

Profiling Protein Powder Consumers: A Survey

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Abstract- The following article discusses the different types of protein powder consumers and their needs from protein supplements. We conducted a survey which helped us gather essential data to profile protein powder consumers and then did a market study to determine scientifically what their requirements may be, as well as what changes they would want in their supplements.

Keywords- Survey, Protein Powder, Fitness and Nutrition

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the global protein supplement market has increased at a steady rate, and in India, this number is a lot higher. The current market size in India is 1.4 Billion USD (2024) and it is expected to hit 1.88 Billion USD in the next 5 years (2029) at a 6.08% CAGR. [1]

Understanding this massive emerging market is crucial for brands looking to innovate, and create a solid customer base. We hope to capture the outlook through this survey.

In this article, our goal is to divide most consumers of protein powder into a few specific categories, depending on their goals, needs, schedule, etc. For example, someone who is a bodybuilder may require protein supplements for muscle growth, while someone who is an older individual may require protein supplements to fulfil their dietary needs. With our survey, we aim to determine various categories and provide them with a proper solution for their specific needs.

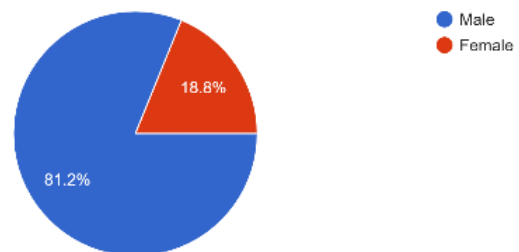
II. AIM

The survey aims to understand people's preferences, habits, and opinions about protein powders. Specifically, the survey aims to identify usage trends - basically who uses protein powder, how often and why. We also find out what people prefer in terms of taste and brands, as well as what they like or dislike about protein powders, along with changes they would like to see. This information can be used to understand consumer needs better, identify market trends, or guide product development for businesses in the fitness and nutrition industry.

To establish the categories, we conducted a short poll amongst various consumers to see what data we got and to try and break down the data into useful information. We also asked them if they wanted to see any changes in existing options and put together to get suitable data that can be processed.

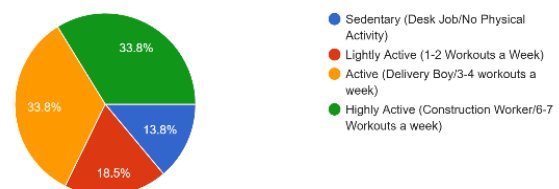
III. SURVEY

1. What is your gender?



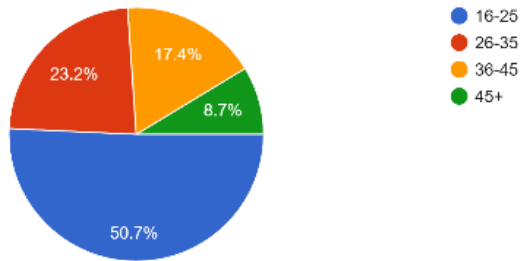
According to the survey results, a whopping 81.2% who took part in this survey are male, and the rest 18.8% are female. It can be seen that the ratio is quite skewed.

2. What is your lifestyle like?



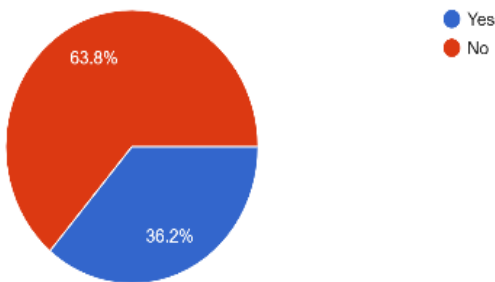
The survey reveals to us, that the majority i.e., 67.6% of people are involved in highly active physical activities as well as moderately active physical activities. The rest 18.5% perform light physical activities and 13.8% hardly do any physical activity. It can be seen that the majority of people are physically active.

3. What is your age group?



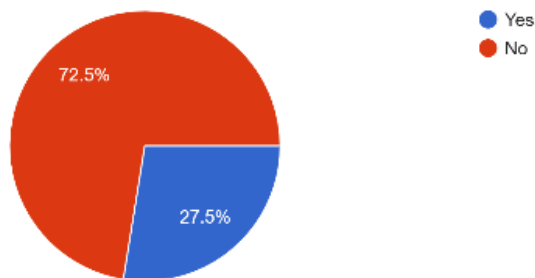
The survey reveals that 50.7% of the folks who participated in this survey lie in the age group 16-25. This survey shows the younger audience is more prevalent. 23.2% of people come between ages 26-35. Another 17.4% are of age 36-45 and the rest 8.7% are above the age of 45.

4. Do you prefer consulting a healthcare professional for diet or protein requirements?



It can be seen that the majority, 63.8% of people do not prefer consulting a healthcare professional for their dietary requirements. The remaining 36.2% consider consulting a professional. This shows that the majority of people may not refer to a proper consultant.

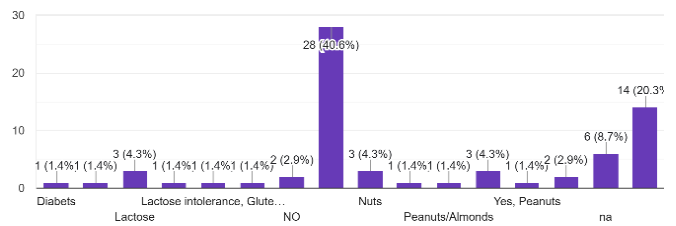
5. Are you lactose intolerant?



It was found that the majority of the people (72.5%) are lactose tolerant and have no issues consuming dairy

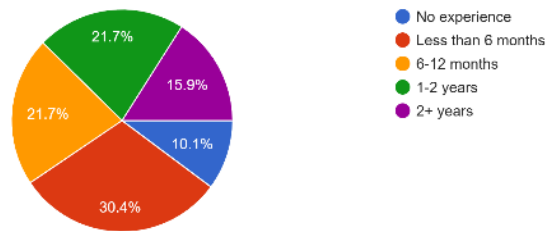
products. The remaining 27.5% have issues consuming dairy products, therefore other options need to be considered.

6. Do you have any allergies?



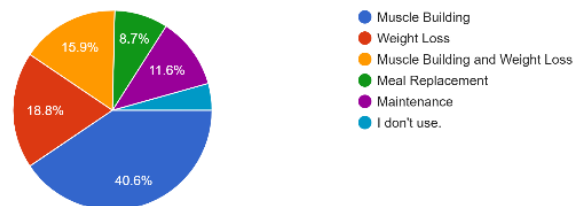
The survey tells that 77% of individuals do not have allergies. 10% of individuals have lactose intolerance (which is not actually an allergy) and 13% of individuals have a nut allergy.

7. How long have you been going to the gym?



From the survey, it can be seen that 30.4% of people have been going to the gym for the past 6 months or less. 21.7% have an experience of 6 to 12 months and 27.6% have been going for a year or more. Also, 10.1% of people have never been to the gym. They are athletes who play a particular sport as a hobby to maintain a healthy lifestyle or have some other physical conditions.

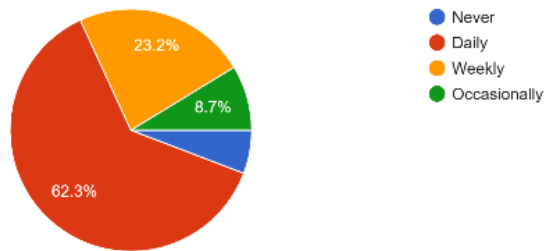
8. What is your main reason for protein powder?



The survey found that 40.6% of the people consume protein powder for muscle building, 18.8% for weight loss, 15.9% for muscle building and weight loss, 8.7% for meal replacement, i.e., a substitute for completing protein goals, and 11.6% for maintenance. This graph shows the importance of protein powder for muscle building as protein requirements

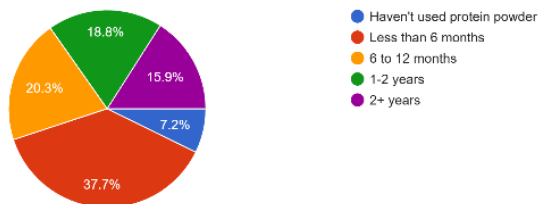
are impossible to complete through meals, especially for bodybuilders and athletes.

9. How often do you consume protein powder?



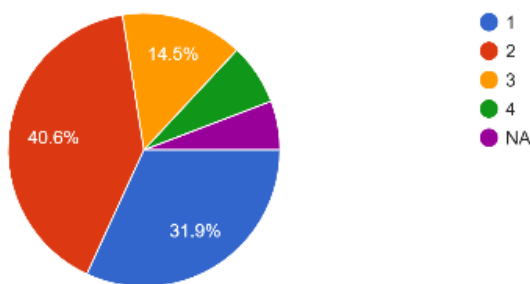
It can be seen that 62.3% of people consume protein powder daily for their protein goals. Rest 23.2% and 8.7% consume it weekly or occasionally when required respectively.

10. How long have you been using protein powder?



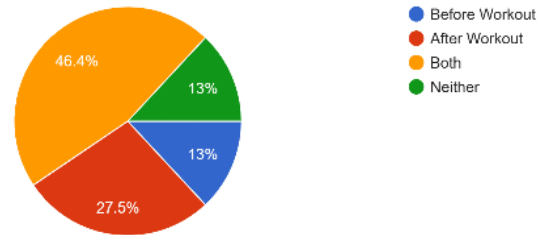
It is found, that 37.7% of the people have been consuming protein powder for the past 6 months or less. Furthermore, 20.3% have been using it for around 6 to 12 months, and are rest 34.7% of people have been consuming protein powder for a year or more. It can be seen, that many of them have started recently to give their workout a kick start, and the rest of them are experienced athletes.

11. How many scoops do you consume in one serving?



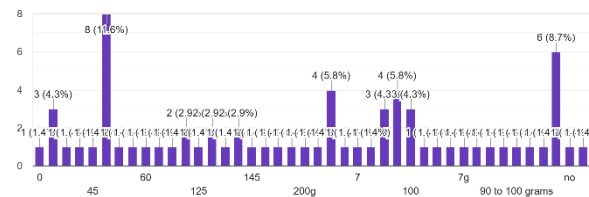
The survey found, that the majority 40.6% of the people have 2 scoops of protein per serving. The rest 31.9% have one scoop and 14.5% have 3 scoops of protein. It is important to note, that each scoop or protein powder contains around 25-30 g of protein. So accordingly people decide the amount of scoops to be consumed in a day.

12. When do you usually consume protein powder?



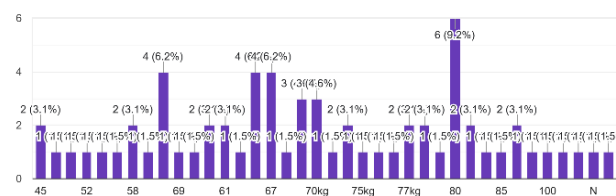
It is found that 13% of people consume protein powder before a workout, 27.5% after a workout, and 46.4% consume both times. However, studies have found out it doesn't matter when you consume protein powder, as long as you complete your daily intake requirements. [2]

13. How many grams of protein do you take in a day? (including protein powder and regular food)?



According to the survey, 26% of individuals are unaware of their daily protein intake. 36% of individuals consume around 40-100 grams of protein in a day. 30% of individuals consume around 100-150 grams of protein and 8% of individuals consume more than 150 grams of protein throughout their day.

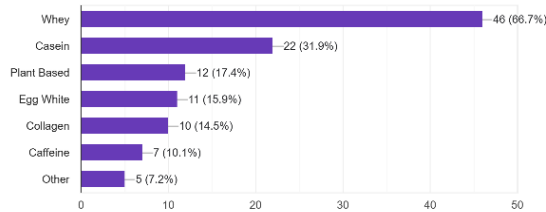
14. What is your weight?



According to the survey, around 21% of individuals fit in the weight category of 40-60 kilograms. 61% of individuals fit in the category of 60-80 kilograms. 18% of individuals fit in the category of 80 kilograms or above.

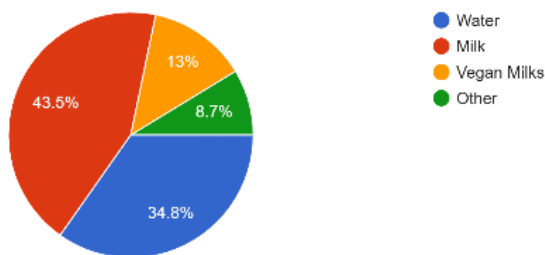
However, according to some research, about 90% of Indians are unaware of their protein requirements and about 80% of them take less than the recommended amount of protein. [3]

15. Which type of protein powder do you prefer? (Select all that apply)



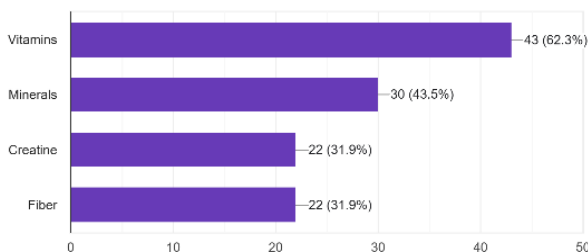
The survey found that the majority 66.7% consume whey protein, 31.9% prefer casein protein, 17.4% prefer plant-based protein, and the rest 47.2% prefer other types of protein supplements such as Egg white, Collagen, Caffeine, etc. Whey protein is preferred mostly because of its price-to-quality ratio, quick absorption, and there are more benefits too. [4]

16. Do you mix your protein with water, milk or any other liquid?



It is found that 43.5% of the people consume protein powder with milk, 34.8% consume it with water, 13% with Vegan milk, and 8.7% with some other solvent. Some of them with lactose intolerance also consume protein powders with water as they have limited options.

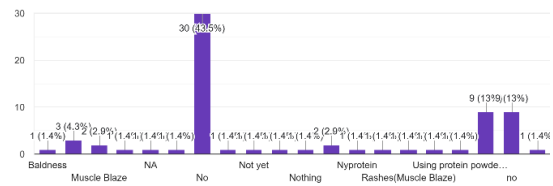
17. Apart from protein, do you look for additional nutrients in your protein powder? (Select all that apply)



From the survey, it is found, that people look for additional nutrients such as vitamins (62.3%), minerals (43.5%), creatine (31.9%), and fibre (31.9%). It is

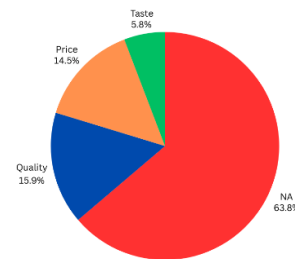
comparatively easier to add such nutrients to whey protein than other protein supplements.

18. Have you experienced any side effects from consuming protein powder? Please specify the brand.



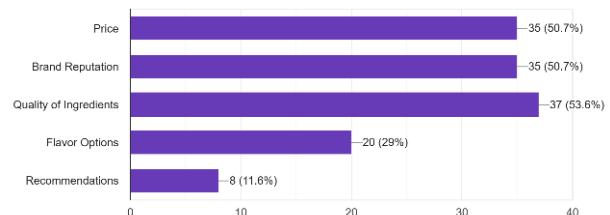
It was found that the majority of people did not face any side effects after consuming protein powder. However, some people complained about a brand named Muscle Blaze that causes rashes. My Protein is another brand being mentioned. Issues like baldness also have been reported. This may be because of their personal health issues or intolerance to certain ingredients of protein powders

19. What improvements would you like to see?



When asked about improvements that can be made, 63.8% of people are totally fine with no changes at all. The rest 15.9% are concerned about quality changes and 14.5% want a better price-to-quality ratio. 5.8% of people need a better taste. The majority said that everything is perfect and no need for any changes.

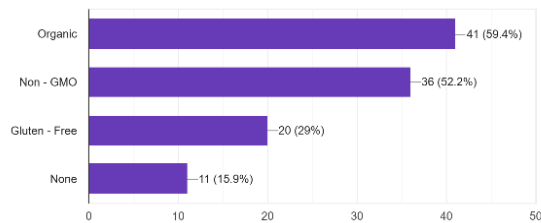
20. What factors influence your choice of protein powder brand? (Select all that apply)



It is found that 50.7% of people consider price, 50.7% consider brand reputation, 29% consider flavour options and 53.6% consider the quality of ingredients while

choosing a specific brand for protein powder. It shows a smart move by the audience.

21. Which of these certificates are important for you when choosing a protein brand? (Select all that apply)



When it comes to the certificates received by the brand that sells these protein powders, 59.4% of people make sure the ingredients are organic, 52.2% ensure that ingredients are Non-GMO, 29% consider Gluten Free ingredients, and the rest 15.9% have no preferences for certification of ingredients.

This survey helped us establish categories of consumers, their requirements, and improvements that can be made to make the supplement more beneficial to consumers and cater to their needs. We tried to cover every aspect of nutrition and also collected the data required for the review.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, we can broadly divide the majority of people into one of five categories –

1. Athletes or Bodybuilders
2. Casual Fitness Enthusiasts
3. Individuals who have health conditions
4. Individuals who can't meet their daily nutritional intake
5. Older individuals

Each category has its own needs and goals.

1. Athletes or Bodybuilders - These individuals prioritize their own physical development and prowess. They need to regulate their protein intake so they can grow muscles efficiently and since they perform high-intensity workouts, they also need good quality protein to help their muscle recovery. For them, protein powders are essential as they provide a high-quality, convenient and efficient way to meet their requirements.
2. Casual Fitness Enthusiasts - These individuals are those who engage in regular

recreational activities to maintain their health and body. They may not require protein powder for a balanced and healthy diet, as they can usually match their intake requirements through regular whole foods. However, some may still choose to go for protein powders as they are convenient.

3. Individuals who have health conditions - These individuals may or may not workout, as they may have certain issues. However, they still need to meet their basic protein and nutrient requirements in one way or another, which are tailor-made to their needs by healthcare professionals, or it may lead to other health complications. For example, for individuals with malnutrition or muscle wasting (due to chronic illnesses), protein powders can boost intake when appetite is low.
4. Individuals who can't meet their daily nutritional intake - These individuals may include people with busy schedules or other challenges that make it hard to attain a proper balanced diet, or someone trying to lose weight. It is key for them to take external supplements such as protein bars and powders. However, a suitable diet is recommended.
5. Older individuals - These individuals need protein as age-related muscle loss is quite common. For them, easily digestible protein would be required which also does not require much effort to make and protein powders are the solution for them.

In terms of protein powder brands available in India, an excellent research paper that is fully transparent, and self-funded explains it all by Dr. Abby Phillips and funded by Paras Chopra.

Brands like Amway and Muscletech were good and brands to avoid would be Big Muscles. For more details, we recommend going through the article yourself. [5]

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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