total respondents. This information is useful in providing an overview of the gender distribution of the respondents in the survey. It can be helpful in analysing the results of the survey and understanding any potential differences in responses or experiences based on gender.

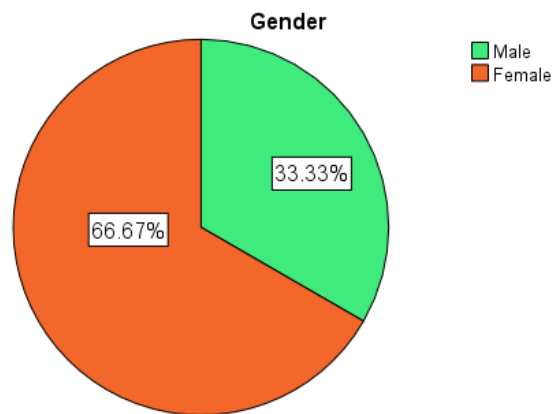


Figure 3 Gender

Source: (Own work, SPSS)

Based on the result (as shown in Figure 4), the respondents' ages are mainly concentrated between 18 and 30, which is often considered the “backbone of society” as this age group is typically associated with being young and active. Furthermore, the result illustrates that 71.63 % of the respondents are between the ages of 18 and 30. This suggests that the majority of the survey's respondents fall within this age range. The statement also highlights that this age group is an important target market for bubble milk tea consumption. Based on the survey results, it appears that the bias toward bubble milk tea consumption is still concentrated among young female consumers. Overall, this result provides insight into the age distribution of respondents in the survey and how it relates to bubble milk tea consumption. By understanding the target market for this product, businesses and marketers can tailor their marketing strategies to effectively reach and engage with this segment.

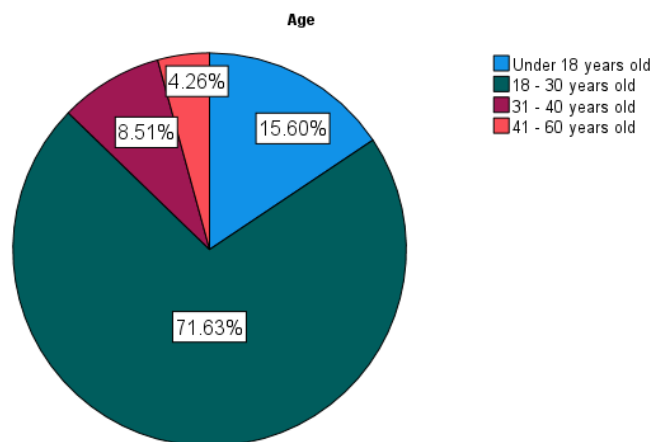


Figure 4 Age Category

Source: (Own work, SPSS)



As shown in Figure 5, it appears that the majority of respondents who consume bubble tea have at least a bachelor's degree, accounting for 63.12 % of the total respondents. The second-largest group is those with a high school diploma, which accounts for a significant proportion of 21.28 %. The third-largest group is those with a master's degree, which accounts for 15.60 % of the respondents. Additionally, the high proportion of respondents with at least a bachelor's degree may suggest that there is potential for premium or higher-end bubble tea products that cater to this demographic.

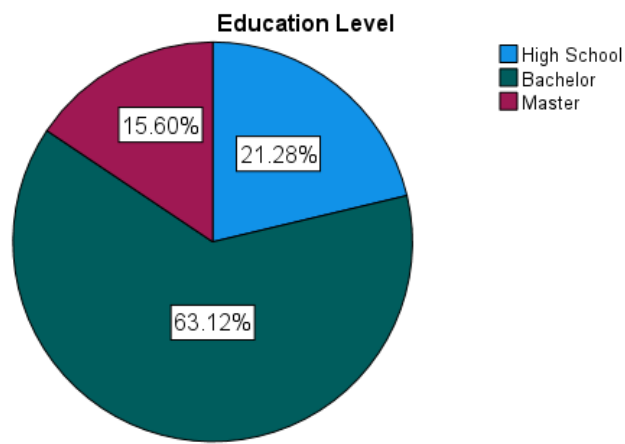


Figure 5 Educational level

Source: (Own work, SPSS)

According to the occupation of the respondents, it indicates that the primary consumers of bubble milk tea are employees, accounting for 42.55 % of respondents, followed by students at 31.91 %. This suggests that individuals in these professions may be more likely to purchase bubble milk tea compared to other occupation such as professionals (13.48 %), and self-employed/contractor (12.06 %). It is possible that age, lifestyle, and personal preferences may also contribute to the higher consumption of bubble milk tea among employees and students. Additionally, cultural and social trends may play a role in the popularity of this beverage, particularly among younger generations.

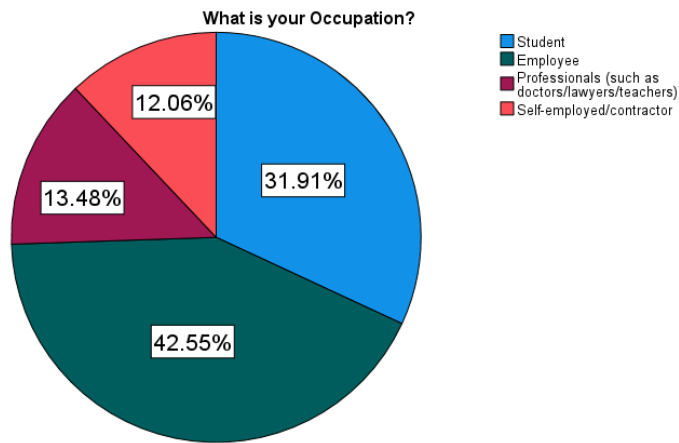


Figure 6 Occupation

Source: (Own work, SPSS)

Based on Figure 7, it illustrates that a considerable portion of the population, accounting for 30.5 %, has a monthly income between \$200-\$500, making it the highest income group among the respondents. In addition, a significant proportion of respondents, 24.82 %, reported a monthly income less than \$200, followed by income between \$500-\$1000 accounting for 21.99 %. Given the popularity of bubble milk tea among people of varying income levels, it is possible that these income groups may still indulge in bubble milk tea.

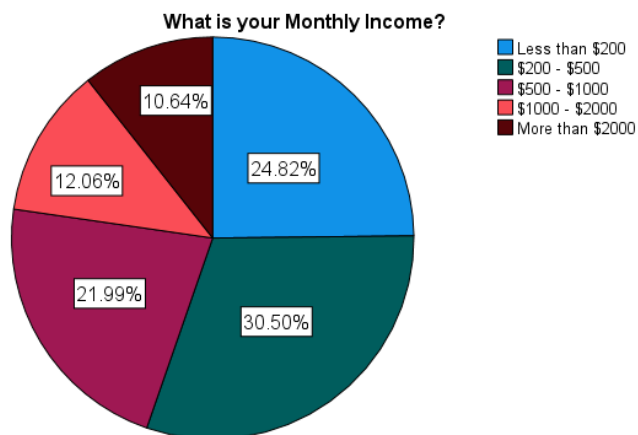


Figure 7 Monthly income

Source: (Own work, SPSS)

According to the Figure 8, it revealed some interesting trends in the consumption habits of bubble milk tea among the respondents. A majority of respondents (68,79 %) reported consuming bubble milk tea less than four times on a monthly basis. This means that they consumer bubble milk tea about once a week or less. This suggests that bubble milk tea is a popular drink choice among the respondents, with many consuming it regularly. On the other hand, 21.21 % of the respondents reported consuming bubble milk tea 4 or more times per month. This higher consumption rate may indicate that some respondents are more frequent and enthusiastic consumers of bubble milk tea.

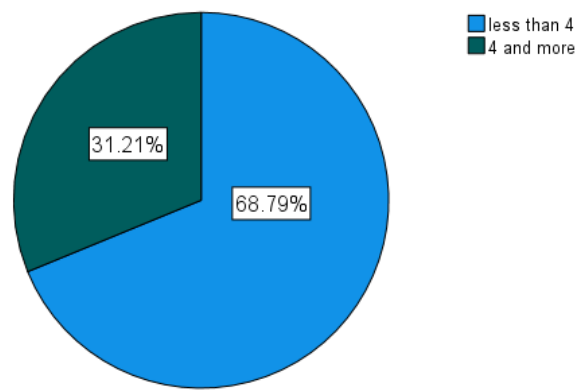


Figure 8 Monthly consumption

Source: (Own work, SPSS)

As shown in Figure 9, it shows that a significant portion of respondents had expectations regarding their monthly spending on bubble milk tea. Specifically, 45.39 % of respondents reported that they would spend between \$1 to \$5 on bubble milk tea each month, while nearly 22 % of respondents expected to spend around \$6 to 10 monthly on bubble milk tea. Additionally, 17.02 % of respondents planned to spend \$11 to \$20 per month, and 10.64 % of respondents expected to spend more than \$20 monthly on bubble milk tea. These findings suggest that bubble milk tea is a popular yet should be affordable drink among the majority of respondents.

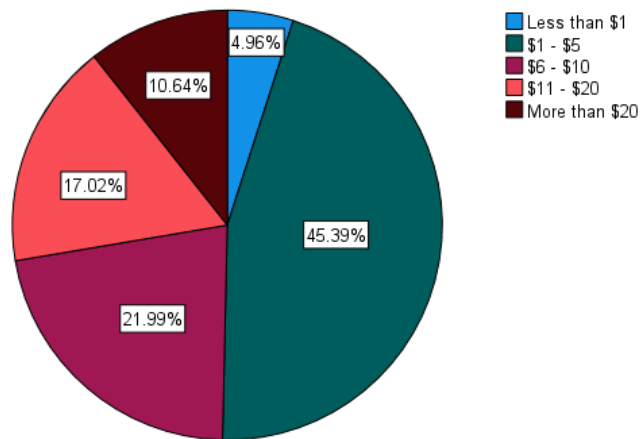


Figure 9 Monthly expense on bubble milk tea

Source: (Own work, SPSS)

According to Figure 10, it indicates that the majority of respondents, accounting for 65.96 %, considered a price range of \$1 to \$3 as suitable for one cup of bubble milk tea. This suggests that many respondents may perceive bubble milk tea as an affordable drink option, with a reasonable price point. Moreover, 20.57 % of the respondents thought a higher price range of \$4 to \$5 would be suitable for one cup of bubble milk tea. This suggests that there may be some variability in the respondents' perceptions of a suitable price for bubble milk tea, with some willing to pay a higher price.

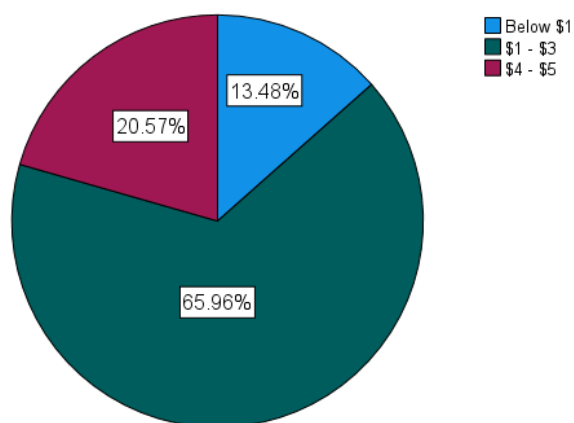


Figure 10 Suitable price

Source: (Own work, SPSS)

The last question of the survey questionnaire is about key factors influencing the bubble milk tea consumer behavior. As shown in figure 11, it illustrates that taste is the main influencing factor, accounting for 86.5 % of overall respondents. This suggests that a majority of bubble milk tea consumers prioritize taste above other factors when making their purchase decisions. Additionally, price is also an important factor, with 50.4 % of respondents indicating that it influences their bubble milk tea consumption behavior. Overall, the result indicates that taste and price are the two most important factors that influence bubble milk tea consumer behavior, ranking higher than promotion, brand, cup design, and other factors.

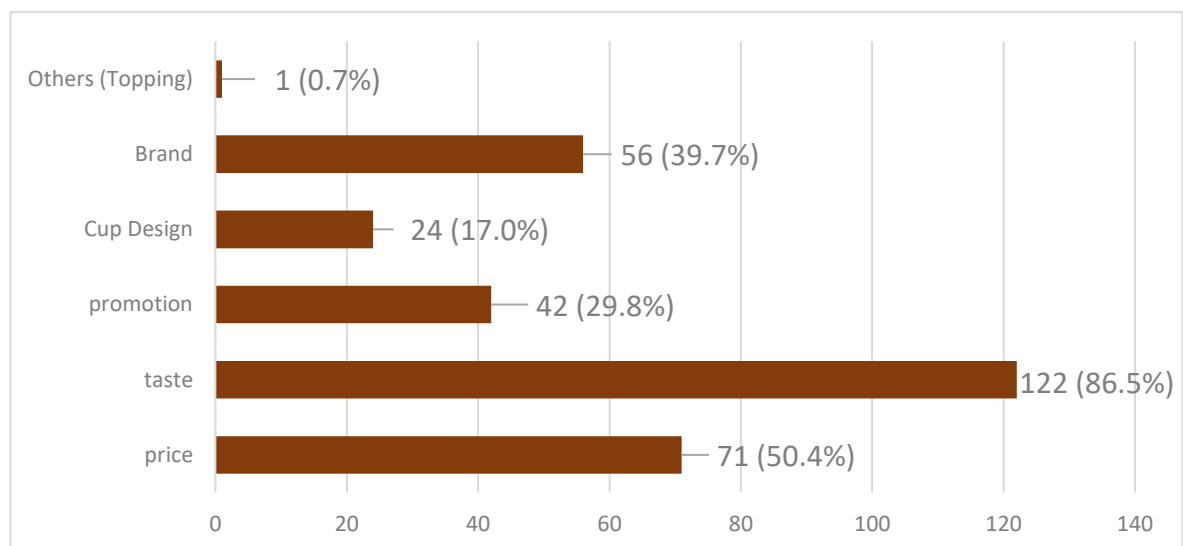


Figure 11 Key factors influencing bubble milk tea consumption

Source: (Own work, Excel)

## 4.2 Hypothesis testing

To establish the factors that have an impact on the consumption of bubble milk tea in Cambodia, 8 hypotheses have been formulated. These hypotheses aim to test the relationship between various variables and the frequency of bubble milk tea consumption in the Cambodian population. The results of these tests will provide valuable insights into factors that influence the demand for bubble milk tea and can be used to inform marketing, pricing decisions, and product development efforts in the bubble milk tea industry in Cambodia.

The eight hypotheses are as follows:

H0: There is a significant difference between gender and bubble milk tea consumption

- H0: There is a significant difference between age and bubble milk tea consumption
- H0: There is a significant difference between education level and bubble milk tea consumption
- H0: There is no relationship between marital status and bubble milk tea consumption
- H0: There is no relationship between income and bubble milk tea consumption
- H0: There is no dependency between occupation and bubble milk tea consumption
- H0: There is no dependency between price and bubble milk tea consumption
- H0: There is no dependency between taste and bubble milk tea consumption

#### 4.2.1 Hypothesis testing between gender and consumption

*H0: There is a significant difference between gender and bubble milk tea consumption*

*HA: There is no significant difference between gender and bubble milk tea consumption*

Let  $\alpha = 0.05$

*Table 3 Contingency Table: Gender and Bubble milk tea Consumption*

#### Gender \* In average, how many cups of bubble tea do you consume monthly? Crosstabulation

			In average, how many cups of bubble tea do you consume monthly?		Total
			less than 4	4 and more	
Gender	Male	Count	30	17	47
		Expected Count	32.3	14.7	47.0
	Female	Count	67	27	94
		Expected Count	64.7	29.3	94.0
Total		Count	97	44	141
		Expected Count	97.0	44.0	141.0

Source: (Own work, SPSS)

According to table 3, for male gender, 30 respondents consume bubble tea less than 4 monthly, while 17 of them consume 4 and more bubble milk tea on a monthly basis. In female gender group, 67 out of 94 respondents would consume bubble milk tea less than 4 cups per month, while the other 27 female respondents would consume 4 and more bubble tea monthly.

Table 4 Statistic: Gender and Bubble Milk Tea Consumption

<b>Chi-Square Tests</b>					
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.809 <sup>a</sup>	1	.368		
Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	.500	1	.480		
Likelihood Ratio	.799	1	.371		
Fisher's Exact Test				.441	.239
Linear-by-Linear Association	.804	1	.370		
N of Valid Cases	141				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 14.67.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Source: (Own work, SPSS)

If the sample size exceeds 40, the  $\chi^2$  test may be utilized to evaluate the hypothesis. According to table 4, P-value is greater than significance level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), then null hypothesis cannot be rejected. Therefore, **there is a significant difference between gender and bubble milk tea consumption.**

Additionally, the consumption of bubble milk tea may not be significantly influenced by gender factor, as it is a widely consumed beverage enjoyed by individuals regardless of their gender.

#### 4.2.2 Hypothesis testing between age and consumption

*H<sub>0</sub>: There is a significant difference between age and bubble milk tea consumption*

*H<sub>A</sub>: There is no significant difference between age and bubble milk tea consumption*

Let  $\alpha = 0.05$

Table 5 Contingency Table: Age and Bubble Milk Tea Consumption

**Age \* In average, how many cups of bubble tea do you consume monthly?  
Crosstabulation**

		In average, how many cups of bubble tea do you consume monthly?		Total	
		less than 4	4 and more		
Age	Under 18 years old	Count	20	2	22
		Expected Count	15.1	6.9	22.0
	18 - 30 years old	Count	64	37	101
		Expected Count	69.5	31.5	101.0
	31 - 60 years old	Count	13	5	18
		Expected Count	12.4	5.6	18.0
Total		Count	97	44	141
		Expected Count	97.0	44.0	141.0

Source: (Own work, SPSS)

The age categories “31-40” and “41-60” have been combined into a single group in order to fulfil the requirements for adopting the chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) test. According to table 5, among 22 respondents who are under 18 years old, 20 consume less than 4 cups of bubble milk tea per month. Moreover, 64 respondents aged between 18 to 30 years old prefer drinking less than 4 cups of bubble tea monthly, while 37 others in this age group consume 4 or more cups per month. Additionally, out of 18 respondents aged between 31 to 60 years old, 13 consume less than 4 cups of bubble milk tea on a monthly basis.

Table 6 Statistic: Age and Bubble Milk Tea Consumption

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.497 <sup>a</sup>	2	.039
Likelihood Ratio	7.664	2	.022
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.093	1	.148
N of Valid Cases	141		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.62.

Source: (Own work, SPSS)



Based on table 6, it indicates P-value is less than significance level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), then null hypothesis  $H_0$  could be rejected. Consequently, **there is no significant difference between age and bubble milk tea consumption.**

From an economic viewpoint, if there were a significant relationship between age and bubble milk tea consumption, it would suggest that business operating in the bubble tea industry should consider age as a key factor of their consumption.

#### 4.2.3 Hypothesis testing between education and consumption

*H<sub>0</sub>: There is a significant difference between educational level and bubble milk tea consumption*

*H<sub>A</sub>: There is no significant different between educational level and bubble milk tea consumption*

Let  $\alpha = 0.05$

Table 7 Contingency Table: Education and Bubble Milk Tea Consumption

**Education Level \* In average, how many cups of bubble tea do you consume monthly? Crosstabulation**

			In average, how many cups of bubble tea do you consume monthly?		Total
			less than 4	4 and more	
Education Level	High School	Count	25	5	30
		Expected Count	20.6	9.4	30.0
	Bachelor	Count	58	31	89
		Expected Count	61.2	27.8	89.0
	Master	Count	14	8	22
		Expected Count	15.1	6.9	22.0
Total	Count	97	44	141	
	Expected Count	97.0	44.0	141.0	

Source: (Own work, SPSS)

The data shown in Table 7 indicates that among high school students, 25 out of 30 respondents prefer to consume less than 4 cups of bubble milk tea per month. For bachelor respondents, 58 of them prefer to drink less than 4 cups of bubble tea per month, while 31 others consumer 4 or more cups monthly. In the case of master's degree holders, 14 out of

22 respondents consume less than 4 cups of bubble milk tea per month, whereas only 8 respondents from this group drink 4 or more cups on a monthly basis.

Table 8 Statistic: Educational level and Bubble Milk Tea Consumption

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.772 <sup>a</sup>	2	.152
Likelihood Ratio	4.114	2	.128
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.711	1	.100
N of Valid Cases	141		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.87.

Source: (Own work, SPSS)

If the sample size exceeds 40, the  $\chi^2$  test may be utilized to evaluate the hypothesis. According to table 8, P-value is greater than significance level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), then null hypothesis cannot be rejected. Therefore, **there is a significant difference between educational level and bubble milk tea consumption.**

From an economic perspective, it can be argued that the consumption of bubble milk tea is not significantly influenced by educational level. This is because bubble milk tea is a widely popular beverage that is enjoyed by individuals from all educational backgrounds, and thus, there may not be a strong correlation between one's level of education and their likelihood to consume bubble milk tea.

#### 4.2.4 Hypothesis testing between marital status and consumption

*H0: There is no relationship between marital status and bubble milk tea consumption*

*HA: There is a relationship between marital status and bubble milk tea consumption*

Let  $\alpha = 0.05$

Table 9 Contingency Table: Marital status and bubble milk tea consumption

**Marital Status \* In average, how many cups of bubble tea do you consume monthly? Crosstabulation**

			In average, how many cups of bubble tea do you consume monthly?		Total
			less than 4	4 and more	
Marital Status	Single	Count	60	18	78
		Expected Count	53.7	24.3	78.0
	In relationship	Count	22	20	42
		Expected Count	28.9	13.1	42.0
	Married	Count	15	6	21
		Expected Count	14.4	6.6	21.0
Total	Count	97	44	141	
	Expected Count	97.0	44.0	141.0	

Source: (Own work, SPSS)

Based on the information presented in Table 9, it appears that a large proportion of single respondents, specifically 60 out of 78, would consumer fewer than four cups of bubble milk tea on a monthly basis. Additionally, of the respondents who are currently in a relationship, 22 out of 42 also reported a preference for drinking less than four cups of bubble milk tea each month. Among the married respondents, 15 out of 21 indicated that they drink less than four cups of bubble milk tea monthly, while the remaining six respondents preferred to drink four or more cups.

Table 10 Statistic: Marital Status and Bubble Milk Tea Consumption

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.739 <sup>a</sup>	2	.021
Likelihood Ratio	7.519	2	.023
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.039	1	.153
N of Valid Cases	141		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.55.

Source: (Own work, SPSS)

The sample size is greater than 40, then  $\chi^2$  test could be used to test this hypothesis. P-value is lower than significance level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), then null hypothesis can be rejected. As a result, **there is a significant relationship between marital status and bubble milk tea consumption.**

From an economic perspective, marital status is an important factor that can affect consumer behaviour and consumption patterns. The data presented in Table 9 indicates that married respondents are more likely to consume fewer cups of bubble milk tea compared to single or in-relationship respondents. This suggests that marriage involves shared financial responsibilities and the need to manage household expenses efficiently, which can influence spending priorities. As a result, the observed relationship between marital status and bubble milk tea consumption highlights how economic factors can impact consumer preferences.

#### 4.2.5 Hypothesis testing between income and consumption

*H<sub>0</sub>: There is no relationship between income and bubble milk tea consumption*

*H<sub>A</sub>: There is a relationship between income and bubble milk tea consumption*

Let  $\alpha = 0.05$

Table 11 Contingency Table: Income and Bubble Milk Tea Consumption

**What is your Monthly Income? \* In average, how many cups of bubble tea do you consume monthly? Crosstabulation**

		In average, how many cups of bubble tea do you consume monthly?		Total	
		less than 4	4 and more		
What is your Monthly Income?	Less than \$200	Count	32	3	35
		Expected Count	24.1	10.9	35.0
	\$200 - \$500	Count	34	9	43
		Expected Count	29.6	13.4	43.0
	\$500 - \$1000	Count	20	11	31
		Expected Count	21.3	9.7	31.0
	\$1000 - \$2000+	Count	11	21	32
		Expected Count	22.0	10.0	32.0
Total		Count	97	44	141
		Expected Count	97.0	44.0	141.0

Source: (Own work, SPSS)

In order to meet the necessary conditions for utilizing the chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) test, the income categories of “\$1000-\$2000” and “\$2000+” have been merged into a single group. Based on the data of table 11, 32 out of 35 respondents who have income less than \$200 monthly would consume less than 4 cups of milk tea per month, while only 3 respondents from this income category would drink 4 and more cups monthly. Moreover, 34 respondents from income group \$200-\$500 also consume less than 4 cups while 9 others drink 4 or more. Additionally, respondents from income group \$500-\$1000, 20 of them would drink less than 4 cups monthly whereas the other 11 respondents prefer drink 4 and more bubble milk tea monthly. On the other hand, 21 out of 31 respondents from income categories \$1000-\$2000+ drink 4 and more bubble milk tea on a monthly basis, whereas only 11 others drink less than 4 monthly.

Table 12 Statistic: Income and Bubble Milk Tea Consumption

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	28.391 <sup>a</sup>	3	<.001
Likelihood Ratio	28.944	3	<.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	26.856	1	<.001
N of Valid Cases	141		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 9.67.

Source: (Own work, SPSS)

If the sample size exceeds 40, the  $\chi^2$  test may be utilized to evaluate the hypothesis. According to table 12, P-value is less than significance level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), then null hypothesis can be rejected. Therefore, **there is a significant relationship between monthly income and bubble milk tea consumption.**

From economic viewpoint, as income increases, the likelihood of consuming more cups of bubble milk tea per month also increases. This relationship can be understood through the concept of income elasticity of demand, which measures the responsiveness of the quantity demanded of a good to change in income. In the case of bubble milk tea consumption, income elasticity of demand is likely positive, meaning that as income

increases, the demand of bubble milk tea also increases. This can be explained by the fact that individuals with higher incomes have more disposable income to spend on non-essential goods and may also have greater exposure to different types of food and beverage.

#### 4.2.6 Hypothesis testing between occupation and consumption

*H0: There is no dependency between occupation and bubble milk tea consumption*

*HA: There is a dependency between occupation and bubble milk tea consumption*

Let  $\alpha = 0.05$

Table 13 Contingency Table: Occupation and Bubble Milk Tea Consumption

**What is your Occupation? \* In average, how many cups of bubble tea do you consume monthly? Crosstabulation**

			In average, how many cups of bubble tea do you consume monthly?		Total
			less than 4	4 and more	
What is your Occupation?	Student	Count	38	7	45
		Expected Count	31.0	14.0	45.0
	Employee	Count	43	17	60
		Expected Count	41.3	18.7	60.0
	Professionals (such as doctors/lawyers/teachers)	Count	12	7	19
		Expected Count	13.1	5.9	19.0
	Self-employed/contractor	Count	4	13	17
		Expected Count	11.7	5.3	17.0
Total		Count	97	44	141
		Expected Count	97.0	44.0	141.0

Source: (Own work, SPSS)

According to Table 13, only 7 of the 45 respondents, whose profession is student, would like to drink more than 4 cups of bubble milk tea each month, while 38 would prefer to drink fewer than 4 cups. Similarly, just 17 of the 43 respondents who are employees would prefer to drink more than four bubble milk teas every month. Considering respondents who work in the professional field such as doctors/lawyers/teachers, 12 of them drink less than four drinks each month while 7 others consume more than four. Furthermore, 13 of the respondents who were self-employed said they would want to drink 4 or more cups of bubble tea per month, while just 4 of them would drink less.

Table 14 Statistic: Occupation and Bubble Milk Tea Consumption

### Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	21.871 <sup>a</sup>	3	<.001
Likelihood Ratio	21.060	3	<.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	19.423	1	<.001
N of Valid Cases	141		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.30.

Source: (Own work, SPSS)

The sample size is greater than 40, then  $\chi^2$  test could be used to test this hypothesis. P-value is lower than significance level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), then null hypothesis can be rejected. As a result, **there is a significant dependency between occupation and bubble milk tea consumption.**

From an economic standpoint, the relationship between occupation and bubble milk tea consumption could be explained through economic concepts such as income and substitute effects. In the case of occupation, students and employees may have lower incomes and fewer opportunities to drink bubble milk tea, while self-employed individuals may have higher incomes and greater flexibility to consumer bubble milk tea.

#### 4.2.7 Hypothesis testing between price and consumption

*H0: There is no dependency between price and bubble milk tea consumption*

*HA: There is a dependency between price and bubble milk tea consumption*

Let  $\alpha = 0.05$

Table 15 Contingency Table: Price and Bubble Milk Tea Consumption

**In average, how many cups of bubble tea do you consume monthly? \* Price Crosstabulation**

			Price		Total
			Yes	No	
In average, how many cups of bubble tea do you consume monthly?	less than 4	Count	47	50	97
		Expected Count	48.8	48.2	97.0
	4 and more	Count	24	20	44
		Expected Count	22.2	21.8	44.0
Total	Count	71	70	141	
	Expected Count	71.0	70.0	141.0	

Source: (Own work, SPSS)

According to Table 15, 47 out of 97 respondents who would consume less than 4 cups of bubble milk tea per month would consider the price of bubble milk tea before purchasing it, whereas 50 other respondents do not care about the price before drinking it. In contrast, 24 out of 44 respondents who would consume 4 or more bubble milk teas would consider price while purchasing this soft drink, whilst the remaining 20 respondents would not use price as their key factor in whether or not to consume this beverage.

Table 16 Statistic: Price and Bubble Milk Tea Consumption

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.449 <sup>a</sup>	1	.503		
Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	.239	1	.625		
Likelihood Ratio	.450	1	.502		
Fisher's Exact Test				.586	.313
Linear-by-Linear Association	.446	1	.504		
N of Valid Cases	141				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 21.84.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Source: (Own work, SPSS)



The  $\chi^2$  test could be used to examine this hypothesis if the sample size is bigger than 40. Whenever the P-value is above the significance level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. Consequently, **there is no significant dependency between price and bubble milk tea consumption.**

From economic viewpoint, this may suggest that bubble milk tea is a differentiated product, meaning that it has unique qualities that distinguish it from other beverages in the market. Differentiated products may be less sensitive to changes in price, as consumers are willing to pay more for the specific characteristics that the product offers. This can be contrasted with commodities, which are undifferentiated products that are typically more sensitive to changes in price.

#### 4.2.8 Hypothesis testing between taste and consumption

*H0: There is no dependency between taste and bubble milk tea consumption*

*HA: There is a dependency between taste and bubble milk tea consumption*

Let  $\alpha = 0.05$

Table 17 Contingency Table: Taste and Bubble Milk Tea Consumption

#### In average, how many cups of bubble tea do you consume monthly? \* Taste Crosstabulation

		Taste		Total	
		Yes	No		
In average, how many cups of bubble tea do you consume monthly?	less than 4	Count	84	13	97
		Expected Count	83.9	13.1	97.0
	4 and more	Count	38	6	44
		Expected Count	38.1	5.9	44.0
Total	Count	122	19	141	
	Expected Count	122.0	19.0	141.0	

Source: (Own work, SPSS)

Table 17 illustrates that 84 out of 97 respondents who consume less than 4 cups of bubble milk tea monthly would consider taste as their key factor to drink the beverage, whereas the 13 others do not think so. Likewise, 38 respondents who consume 4 and more bubble milk tea on a monthly basis would consider taste as their prime aspect purchasing it,

while the remaining 6 respondents do not consider taste as their key factor to consume bubble milk tea.

Table 18 Statistic: Taste and Bubble Milk Tea Consumption

<b>Chi-Square Tests</b>					
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.001 <sup>a</sup>	1	.970		
Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	.000	1	1.000		
Likelihood Ratio	.001	1	.970		
Fisher's Exact Test				1.000	.581
Linear-by-Linear Association	.001	1	.970		
N of Valid Cases	141				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.93.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Source: (Own work, SPSS)

The sample size is greater than 40, then  $\chi^2$  test could be used to test this hypothesis. P-value is greater than significance level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), then null hypothesis cannot be rejected. As a result, **there is no significant dependency between taste and bubble milk tea consumption.**

From an economic perspective, the absence of a significant relationship between taste and bubble milk tea consumption could suggest that consumers are not highly differentiated in their preferences for the taste of bubble tea. This means that taste may not be the primary driver of demand for this beverage. However, it's important to note that taste can still be an important factor in driving consumer demand, even if it is not statistically significant in this particular sample. Taste can help to differentiate bubble milk tea from other beverages on the market and can create a unique selling point that attracts consumers who are looking for a specific taste experience.

## **5 Conclusion and further research**

### **5.1 Conclusion**

In conclusion, bubble milk tea has become an increasingly popular beverage in Cambodia, particularly among younger consumers. The consumption of bubble milk tea is not gender-specific, as both men and women spend approximately the same amount of money on the beverage, regardless of their ethnic background, educational level, or occupation.

The primary goals of this thesis are to examine Cambodia's consumption of bubble milk tea and the variables that affect it. In order to achieve this, the theoretical part has included a discussion of the origins of bubble milk tea, the consumption of bubble milk tea globally, the consumption of bubble milk tea in Cambodia, and a brief introduction to the economy of Cambodia as a whole. All of these topics may have an influence on shifts in customer preferences when buying this soft drink.

The practical part of this thesis involved conducting a survey with 141 participants, of which 94 were female and 47 were male. The majority of respondents (71.63 %) were aged between 18 and 30, which is considered a young and active age group and a significant demographic segment in society. The survey results showed that the primary factors motivating consumers to purchase bubble milk tea were taste (86.5 %), price (50.4 %) and brand image as well. These three factors were the most frequently cited among the survey participants.

To analyse the potential relationship between personal factors and bubble milk tea consumption in Cambodia, a contingency table was utilized in this paper. Eight hypotheses were formulated and tested using SPSS statistical software. The results revealed that four of the hypotheses were confirmed to have a significant relationship between two variables. These variables included age, marital status, occupation, and income level of the survey participants. Consequently, these factors have been identified as the most critical influencers of consumer behaviour toward bubble milk tea in Cambodia.

Based on this information, businesses seeking to enter the Cambodian bubble milk tea market could focus on developing a unique and appealing taste, establishing competitive pricing strategies, and building a strong brand image. They could also target younger

consumers and consider the personal factors that influence their purchasing decisions, such as age, occupation, and income level. Additionally, businesses should conduct market research to gain a better understanding of the Cambodian market and adapt their marketing strategies accordingly.

## **5.2 Further research**

The present research has provided valuable insights into the consumption of bubble milk tea in Cambodia. However, there are several limitations that should be taken into consideration. Firstly, the sample used in the study mainly comprised respondents from Cambodia, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions across Asia, Europe, or other continents. Secondly, the respondents were asked to recall their own drinking experiences, which may have resulted in some inaccuracies. Details such as the number of cups consumed and the amount spent on the beverage were reliant on individual memory, which could lead to imprecise responses. Thirdly, since this research solely focused on the consumers of bubble milk tea in Cambodia, and the majority of the respondents were between the ages of 18 and 30, further research may be necessary to gather data from other age groups and regions to better understand the consumption patterns and preferences of bubble milk tea in other parts of the world. Despite these limitations, the present research suggests that personal factors are key in shaping consumers' preferences for bubble milk tea, though which factors have the greatest impact remains unclear. While the smaller sample size of 141 responses may make it difficult to accurately verify the proposed assumptions, it is still evident that personal factors play a significant role in shaping these preferences. Therefore, it is important to consider these factors when conducting future research on the consumption patterns and preferences of bubble milk tea in Cambodia and other parts of the world.

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## 7 Appendix

### Survey questionnaire

- 1) What is your gender?
  - a) Male
  - b) Female
  
- 2) What is your age?
  - a) Under 18 years old
  - b) 18-30 years old
  - c) 31-40 years old
  - d) 41-60 years old
  - e) Above 60 years old
  
- 3) What is your educational level?
  - a) Secondary
  - b) High School
  - c) Bachelor
  - d) Master
  - e) Doctor
  
- 4) What is your occupation?
  - a) Student
  - b) Employee
  - c) Professionals (such as doctors/lawyers/teachers.)
  - d) Self-employed/contractor
  - e) No career
  - f) Retirement
  
- 5) What is your marital status?
  - a) Single
  - b) In relationship
  - c) Married

- d) Divorce
- 6) What is your monthly income?
- a) Less than \$200
  - b) \$200-\$500
  - c) \$501-\$1000
  - d) \$1001-\$2000
  - e) More than \$2000
- 7) On average, how many cups of bubble tea do you consume monthly?
- a) Less than 4
  - b) 4 and more
- 8) On average, how much would you spend on bubble milk tea monthly?
- a) Less than \$1
  - b) \$1-\$5
  - c) \$6-\$10
  - d) \$11-\$20
  - e) More than \$20
- 9) What price of bubble milk tea would you consider as suitable price?
- a) Below \$1
  - b) \$1-\$3
  - c) \$4-\$5
  - d) Above \$5
- 10) What are the key factors that you consider before purchasing bubble milk tea?
- a) Price
  - b) Taste
  - c) Promotion
  - d) Cup Design
  - e) Brand
  - f) Other