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Tandle VH
Research Scholar, College of
Agribusiness Management,
SDAU, Sardarkrushinagar,
Gujarat, India

Dubey LR
Assistant Professor, College of
Agribusiness Management,
SDAU, Sardarkrushinagar,
Gujarat, India

Study of Consumer Satisfaction Towards Different Dairy Companies Products in Parbhani District of Maharashtra

Tandle VH and Dubey LR

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Abstract

The present study was undertaken to analyse consumer behaviour, attitudes, satisfaction levels and perceptions towards dairy companies' products in Parbhani district, with special reference to Hatsun, Amul, Natural and other local brands (*i.e.* Thorat milk, Godavari, Gokul, Quality Walls, Krushna dairy, *etc.*). The study focused on attributes such as taste, quality, price, availability, brand trust, and factors influencing purchase decisions. Primary data were collected from 150 consumers through personal interviews using structured questionnaires. The results revealed that consumers rated taste and quality of dairy products very positively, while moderate ratings were given for price, availability and brand trust. Among the brands, Amul and local companies were preferred by (31.33 per cent) of respondents each, followed by Hatsun (25.33 per cent) and Natural (12.00 per cent). Overall, 84.00 per cent of consumers were satisfied with the products. Satisfaction analysis indicated that "others" (local companies) recorded the highest weighted mean score (3.88), followed by Hatsun (3.71), Amul (3.57) and Natural (3.56). The factors influencing purchase differed across companies: brand trust dominated for Amul, easy availability for Hatsun and Natural, and quality for local companies. Awareness levels were highest for local companies (100.00 per cent) and Amul (72.67 per cent), while Natural had low brand awareness (48.67 per cent).

Keywords: Consumer behaviour, Attitude and satisfaction, Dairy products

Introduction

A dairy is a business enterprise established for the harvesting or processing (or both) of animal milk - mostly from cows or buffaloes, but also from goats, sheep, or camels for human consumption. The highest milk producer in the entire globe, India, boasts of that status. India is otherwise known as the 'oyster' of the global dairy industry, with opportunities for entrepreneurs globally. The National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) is an institution of national importance set up by an Act of Parliament of India. The main office is located in Anand, Gujarat, with regional offices throughout the country. Major dairy co-operatives are present in the country, which gives most of the profit >70.00 per cent to the farmers (Source: NDDB, 2023).

The first evidence of dairy consumption dates back over six thousand years, and today dairy products are enjoyed all over the world. Over the past couple of millennia, there has been an incredible amount of creativity and innovation when it comes to processing, fermenting, and consuming dairy products. In 2022, the value of the dairy market worldwide was estimated to be about 893 billion U.S. dollars, which is projected to grow to 1,243 billion dollars by 2028 (Anon., 2023).

The highest milk producer in the entire globe, India, boasts of that status. India is otherwise known as the 'oyster' of the global dairy industry, with opportunities. For the entrepreneurs globally. India's milk production in 2022 -2023 was 230.58 million tonnes, which was a (3.83 per cent) increase from the previous year. India's per capita availability of milk was 459 grams per day in 2022-2023, which is higher than the world average of 322 grams per day. 1/5th of the world's bovine population. According to the 20th livestock census, (26.50 per cent) of India's cattle population is exotic/crossbred, while the remaining (73.50 per cent) are indigenous and non-descript. The majority of the dairy industry in India is still unorganized and dominated by small and marginal dairy farmers (Source: NDDB, 2023).

Corresponding Author:
Tandle VH
Research. Scholar, College of
Agribusiness Management,
SDAU, Sardarkrushinagar,
Gujarat, India

Objective of the study

1. To study the attitude and satisfaction among the consumers for different dairy companies' products.
2. To study various factors, influence the consumers to purchase different dairy companies' products.

Material and Methods

The study analyzes attitude and satisfaction among the consumers for different dairy companies' products and various factors, influence the consumers to purchase different dairy companies' products. A multistage sampling method was adopted as an appropriate sampling procedure for the study. In the first stage, Parbhani district was selected purposively. In the Second stage, 5 talukas of Parbhani district were selected randomly. Primary data was collected from well-structured interviews. From each Taluka, 30 consumers were selected of Hatsun, Amul, Natural and Others. In this way, 150 consumers had been selected for the research study. Secondary data was collected from company reports and websites.

Percentage Method

A percentage refers to a special kind of ratio that is used in making comparisons between two or more series of data.

$$\text{Percentage} = X/Y \times 100$$

Where: -

X = Number of respondents

Y = Total number of respondents

Likert scale technique

The Likert scaling technique was used to identify the constraints and satisfaction level of consumers. The Likert scale assumes that the strength/intensity of experience/response is linear, i.e., on a continuum from 1-very unsatisfied to 5-highly satisfied and 1-very poor to 5-very good and makes the assumption that attitudes can be measured. The total value was then divided by the total weight. Statistically, the weighted mean was calculated using the formula below:

$$\text{Cumulative Score (X)} = F_1X_1 + F_2X_2 + F_3X_3 + F_4X_4 + F_5X_5$$

$$\text{Weighted Mean} = \frac{\text{Cumulative Score (X)}}{\text{Total number of responses (Xt)}}$$

F = Weight given to each response

X = Number of responses

X_t = Number of responses

Results and Discussions

The attitude among the consumer for different dairy companies summarized in table 1. The products across five attributes: taste, quality, price, availability, and brand trust. Overall, consumers showed positive perceptions of taste and quality, with most respondents rating these attributes between 3 and 5.

Table 1: Attitude among the consumers for different dairy companies' c products (n=150)

Frequency (n) and Percentage (%)					
Rate	Taste	Quality	Price	Availability	Brand trust
1	08 (05.33)	06 (04.00)	18 (12.00)	18 (12.00)	18 (12.00)
2	26 (17.33)	13 (08.67)	14 (09.33)	17 (11.33)	13 (08.67)
3	45 (30.00)	48 (32.00)	52 (34.67)	53 (35.33)	53 (35.33)
4	56 (37.34)	43 (28.67)	46 (30.67)	44 (29.33)	40 (26.67)
5	15 (10.00)	40 (26.67)	20 (13.33)	18 (26.67)	26 (17.33)
Total	150 (100.00)	150 (100.00)	150 (100.00)	150 (100.00)	150 (100.00)

[Note: 1) Rate: 1-Poor, 2- Below Average, 3- Average, 4- Good, 5- Excellent]

[2) Figure in parentheses is given in percentage]

The price received mixed feedback, as many consumers felt products were moderately priced, though some viewed them as expensive. Availability also showed moderate satisfaction, suggesting occasional inconsistency in product access. Brand trust was generally positive but not strong, with some consumers expressing doubt. Overall, the findings indicate that while consumers are largely satisfied with dairy products, improvements in pricing, distribution, and brand credibility could enhance overall satisfaction.

Table 2: Satisfaction among the consumers for different dairy companies' prod products (n =150)

Companies	Frequency (n) and Percentage (%)	
	Yes	No
Hatsun	32 (21.33)	06 (04.00)
Amul	36 (24.00)	11 (07.33)
Natural	15 (10.00)	03 (02.00)
Others	43 (28.67)	04 (02.67)
Sub total	126 (84.00)	24 (16.00)
Total	150 (100.00)	

(Note: Figure in parentheses is given in percentage)

Consumer satisfaction with dairy products varied across companies. Among the 150 respondents, the highest satisfaction was reported for other local dairy brands (28.67 per cent), followed by Amul (24.00 per cent), Hatsun (21.33 per cent), and Natural (10.00 per cent). Overall, 84 per cent of consumers were satisfied, while 16.00 per cent were not. The findings suggest that while local dairy brands and Hatsun enjoy relatively high satisfaction, Amul and Natural have room to improve in meeting consumer expectations. All companies, including the top performers, should continue adopting strategies to enhance consumer satisfaction.

Table 3: Satisfaction level among the consumers for different dairy companies' products (n=150)

Companies	HU (1)	U (2)	N (3)	S (4)	HS (5)	C.S	WM	Rank
Hatsun	1 (00)	2 (08)	3 (05)	4 (19)	5 (09)	152	03.71	II
Amul	1 (00)	2 (11)	3 (08)	4 (14)	5 (11)	157	03.57	III
Natural	1 (01)	2 (02)	3 (03)	4 (07)	5 (03)	57	03.56	IV
Others	1 (00)	2 (05)	3 (06)	4 (28)	5 (10)	190	03.88	I

(Note: 1 is HU-Highly Unsatisfied, 2 is U-unsatisfied, 3 is N-Neutral, 4 is S- Satisfied, 5 is HS- Highly Satisfied)

Table 3 presents consumer satisfaction levels for different dairy companies using a Likert scale from 1 (least satisfied) to 5 (highly satisfied). Based on the weighted mean scores, consumers of other local dairy brands (Thorat Milk, Godavari, Gokul, Quality Walls, Krushna Dairy, etc.)

reported the highest satisfaction (3.88), followed by Hatsun (3.71). Amul consumers were moderately satisfied (3.57), while Natural recorded the lowest satisfaction (3.56), indicating varying levels of consumer contentment across companies.

Table 4: Consumers' preference for purchasing different dairy companies' milk and milk products (n=150)

Companies	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Hatsun	38	25.34
Amul	47	31.33
Natural	18	12.00
Others	47	31.33
Total	150	100.00

Table 4 shows consumer preferences for purchasing milk and milk products from different dairy companies based on factors like quality, availability, brand trust, and packaging. Amul and other local dairy brands (Thorat Milk, Godavari, Gokul, Quality Walls, Krushna Dairy, etc.) received the highest preference at (31.33 per cent), followed by Hatsun at

(25.34 per cent), while Natural had the lowest preference at (12.00 per cent). Amul's strong brand reputation drives its popularity, whereas consumers choose other local brands for their quality and easy availability, with Natural being the least preferred.

Table 5: Various factors influence the consumers to purchase the different dairy companies' products (n=150)

Factors	Frequency (n)				Percentage (%)			
Companies	Hatsun	Amul	Natural	Others	Hatsun	Amul	Natural	Others
Quality	09	12	04	32	23.68	25.53	22.22	68.09
Easy availability	16	10	09	15	42.00	21.28	50.00	31.91
Brand trust	10	20	02	00	26.32	42.55	11.11	00
Packaging	03	05	03	00	07.89	10.64	16.67	00
Total	38	47	18	47	100	100	100	100

Table 5 highlights the key factors influencing consumers' purchases of dairy products. For Hatsun, easy availability was the main reason (42.00 per cent), followed by brand trust (26.32 per cent) and quality (23.68 per cent), with packaging least considered (7.89 per cent). Amul consumers prioritized brand trust (42.55 per cent), then quality (25.53 per cent) and availability (21.28 per cent), while packaging was least influential (10.64 per cent). For Natural, easy availability dominated (50.00 per cent), followed by quality (22.22 per cent), packaging (16.67 per cent), and brand trust (11.11 per cent). Consumers of other local dairy brands (Thorat Milk, Godavari, Gokul, Quality Walls, Krushna Dairy, etc.) mostly purchased for quality (68.09 per cent) and availability (31.91 per cent), with brand trust and packaging having no influence.

Table 6: Awareness of consumers regarding different dairy companies (n=150)

Companies	Frequency (n)		Percentage (%)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Hatsun	104	46	69.33	30.67
Amul	109	41	72.67	27.33
Natural	73	77	48.67	51.33
Others	150	00	100.00	00.00

Table 6 shows consumer awareness of different dairy companies among 150 respondents. Amul had the highest awareness at (72.67 per cent), followed by Hatsun at (69.33 per cent). Natural had lower recognition, with only (48.67 per cent) aware of the brand, indicating a need for improved marketing. In contrast, all respondents (100.00 per cent) were aware of other local dairy brands such as Thorat Milk, Godavari, Gokul, Quality Walls, and Krushna Dairy, reflecting strong familiarity and market presence. Overall,

while Amul and Hatsun enjoy substantial brand recognition, Natural may need to strengthen its promotional efforts.

Major Findings

Among the dairy companies, Amul and other local brands (such as Thorat Milk, Godavari, Gokul, Quality Walls, and Krushna Dairy) received the highest consumer preference, each with 31.33 per cent of respondents showing a favorable attitude, followed by Hatsun (25.33 per cent) and Natural (12.00 per cent) as the least preferred. Overall, 84.00 per cent of consumers were satisfied with dairy products, while 16.00 per cent were not. Based on weighted mean scores, consumer satisfaction was highest for other local dairies (03.88 per cent), followed by Hatsun (3.71 per cent), Amul (3.57 per cent), and Natural (03.56 per cent).

When analysing purchase factors, consumers of Hatsun prioritized easy availability (42 per cent), while Amul buyers valued brand trust (42.55 per cent). For Natural, easy availability was the key driver (50.00 per cent), and for other dairies, quality played the most important role (68.09 per cent). In terms of brand awareness, all respondents were aware of local dairy brands, followed by Amul (72.67 per cent), Hatsun (69.33 per cent) and Natural (48.67 per cent), indicating that local brands enjoy the strongest recognition and presence among consumers.

Conclusions

The study concluded that consumers generally had a positive attitude toward dairy products, with taste and quality being the most valued factors. However, aspects such as price, availability, and brand trust showed room for improvement. Overall satisfaction among consumers was high, though some expressed dissatisfaction. Different brands appealed to consumers for different reasons. Hatsun

and Natural were chosen mainly for their easy availability, Amul for its strong brand trust, and other local brands for their product quality. Amul emerged as the most recognized brand, followed by Hatsun, while Natural Dairy had the lowest brand awareness.

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