



Mead the Oldest Fermented Beverage

(Mead Culture in India)

Mr. Arun Selvaraj, Dr. Mala Kharkar

Chikitsak Samuha's

S.S & L.S Patkar College Of Arts & Science And V.P Varde College of Commerce & Economics, Department Of Hospitality Studies. S.V. Road, Goregaon west, Mumbai- 400062.

Abstract : Honey is a natural product with excellent properties, mead is a fermented alcoholic beverage obtained from honey, Additionally, mead contains the nutritional advantages of honey. Honey has inherent bacterial and antimicrobial properties. The Supposed Benefits of Mead It is known as the best immune booster due to its anti-inflammatory and antibacterial properties. Also honey has been used to cure illnesses in ancient medicine. Mead is much better and the raw materials are locally available in India, the beverage industry promotes wine more as a healthier drink which is Obtained by the fermentation of freshly plugged Vine grapes, India doesn't have a suitable geographic and climatic condition for the cultivation of grapes, unlike grapes honey is an traditional food commodity used from the ancient world, and need more awareness about the honey and its by products which is somewhere lacking in Indian market. The study majorly covers the Importance of honey in human culture and its product mead and its advantages and limitations, and how the fermented mead helps in improving in human diet. The final section focuses on the problems that must be surpassed and how to take it to the future generations.

Keywords: Mead, Fermentation, Antimicrobial, Diet, Advantages, Alcoholic, Limitations.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Mead is an alcoholic beverage made by fermenting honey diluted with water, and also with other ingredients like tropical fruits, spices, grains or hopes. It's a good source to increase the income of honey producers. mead does not fall under the category of wines it exists in its own category. [1] Traditionally, mead is fermented with three basic ingredients: honey, yeast, and water. Both of them are brewed and fermented in a similar way, more so than wine.[5] But like wine and beer, mead exists in it's own category. but, it is more akin to beer than wine because of its consistency and habits. Meads are better than wine and beers because honey, which is easier for the body to process than alcohol, is used to make mead, it is thought to be healthier than beer and wine. Additionally, mead contains the nutritional advantages of honey. Honey has inherent bacterial and antimicrobial properties.[2]

Honey is a natural product that has been widely used from an ancient Vedic period due to its therapeutic values.[6][8] The researchers reported that it contains about 200 substances. Honey is composed primarily of fructose and glucose but also contains fructo-oligosaccharides and many amino acids, vitamins, minerals and enzymes. It was a primary and most common ingredient used as a traditional medicine for centuries.

The alcoholic content ranges from 3.5% to 20% alcohol by volume. Mead was produced in Europe ancient times also in Africa, and Asia Evidence of mead begins to show up in the archaeological record , with clay vessels used in northern China from at least 7000 BCE

The earliest surviving written record of mead is possibly the soma mentioned in the hymns - Rigveda, one of the sacrosanct books of the historical Vedic religion and (later) Hinduism dated around 1700–1100 BCE it's been believed it existence from

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A survey conducted among the different age group of people in India primarily focused on the beverage servers and passionate beverage consumers to find out the interest on this unique beverage

Monitor the honey consumption across India and the reason behind it. to promote the oldest beverage of the world the survey was conducted in beverage service organization to understand the demand.

The reason to choose the questions:

1. Have you ever heard about mead?

It's been observed that people in India are very much enthusiastic about the beverages and are very much attracted to the wine tradition of France and Italy, people speak more about the French wines and champagne, champagne is a region in France which has a favorable geographical climate to cultivate the three varieties of principal grapes and hence produces the world's best sparkling wine, and has a huge demand. The oldest fermented beverage mentioned in the Rig-Veda is been forgotten by the people in India which is also a traditional drink of India.

2. Have you tasted mead?

The reason behind asking the question is to find out the interest in traditional drink of our own country, and answers were surprising to know out 51.4 % of people know mead only 34.3 % had tasted the beverage and the rest of 65.7% had not tasted the beverage, we are so attractive to the European cultures and not trying to adopt or even try to know about our own culture and the history.

3. and 4. Do you use honey in your diet? / why do you prefer honey in your diet?

This is to understand the demand of honey in Indian market and analyze the data and among them how much people are showing interest to the fermented healthy drinks and that can be used to convert it into the target market to promote low alcoholic and healthy drinks instead of getting attracted to the high-alcoholic drinks.

5. Do you prefer moderate consumption of alcohol?

Fermented foods and beverages are a part of many cultures from 1700 BCE as per Rig-Veda and 7000 to 4000 BCE as per the other archeological data, but people don't know the moderate consumption of these beverages.

6. Specify your interest on alcoholic beverage?

The reason behind asking this question is to understand the demand of healthy low alcoholic beverages and to create an awareness on moderate consumption and responsible beverage consumption practices.

2.1 Data and Sources of Data

The Google survey form was made and sent to the target age group of people and the results were combined and the data and also visited many beverage service associations like fine dine restaurants, bars, pubs and also approached the retail shops which serve the legal age group of people and the one who knows about responsible drinking. The interviews were quite interesting being an passionate beverage professional many people from target market denied for the beverage due to lack of knowledge about the product and the interesting part was

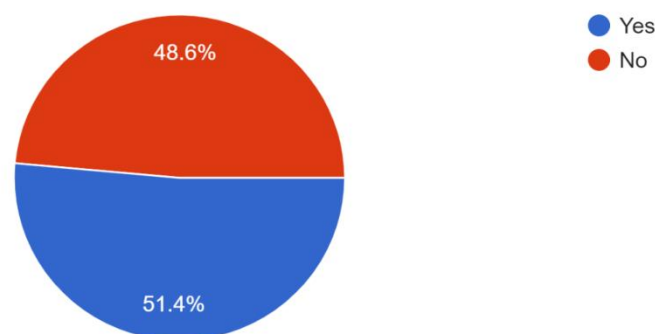
A survey was conducted among the people age group between 21 years to 45 years old belonging to the professional in alcoholic beverage sales and service also approached to the legal age group of people who are passionate in beverages

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Pie chart no 1

Have you ever heard about mead ?

35 responses

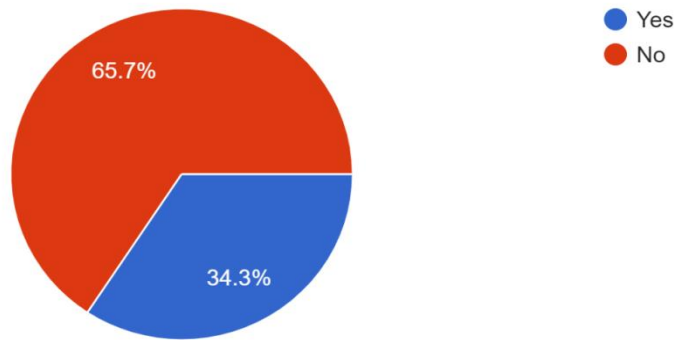


As per Pie chart no 1 the Indian beverage consumers and the one who are in to sales and service of beverages specially alcoholic beverages it is been observed that 48.6% of Indian population don't know about the oldest fermented beverage- mead. Which is also mentioned in Rig-Veda

Pie chard no 2

have you tasted mead?

35 responses

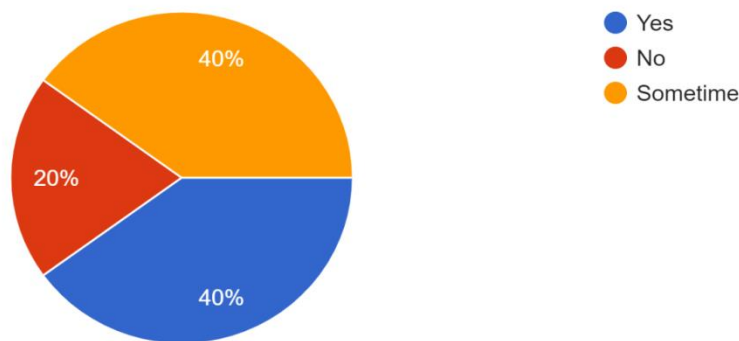


Pie chart no 2 shows the interest on the traditional foods and beverages It was shocking to know Out 51.4 % of people know mead only 34.3 % had tasted the beverage.

Pie chard no 3

do you use honey in your diet ?

35 responses

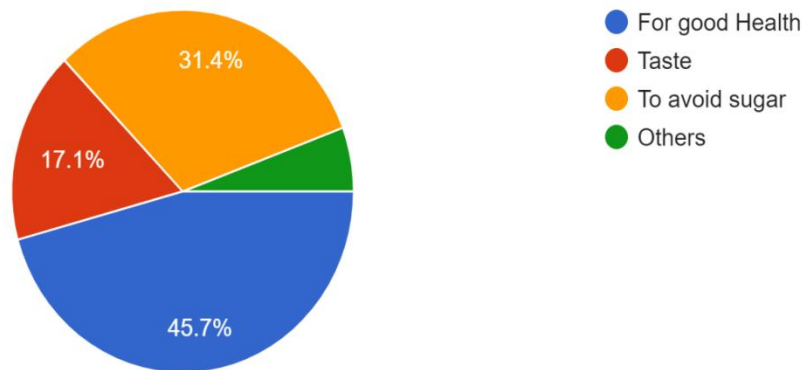


The above Pie chart no 3 shows the demand of honey in Indian market. Honey is quite useful for both internal and external applications in Ayurveda. Also its mentioned in Rig-Veda Therefore, the primary treatment is for cough, eye disease, blood in vomit, leprosy, diabetes, obesity, worm infestation, vomiting, asthma, diarrhea and healing wounds. Honey as a natural preservative. It's been observed that majority - 80% of Indian population use honey in their diet.

Pie chard no 4

Why do you prefer honey in your diet ?

35 responses

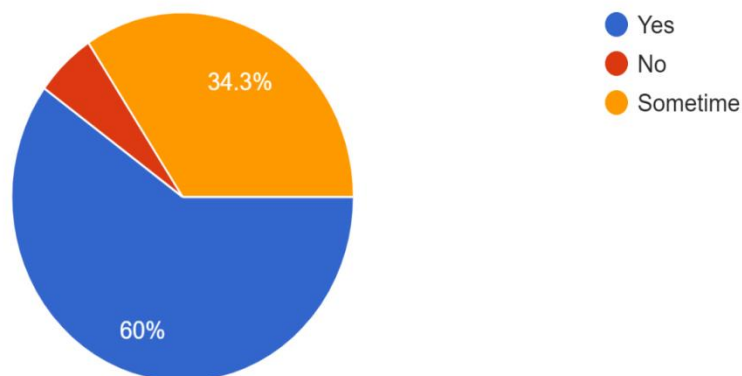


The above Pie chart no 4 shows the reason behind the demand of honey in Indian market. We reached out to the consumers of honey and tried to find out the reason behind using the honey. 45.7% people said for good health and 31.4% people to avoid sugar as it's not good for health (hence for Good health) and just 17.1% people for taste and finally 5.8% people said for other reasons(Aroma, natural Ingredient, just like it etc)

Pie chard no 5

Would you like to prefer moderate consumption of alcohol?

35 responses



As the results in Pie chart no 5 shows the people talk about moderate consumption but advertising of alcoholic beverages are banned in India but the brand produces many more commodities and they are in advertisement. In spite of banning the ads, there must be the warning "Alcohol consumption harms health." A responsible drinking message should be carried on all platforms traditional and digital, including brand websites, and print point of sale materials, and also the awareness to be provided for responsible drinking the question asked was would you like moderate consumption of alcohol? and the results are 94.3 % of people agreed that moderate consumption of alcohol is good from all the practical aspects.

Only 5.3 % people in India says no to alcoholic beverage- may be because of the religious perspective.

Conclusion and Further Scope

Pie chard no 6

If yes then please specify your interest?

35 responses



As analyzed in pie chart 6 the results shows that more and more young people are choosing to pursue sobriety for health and wellness, instead of due to dependency. Many more are limiting their alcohol consumption for the same reasons.

With that comes the rise of hip, new non-alcoholic beverages and low alcoholic fermented beverages and the mead satisfying both the aspects, health benefits will acquire the major part of beverage industry and the survey too show the demand for healthy drink in segment of fermented drinks.

The fermented foods and beverages are in human tradition more than 7000 BCE. And fermentation gives alcohol which is a naturally occurring by the bio chemical reactions happening during fermentation.

The beverage industry is serving the demand oriented market, just to understand the interest of the people the question asked to the target market was specify the alcoholic beverage of your own interest? And the results were not greatly towards the fermented beverages like mead.

Only one quarter of target market that is 34.33% said yes to fermented beverages.

Majority of people from target market that is 57.1% said yes to high proof distilled beverages.

As the beverage industry is serving the demand, there is a huge demand for high proof alcoholic beverages.

This situation can be only changed by creating awareness on the moderate consumption and responsible drinking practices.

And remaining 8.6% gave the mix and match approach to fermented and distilled beverages.

Only 2.9% people in India says yes to wine and 2.9% for beer, therefore scope for promoting mead among 34.3% of people interested in fermented beverages (-) minus people interested in wine and beer is 28.5% it's a very good opportunity to promote mead as a traditional as well as the healthiest low alcoholic drink.

If this spread the awareness in the beverage industry there will be a huge demand for low alcoholic healthy drinks like mead and market will be full of healthiest low alcoholic drinks, which were our traditional drinks and were the part of human culture.

References:

1. Zumla A, Lulat A. Honey: a remedy rediscovered. *J R Soc Med.* 1989;82:384–385. [PMC free article] [PubMed] [Google Scholar] [Ref list]
2. Al-Waili NS, Haq A. Effect of honey on antibody production against thymus-dependent and thymus-independent antigens in primary and secondary immune responses. *J Med Food.* 2004;7:491–494. [PubMed] [Google Scholar] [Ref list]
3. Tonks AJ, Cooper RA, Jones KP, Blair S, Parton J, Tonks A. Honey stimulates inflammatory cytokine production from monocytes. *Cytokine.* 2003;21:242–247.
4. Won S-R, Li C-Y, Kim J-W, Rhee H-I. Immunological characterization of honey major protein and its application. *Food Chem.* 2009;113:1334–1338

5. Aasvad M (1988) History of mead. <http://redstonemeadery.com/store/catalog/History-of-Mead-sp-17.html> Accessed 2015
6. Rosch M (2005) Pollen analysis of the contents of excavated vessels—direct archaeobotanical evidence of beverages. *Veg Hist Archaeobot* 14(3):179–188
7. Characteristic parameters of honey wines and dessert meads 2022, *Czech Journal of Food Sciences*
8. Medhi B, Puri A, Upadhyay S, Kaman L. Topical application of honey in the treatment of wound healing: a meta analysis. *JK Sci* . 2008;10:166–169. [[Google Scholar](#)] [[Ref list](#)]

