

Abstract

The study of "The Signification of "Green Tea" in Contemporary Thai and Japanese Societies" is aiming to investigate the creation and recognition. Using questionnaires and interviews does the research. The results are examined and compared. Moreover, the semiotics concept is used to study the establishment of the perception of green tea in Thai and Japanese societies. The logic of consumption concept is used to investigate the meaning and interpretation of green tea among both Thai and Japanese consumers as well.

The sample population for this study is divided into 2 groups. They are a surveyed group that answered the questionnaires and another group that was interviewed. The surveyed group is separated into 2 sets. They are 100 green tea drinking Thai persons resident in Bangkok and 100 Japanese living in Japan. Then, each set is also classified according to their ages into 5 smaller groups; 1) aged between 12-17 years old representing early teenagers, 2) aged between 18-23 years old representing late teenagers, 3) aged between 24-42 years old representing young adults, 4) aged between 43-60 years old representing more mature adults, and 5) aged over 60 years old representing the elders. The interviewed group is separated into 2 groups, 10 Thai and 10 Japanese persons. They are also classified into small groups according to their ages similarly to the surveyed group. The results are evaluated, analyzed and compared together.

The results show that the signification of green tea in contemporary Thai and Japanese societies are significantly different in the creation aspect. For the recognition aspect, there are both similarities and differences. As a matter of fact, for Thais, the perception of green tea has been created as Japanization, healthy beverage, and having a good figure. For Japanese, green tea is just a kind of beverage. There has not been created or modified. It is shown in this study that most Thai green tea consumers can recognize the contents in the advertisements. However, most Japanese can not remember such an advertisement. In addition, for buying and consumption behavior of

green tea, most Thai consumers drink ready-to-drink green tea. The reasons for making a decision are ease of purchase and availability. Most of them drink green tea once a week. But most Japanese consumers drink both self-infusion and ready-to-drink green tea. The reason is green tea has an advantage for health and they drink it everyday. Regarding green tea knowledge, most Japanese have got knowledge about it around 60%, alternatively, 25% for Thais. For consumers' attitude, most Thai and Japanese have got attitude in the middle, high, and low levels, respectively. The most agreement for Japanese is that green tea is a general daily beverage. For Thais, green tea is a healthy beverage, helping with diet or losing weight. However, both Thai and Japanese agree that green tea does not denote a difference in social status or taste.

For Thai society green tea also reveals the economical logic of exchange value since there is a making of marketing strategy such as discounting, preemption, offering and supplements.