

ABSTRACT

The landscape of the Canadian beer industry is changing. Overall, consumers are drinking less alcohol but are developing an interest in craft beer causing a premiumization of beer products. It has been reported that twice as many males as females drink beer and suggested that only one fifth of women are primarily beer drinkers. In order to sustain the fast expanding craft beer industry companies will need to work to attract female consumers. In the past, there has been a lot of sensory research conducted regarding the evaluation of beer; however, women's beer preferences have not been examined in isolation. A choice based conjoint analysis (CBC) survey was designed to extract the importance of individual attributes on women's liking of beer. One hundred and forty four female participants completed the CBC survey; utility scores and consumer clusters were generated using Hierarchical Bayesian and Latent Class Analysis. Preferred attribute elicitation (PAE), a rapid sensory method, was conducted using two groups of females (n=16, n=15) and two groups of males (n=11, n=17). The participants evaluated three ales and one lager. Two of the samples were NS brewed craft beers and the other two samples were nationally available macro-brewed beers. The results of this trial were analyzed using Generalized Procrustes Analysis (GPA). The preference maps created using GPA were compared using RV coefficients. A consumer trial was also conducted using the same samples. Panelists (n=108) evaluated overall liking, liking of flavour, and liking of mouthfeel on 9-point hedonic scales. They also rated perceived bitterness on a 15-centimeter intensity scale. The results of the consumer trial were regressed onto the preference maps created using the PAE data to generate consumer clusters using Agglomerative Hierarchical Clustering. The results of the CA trial displayed that there is a strong negative correlation between bitterness and female liking of beer.

Stouts, black coloured, and macro-brewed beers were also found to have negative effects on liking, although, sweetness was found to be a positive driver of liking. Generally, all of the female clusters were found to prefer sweet beers with low levels of bitterness. The results found that men and women evaluate beer differently. However, all groups were able to generate similar product descriptions of the samples. The liking scores were found to be negatively correlated with the bitterness intensity ratings, supporting the finding that bitterness is generally disliked in beer products by consumers. Consumer clusters generated using the PAE results and indicated that 84% of the female consumers were associated with the macro-brewed beer samples. This suggests that although macro-brewed national brands had a negative effect on female liking, women prefer the intrinsic qualities of macro-brewed beers.