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Consumer preference and dealer perception towards Amar dairy products in Akola city of Maharashtra

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Abstract

The present study was undertaken to identify the consumer preference towards Amar Dairy products and to study the advantages of selling Amar Dairy products in Akola city of Maharashtra state. The study is based on primary data collected from 90 selected consumers and 10 Amar Dairy dealers in Akola city through a well-structured schedule using the survey method during the academic year 2025-26. Frequency and percentage analysis was used to identify consumer preference, reasons for preference and purchase frequency, while mean score and simple ranking technique was used to identify the advantages perceived by dealers while selling Amar Dairy products. The results revealed that Gold Milk was the most preferred product among consumers (17.78%), followed by Lassi (14.44%) and Buttermilk and Dahi (12.22% each). Quality emerged as the major reason for preference (28.89%), followed by price and fat content (14.44% each). Daily purchase was the most common buying pattern, reported by 33.00 percent of consumers, followed by occasional purchase (27.00%). Among the advantages of selling Amar Dairy products, better profit margin ranked first (mean score 3.6, 72%), followed by high consumer demand (mean score 3.4, 68%), good product quality (mean score 3.1, 62%), brand image (mean score 2.8, 56%) and regular supply, which ranked last (mean score 2.0, 40%). The study concludes that Amar Dairy enjoys favourable consumer acceptance, with Gold Milk and quality-driven purchase behaviour dominating consumer choice, while dealers are primarily motivated by profit margin and consumer demand rather than brand image or supply regularity. The findings suggest that Amar Dairy should strengthen product quality and pricing strategy to sustain consumer preference, and improve dealer margins and regular supply to further motivate distribution partners.

Keywords: Consumer preference, Amar dairy, advantages, dealers, Akola

Introduction

The dairy sector occupies a central place in Indian agriculture, providing nutritious food, regular income and employment to millions of rural households. India is presently the largest milk-producing country in the world, with milk production reaching 239.30 million tonnes during 2023-24 and per capita availability of about 471 grams per day, higher than the world average (Source: DAHD, Basic Animal Husbandry Statistics, 2024). Along with well-established national brands such as Amul and Mother Dairy, regional dairy brands have expanded rapidly in recent years by strengthening product quality and distribution networks in their local markets.

Amar Dairy, established in 1990 with its head office at Bodwad, Jalgaon district of Maharashtra, is one such regional brand that has built a strong market presence in Jalgaon, Akola, Khamgaon, Malkapur, Nandura, Bhusawal and nearby districts. The company procures, processes and markets a wide range of dairy products including Gold Milk, Standard Milk, Toned Milk, Cow Milk, Curd, Buttermilk, Paneer and Lassi. In a competitive dairy market where consumers can choose among several branded and unbranded alternatives, understanding what drives consumer preference and what motivates dealers to stock and promote a particular brand becomes essential for a company seeking to strengthen its market position.

Consumer preference reflects the choices consumers make on the basis of taste, quality, price, availability, packaging and other product attributes, while the willingness of dealers to sell a brand depends on the trade-related advantages they perceive, such as profit margin, consumer demand, product quality, regular supply and brand image.

Both dimensions together determine the overall market performance of a dairy brand. Against this background, the present study was undertaken with the following objectives:

1. To identify the consumer preference towards Amar Dairy products in Akola city.
2. To study the advantages of selling Amar Dairy products as perceived by the selected dealers in Akola city.

Methodology

Study Area and Sampling Design

The study was conducted in Akola city of Maharashtra, where Amar Dairy products are widely available through dealers and retail outlets. The data were collected during the academic year 2025-26. Primary data were collected directly from respondents using a well-structured schedule administered through personal interviews. Data on consumer preference were collected from 90 selected consumers, while data on advantages of selling Amar Dairy products were collected from 10 selected Amar Dairy dealers in Akola city.

Analytical Methods

1. Identification of consumer preference

The data on preferred product, reason for preference and purchase frequency were classified and analysed using frequency and percentage analysis.

Percentage = (Number of respondents/Total number of respondents) × 100

2. Advantages of selling Amar Dairy products:

Dealers were asked to rank five advantages of selling Amar Dairy products, namely high consumer demand, good product quality, better profit margin, regular supply and brand image, assigning ranks from 1 to 5, where rank 5 represented the most important advantage. The mean score for each advantage was calculated and ranks were assigned on the basis of the mean score, the highest mean score being awarded Rank I.

Mean score ($\bar{x}$) = $\Sigma x/N$

Where, Σx = total score given by all respondents for a particular advantage, and N = total number of respondents (10 dealers).

Results and Discussion

1. Preference for Amar Dairy products by selected consumers

Consumer preference is an important factor influencing the purchase of dairy products, reflecting the choices made by consumers on the basis of taste, quality, price, availability and packaging. The preference of selected consumers for different Amar Dairy products is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Preference for Amar Dairy products by selected consumers

Sr. No.	Product	No. of Consumers	Percentage
1	Gold Milk	16	17.78
2	Toned Milk	10	11.11
3	Standardized Milk	10	11.11
4	Cow Milk	9	10.00
5	Buttermilk	11	12.22
6	Dahi	11	12.22
7	Paneer	10	11.11
8	Lassi	13	14.44
Total		90	100.00

Table 1 shows that Gold Milk was the most preferred Amar Dairy product, chosen by 16 consumers (17.78%), followed by Lassi (14.44%), and Buttermilk and Dahi jointly ranked next with 12.22 percent each. Toned Milk, Standardized Milk and Paneer were each preferred by 11.11 percent of consumers, while Cow Milk was the least preferred product (10.00%). The higher preference for Gold Milk may be attributed to its taste, quality and suitability for daily household consumption, indicating that while all Amar Dairy products are accepted by consumers, the level of preference varies depending on consumer needs and buying habits.

2. Reason for preference of Amar Dairy products

Table 2: Reason for preference of products by selected consumers

Sr. No.	Reason for Preference	No. of Consumers	Percentage
1	Availability	12	13.33
2	Price	13	14.44
3	Taste	11	12.22
4	Quality	26	28.89
5	Quantity	6	6.67
6	Fat Content	13	14.44
7	Packaging	9	10.00
Total		90	100.00

Table 2 shows that quality was the most important reason for preference, selected by 26 consumers (28.89%), followed by price and fat content (14.44% each) and availability (13.33%). Taste was selected by 12.22 percent of consumers and packaging by 10.00 percent, while quantity was the least important reason (6.67%). These findings indicate that consumers give greater importance to product quality and value than to the quantity offered, suggesting that maintaining good quality at a reasonable price is central to strengthening Amar Dairy's position in the market.

3. Purchase frequency of selected consumers

Table 3: Purchase frequency of selected consumers

Sr. No.	Purchase Frequency	No. of Consumers	Percentage
1	Daily	30	33.33
2	2-3 times a week	4	4.44
3	Weekly	12	13.33
4	Fortnightly	12	13.33
5	Monthly	8	8.88
6	Occasionally	24	26.66
Total		90	100.00

Table 3 reveals that daily purchase was the most common buying pattern, reported by 30 consumers (33.33%), followed by occasional purchase (26.66%). Weekly and fortnightly purchases were each reported by 13.33 percent of consumers, monthly purchase by 8.88 percent, and only 4.44 percent of consumers purchased Amar Dairy products 2-3 times a week. The predominance of daily purchase indicates that Amar Dairy products are widely used for regular household consumption, while the presence of weekly, fortnightly and occasional buyers reflects differences in family needs and consumption habits.

4. Advantages of selling Amar Dairy products

The success of a dairy brand depends not only on consumer demand but also on the advantages experienced by dealers while selling the products. The advantages of selling Amar Dairy products, as perceived by the selected dealers, are presented in Table 4.

Sr. No.	Advantage	Mean Score	Percentage	Rank
1	Better Profit Margin	3.6	72	I
2	High Consumer Demand	3.4	68	II
3	Good Product Quality	3.1	62	III
4	Brand Image	2.8	56	IV
5	Regular Supply	2.0	40	V

Table 4 shows that better profit margin was the most important advantage of selling Amar Dairy products, with a mean score of 3.6 (72%), securing Rank I, this indicates that dealers attach the highest importance to the financial return obtained from selling the brand. High consumer demand ranked second with a mean score 3.4 (68%), followed by good product quality with a mean score 3.1 (62%) at Rank III. Brand image obtained Rank IV with a mean score 2.8 (56%), while regular supply received the lowest rank with a mean score 2.0 (40%). These results indicate that dealers give greater importance to the economic benefits and sales potential of Amar Dairy products, namely profit margin and consumer demand, than to brand image or the regularity of supply while deciding to stock and promote the brand.

Conclusion

The study revealed that Gold Milk was the most preferred Amar Dairy product among consumers in Akola city, followed by Lassi, Buttermilk and Dahi, with quality being the dominant reason for preference, followed by price and fat content. Daily purchase was the most common buying pattern, indicating that Amar Dairy products are largely used for regular household consumption. Among dealers, better profit margin was identified as the foremost advantage of selling Amar Dairy products, followed by high consumer demand and good product quality, while regular supply was perceived as the least important advantage. The findings suggest that consumer preference for Amar Dairy is primarily quality-and price-driven, while dealer participation is chiefly motivated by profit margin and demand. Amar Dairy should therefore continue to strengthen product quality and offer competitive pricing to sustain consumer preference, while improving dealer margins and ensuring more regular supply to strengthen its distribution network and overall market position in Akola city.

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