**CUSTOMER PREFERENCE TOWARDS MILK PRODUCTS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO NAMAKKAL DISTRICT**

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**ABSRTRACT**

A variety of factors influence customers' purchasing behaviour for milk products, including demography, lifestyle, and personal preferences. For example, younger consumers are more likely to prioritize convenience and quality when buying milk products, whereas elderly consumers may be more concerned with price and brand loyalty. Furthermore, customers who prioritize health and wellbeing are more likely to choose organic or low-fat milk products, whilst those who value taste and enjoyment may prefer full-fat or flavoured options. Furthermore, those with hectic schedules may be more prone to buy milk in handy formats like single-serve cartons or chilled shelf-stable items. Furthermore, social media and online reviews can have a substantial impact on consumer purchasing behaviour, as people seek tips and endorsements from influencers and peers before making a purchase. The study has been made to find the preference of milk products with the sample size of 110. The result of the study found that customer used to prefer milk products because they are good for healthy, quality and quantity wise it is good and the taste is as expected by the customers.

**Keywords:** Milk products, customer preference, customer expectations and behaviour.

**INTRODUCTION**

Milk products are a diversified and crucial component of our daily diet, providing a variety of nutritional benefits and culinary applications. Milk products, from the creamy texture of butter to the sour flavour of yoghurt, have been a mainstay in many cultures around the world for generations. Dairy products, like cheese, milk, and cream, are high in protein, calcium, and other necessary nutrients, making them an important part of a balanced diet. Milk products, whether consumed on their own or as an ingredient in cooking and baking, enhance the flavour, texture, and wetness of a variety of cuisines.

Milk products come in a wide range of varieties to suit diverse tastes, dietary requirements, and cultural preferences. Cheese, for example, comes in an incredible variety of flavours and textures, ranging from soft and creamy brie to sharp and pungent cheddar. Yoghurt is another popular milk product, because to its probiotic properties and adaptability in both sweet and savoury meals. Other milk products include butter, cream, ice cream, and milk powders, each with their own distinct features and applications. Whether you're seeking for a comfort food or a nutritious snack, milk products provide endless opportunities for culinary experimentation and delight.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

* To study the customer preference towards milks products.
* To identify the factors influencing the customer towards milk products.
* To determine the purchase behaviour of customer on milk products.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The trend is particularly evident among health-conscious millennials, who are more likely to prioritize nutrition and sustainability when making purchasing decisions. Furthermore, many customers are also seeking out specialty dairy products such as artisanal cheese and yogurt, which are perceived as higher-quality and more unique. The company is facing a challenge in adapting to these changing consumer preferences and developing products that meet the evolving needs of our target market.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**Sources of data:**

Primary data has been collected from the respondents and secondary data was collected from the research works, reports, articles and others.

**Sample size**

Sample size used in the study is 110

**Sampling technique**

In the study Simple random sampling technique has been used.

**Data Collection Instrument:**

Questionnaire has been used for collecting the data from respondents.

**Tools for Analysis:**

The research tool used in the study is simple percentage and chi-square test.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

1. **Percentage Analysis**

**TABLE 1: REGULAR CUSTOMER OF MILK PRODUCTS**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Regular Customer | | Frequency | Percent |
|  | Yes | 59 | 53.6 |
| No | 51 | 46.4 |
| Total | 110 | 100.0 |

**TABLE 2: FROM WHERE DO YOU GET MILK PRODUCTS**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| From where do you get milk products | | Frequency | Percent |
|  | Nearby shop | 21 | 19.1 |
| Milk products Booth | 45 | 40.9 |
| Departmental stores | 29 | 26.4 |
| Other stores | 15 | 13.6 |
| Total | 110 | 100.0 |

**TABLE 3: USAGE OF MILK PRODUCTS**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Usage of Milk Products | | Frequency | Percent |
|  | Daily | 16 | 14.5 |
| Weekly once | 36 | 32.7 |
| Monthly once | 25 | 22.7 |
| Monthly twice | 18 | 16.4 |
| Never | 10 | 9.1 |
| Rarely | 5 | 4.5 |
| Total | 110 | 100.0 |

**TABLE 4: MILK PRODUCTS ARE VERY HEALTHY**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Milk Products are Very Healthy | | Frequency | Percent |
|  | Strongly Agree | 29 | 26.4 |
| Agree | 26 | 23.6 |
| Neutral | 24 | 21.8 |
| Disagree | 14 | 12.7 |
| Strongly disagree | 17 | 15.5 |
| Total | 110 | 100.0 |

**TABLE 5: OPINION ABOUT MILK PRODUCTS AVALIABILITY**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Opinion about Milk Products availability | | Frequency | Percent |
|  | Highly satisfied | 42 | 38.18 |
| Satisfied | 25 | 22.73 |
| Neutral | 21 | 19.09 |
| Dissatisfied | 10 | 9.09 |
| Highly dissatisfied | 12 | 10.91 |
| Total | 110 | 100.0 |

**TABLE 6: OPINION ABOUT MILK PRODUCTS QUALITY**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Opinion about Milk Products Quality | | Frequency | Percent |
|  | Highly satisfied | 32 | 29.09 |
| Satisfied | 36 | 32.73 |
| Neutral | 16 | 14.55 |
| Dissatisfied | 14 | 12.73 |
| Highly dissatisfied | 12 | 10.19 |
| Total | 110 | 100.0 |

**TABLE 7: OPINION ABOUT MILK PRODUCTS QUANTITY**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Opinion about Milk Products Quantity | | Frequency | Percent |
|  | Highly satisfied | 30 | 27.27 |
| Satisfied | 39 | 35.45 |
| Neutral | 22 | 20.00 |
| Dissatisfied | 15 | 13.64 |
| Highly dissatisfied | 4 | 3.64 |
| Total | 110 | 100.0 |

**TABLE 7: OPINION ABOUT MILK PRODUCTS PRICE**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Opinion about Milk Products Price | | Frequency | Percent |
|  | Highly satisfied | 39 | 35.45 |
| Satisfied | 33 | 30.00 |
| Neutral | 18 | 16.36 |
| Dissatisfied | 13 | 11.82 |
| Highly dissatisfied | 7 | 6.36 |
| Total | 110 | 100.0 |

**TABLE 8: OPINION ABOUT MILK PRODUCTS PACKAGING**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Opinion about Milk Products Packaging | | Frequency | Percent |
|  | Highly satisfied | 28 | 27.72 |
| Satisfied | 30 | 29.70 |
| Neutral | 15 | 14.85 |
| Dissatisfied | 18 | 17.82 |
| Highly dissatisfied | 10 | 9.90 |
| Total | 110 | 100.0 |

**TABLE 9: OPINION ABOUT MILK PRODUCT TASTE**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Opinion about Milk Product Taste | | Frequency | Percent |
|  | Highly satisfied | 25 | 24.75 |
| Satisfied | 37 | 36.63 |
| Neutral | 22 | 21.78 |
| Dissatisfied | 11 | 10.89 |
| Highly dissatisfied | 6 | 5.94 |
| Total | 110 | 100.0 |

Inference:

From the analysis it is found that customers used to prefer milk products as they are healthy, always available in the stores, good with the quality, quantity and taste as expected by the customers. where the price and taste of the products are satisfied. This shows that the customers used to prefer milk products based in the satisfaction of their expectations.

1. **CHI-SQUARE**
   * 1. **Association between age and Preference of Milk products.**

**Table 10: Age and Preference of Milk products.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| AGE | | PREFERENCE OF MILK PRODUCTS | | Total |
| Yes | No |
|  | 10-20 | 13 | 15 | 28 |
| 20-30 | 22 | 13 | 35 |
| 30-40 | 22 | 10 | 32 |
| Above50 | 9 | 6 | 15 |
| Total | | 66 | 44 | 110 |

**Table 11: Age and Preference of Milk products.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Chi-Square Tests** | | | |
|  | Value | Df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
| Pearson Chi-Square | 98.515a | 12 | .000 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 110.739 | 12 | .000 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | 8.970 | 1 | .003 |
| N of Valid Cases | 110 |  |  |
| a. 17 cells (85.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.20. | | | |

**Inference**

Here, the null hypothesis is accepted. It is inferred that there is a significant relationship between age and Preference of Milk products.

**CONCLUSION**

The study on customer preferences for milk products found that customers have a great affection for milk and its many products, with a considerable majority preferring to buy milk from traditional sources such as dairy cooperatives and local sellers. The study's findings indicate that the quality of milk products, flavour, and packaging are the most important elements determining customer choices.

The findings show that customers are prepared to pay a premium for high-quality milk products that match their taste, nutrition, and health standards. Understanding these preferences allows dairy companies and governments to build effective strategies to encourage dairy industry growth while also meeting customers' growing wants.

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