

The Role Of Branding In Shaping Consumer Behavior: A Study Of Selected Dairy Companies In Nashik District

Prof. Sachin Patole^{1*}, Dr. Yogesh Gosavi²

^{1*}PhD Scholar, MET's, Institute of Management, Nashik affiliated to Savitribai Phule Pune, University, Pune

²PhD Guide, MET's, Institute of Management, Bhujbal Knowledge City, Nashik affiliated to Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune

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ABSTRACT

Branding has become a crucial element affecting consumer behavior, especially in the competitive dairy industry, where product differentiation may be limited. This research examines the influence of branding components—namely brand awareness, brand trust, perceived quality, and brand loyalty—on consumer purchasing decisions concerning dairy products in the Nashik region of Maharashtra, India. A structured questionnaire was administered to 180 respondents, who are regular consumers of dairy products including milk, curd, paneer, ghee, and flavored milk from brands such as Amul, Gokul, Warana, Sarda, and Mahanand.

The results indicate that robust brand recognition has a substantial effect on repeat purchases and consumer trust. Trust in brands and perceptions of quality emerged as the primary factors influencing consumer decisions. Additionally, packaging, marketing memory, and emotional affiliation with brands were recognized as additional determinants of brand choice. The study highlights the importance of consistent brand messaging and quality control in cultivating lasting consumer loyalty in the dairy sector.

Keywords: Branding, Consumer Behavior, Dairy Industry, Brand Loyalty, Brand Trust, Perceived Quality.

1. Introduction

In the current competitive market landscape, branding has transitioned from a simple name or symbol to a significant factor that shapes consumer perception and purchasing behavior. A brand signifies a dedication to quality, trust, and experience, allowing consumers to differentiate between similar products offered by different companies. Branding holds significant importance in the dairy industry because of the limited variability in taste, composition, and appearance of products. The ability of a brand to forge emotional connections with consumers, generate brand responses, and foster lasting loyalty can impact a company's market success.

Consumer behavior includes psychological, social, and emotional responses related to the acquisition and utilization of goods and services. Consumer behavior in the dairy industry is influenced by essential branding components, including brand awareness, brand trust, perceived quality, brand loyalty, and emotional engagement. Brand awareness refers to the degree to which a consumer can identify or remember a brand across various contexts. This represents the initial phase of the consumer decision-making process, particularly significant in the dairy sector, where numerous brands frequently vie for market share.

Brand trust denotes the confidence consumers possess regarding a brand's ability to deliver consistent quality and safety, which are essential elements in food products. A strong sense of trust can lead to consistent purchasing behaviors and influence recommendations made through word of mouth. This perception may not consistently correspond with actual product performance; however, it can significantly affect purchasing and repurchasing decisions. Brand loyalty refers to a consumer's tendency to repeatedly choose the same brand over time, which arises from factors such as satisfaction, trust, and perceived value. In a market characterized by high substitutability, customer loyalty offers companies a significant advantage by securing stable revenue streams despite competitors' price reductions or promotional efforts.

Packaging and brand communication, which include advertising and promotion, are critical components of branding. Packaging serves two primary functions: it protects the product and shapes initial perceptions, thus

aiding in brand recognition. Communication strategies in the contemporary digital landscape enhance brand messaging and foster consumer-brand relationships through emotional storytelling and targeted marketing.

2. Review of Literature

The concept of branding has transformed from simple visual markers to strategic tools that affect consumer behavior and decision-making processes. Branding plays a crucial role in influencing consumer decisions, especially in sectors such as dairy where product differentiation is minimal.

Trust is a fundamental element within the domain of consumer behavior influenced by branding. Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) emphasized how brand loyalty and brand trust are significantly correlated. Consumers choose brands they believe to be reliable and trustworthy, they discovered. Trust is essential in the realm of food and dairy products, given the prevailing concerns regarding health and safety. A study conducted by Delgado-Ballester et al. in 2003 demonstrated the relationship between consumer commitment and brand trust, along with the promotion of positive word-of-mouth.

The perceived quality of a brand significantly influences the value consumers assign to it. Zeithaml (1988) posits that consumers' perceptions of a brand's excellence are more influential than the brand's actual performance in assessing the perceived quality of a product or service. The quality of dairy products is influenced by several factors, including cleanliness, freshness, packaging, and storage conditions. According to Pappu et al. (2005), perceived quality positively influences brand loyalty and purchase intentions. This is particularly applicable in categories marked by consistent and recurrent consumption.

The body of research on branding has extensively examined the concept of brand loyalty. Oliver (1999) defined brand loyalty as a strong commitment to repeatedly purchase or support a preferred product in the future. Loyalty in the dairy sector is influenced by factors including consistent product availability, price stability, and emotional connection. Research conducted by Dick and Basu (1994) indicates that loyalty is influenced not only by satisfaction but also by the comparative attitude towards alternative options.

Packaging and promotional communication play a significant role in shaping consumer choices. Silayoi and Speece (2007) assert that packaging serves as a "silent salesperson" in retail settings, especially when advertising exposure is constrained. Effective packaging protects the product while reinforcing brand identification and communicating product quality. Freshness and cleanliness are important in dairy products, but the aesthetics and practicality of packaging profoundly influence consumer perception and trust in the product.

The branding of Indian dairy products has attracted attention. Palanichamy et. al. (2024) conducted a study indicating that Indian milk consumers exhibited a preference for brands that are pure and reliable. Bibve et. al. (2025) found that promotional strategies, including advertisements and discounts, significantly impacted the purchasing decisions of Indian dairy consumers.

The literature indicates a complex relationship between branding and consumer behavior. Global studies provide a theoretical framework, while Indian research emphasizes regional sensitivities and consumer expectations. A localized study, especially in semi-urban and rural regions such as Nashik, is essential to assess the impact of branding on dairy consumer behavior in India.

3. Research Objectives

The primary objectives for the paper are:

- To analyze the impact of branding elements, including brand trust, brand awareness, and perceived quality, on consumer behavior regarding dairy products.
- To assess the influence of packaging, advertising, and emotional branding on consumer brand preference and loyalty within the dairy industry.
- To examine demographic variations in consumer behavior and brand preference within the dairy sector of Nashik district.

4. Research Methodology

A quantitative, cross-sectional survey research design was utilized to examine the impact of branding on consumer behavior within the dairy industry. This approach was selected for its effectiveness in capturing consumer attitudes, preferences, and behavioral patterns at a specific moment in time. This study examined dairy product consumers, including milk, curd, paneer, ghee, and flavored milk, in the Nashik district of Maharashtra, India. A sample of 180 respondents was chosen to ensure a representative perspective across various demographic backgrounds.

A stratified random sampling technique was employed to guarantee equitable representation of respondents across essential demographic variables, including age, gender, occupation, and geographic location (urban, semi-urban, and rural). This approach was implemented to minimize sampling bias and to ensure that the results could be generalized across various population segments. Participants were randomly selected within each stratum to ensure objectivity.

The data collection included a standardized, self-administered questionnaire including 5 demographic inquiries and 24 closed-ended quantitative questions related to branding aspects and consumer behavior. The questionnaire was disseminated through both online and in-person methods to enhance outreach and inclusion, especially in rural and semi-urban regions with restricted internet access.

The survey assessed brand recognition, trustworthiness, perceived quality, customer loyalty, packaging appeal, and emotional engagement with dairy products. The use of a Likert scale and multiple-choice format facilitated statistical analysis and the identification of patterns.

The research hypotheses were formulated as follows:

Hypothesis 1:

H₀: "No significant relationship exists between brand awareness and consumer preference for dairy products."

H₁: "A substantial correlation exists between brand awareness and consumer preference for dairy products."

Hypothesis 2:

H₀: "There is no significant association between brand trust and repeat purchase behavior among dairy consumers."

H₁: "A significant association exists between brand trust and repeat purchase behavior among dairy consumers."

Hypothesis 3:

H₀: "No significant difference exists in brand loyalty among consumers when analyzed by demographic factors, including age and income."

H₁: "A significant difference exists in brand loyalty among consumers influenced by demographic factors, including age and income."

Hypothesis 4:

H₀: "Packaging and advertising have no significant impact on consumers' perception of dairy brand quality."

H₁: "Packaging and advertising have a significant impact on consumers' perceptions of the quality of dairy brands."

5. Empirical Results

Section A: Demographic Questions

Table 1: What is your gender?

Gender	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Male	98	54.44%	54.44%	54.44%
Female	81	45.00%	45.00%	99.44%
Other	1	0.56%	0.56%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	

Interpretation:

Male respondents (54.44%) slightly outnumbered females (45%), indicating a nearly balanced gender distribution. One response (0.56%) identified as other, showing inclusivity in gender response but not large enough to indicate a trend.

Table 2: What is your age group?

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Below 20 years	21	11.67%	11.67%	11.67%
21–30 years	58	32.22%	32.22%	43.89%
31–40 years	43	23.89%	23.89%	67.78%
41–50 years	36	20.00%	20.00%	87.78%
Above 50 years	22	12.22%	12.22%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	

Interpretation:

The majority of respondents (32.22%) were in the 21–30 years age group, indicating that younger adults are the dominant consumer segment for dairy brands in the Nashik district. Respondents aged 31–40 years formed the second-largest group (23.89%). Only 12.22% were above 50 years, suggesting that older consumers are less represented or perhaps less brand-influenced in their dairy choices.

Table 3: What is your occupation?

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Student	38	21.11%	21.11%	21.11%
Salaried Employee	61	33.89%	33.89%	55.00%
Business Owner	34	18.89%	18.89%	73.89%

Homemaker	29	16.11%	16.11%	90.00%
Retired	18	10.00%	10.00%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	

Interpretation:

Salaried employees (33.89%) were the most represented occupation group, indicating a strong working-class presence in dairy consumption. Students (21.11%) and business owners (18.89%) also had significant representation, suggesting that younger and economically active groups are key consumers.

Table 4: What is your monthly household income?

Monthly Income	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Below ₹20,000	27	15.00%	15.00%	15.00%
₹20,001–₹50,000	45	25.00%	25.00%	40.00%
₹50,001–₹80,000	46	25.56%	25.56%	65.56%
₹80,001–₹1,00,000	34	18.89%	18.89%	84.44%
Above ₹1,00,000	28	15.56%	15.56%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	

Interpretation:

Respondents were fairly distributed across income groups, with the highest concentration in the ₹50,001–₹80,000 bracket (25.56%). Lower-income (below ₹20,000) and higher-income (above ₹1,00,000) groups were nearly equal in representation (around 15%), showing that dairy consumption spans across economic classes.

Table 5: Which type of area do you reside in?

Residential Area	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Urban	79	43.89%	43.89%	43.89%
Semi-urban	52	28.89%	28.89%	72.78%
Rural	49	27.22%	27.22%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	

Interpretation:

Urban residents formed the largest segment (43.89%), suggesting greater exposure to branded dairy products and advertisements. Semi-urban and rural respondents accounted for 28.89% and 27.22%, respectively, indicating that dairy branding strategies must cater to diverse geographies within the Nashik district.

Section B: Quantitative Questions

Category 2: Brand Awareness

Table 6: Are you aware of dairy brands available in your region?

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Yes	173	96.11%	96.11%	96.11%
No	7	3.89%	3.89%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	

Interpretation:

The vast majority (96.11%) of respondents are aware of dairy brands in their region, indicating strong brand visibility and awareness in the Nashik district. Only 3.89% claimed unawareness, which shows the deep penetration of branding in the dairy market.

Table 7: Which of the following dairy brands have you heard of? (Multiple responses allowed)

Brand Name	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage
Amul	165	91.67%	91.67%
Gokul	142	78.89%	78.89%
Warana	109	60.56%	60.56%
Sarda	83	46.11%	46.11%
Mahanand	97	53.89%	53.89%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%

Interpretation:

Amul dominates brand recall with 91.67% awareness, reflecting its strong national presence. Gokul and Warana follow closely with 78.89% and 60.56% awareness, respectively, indicating a strong regional

presence. Sarda and Mahanand, though relatively less known, still have a notable recall rate above 45%, highlighting local familiarity.

Table 8: How did you first come to know about your preferred dairy brand?

Medium	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Television	53	29.44%	29.44%	29.44%
Social Media	28	15.56%	15.56%	45.00%
Word of Mouth	36	20.00%	20.00%	65.00%
Retailers/Shopkeepers	42	23.33%	23.33%	88.33%
Outdoor Advertisements	21	11.67%	11.67%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	

Interpretation:

Television (29.44%) and retailers (23.33%) are the leading sources of brand awareness, indicating the influence of traditional media and point-of-sale interactions. Word of mouth and social media combined influence over 35%, revealing the growing impact of interpersonal and digital communication.

Category 3: Brand Preference and Buying Behavior

Table 9: Which dairy brand do you most frequently purchase?

Brand	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Amul	68	37.78%	37.78%	37.78%
Gokul	42	23.33%	23.33%	61.11%
Warana	33	18.33%	18.33%	79.44%
Sarda	21	11.67%	11.67%	91.11%
Mahanand	16	8.89%	8.89%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	

Interpretation:

Amul is the most frequently purchased brand with 37.78%, followed by Gokul at 23.33%. Warana and Sarda have niche yet significant consumer bases, while Mahanand remains a modestly preferred choice. This indicates both brand dominance and local diversity in consumption.

Table 10: How often do you purchase dairy products?

Frequency of Purchase	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Daily	61	33.89%	33.89%	33.89%
2-3 times a week	57	31.67%	31.67%	65.56%
Once a week	38	21.11%	21.11%	86.67%
Occasionally	24	13.33%	13.33%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	

Interpretation:

Most respondents (33.89%) purchase dairy products daily, and an additional 31.67% buy them multiple times a week. This confirms dairy's role as a staple in daily nutrition. Only 13.33% purchase occasionally, suggesting low dependence or selective use.

Table 11: What product category do you purchase most often?

Product	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Milk	83	46.11%	46.11%	46.11%
Curd	39	21.67%	21.67%	67.78%
Paneer	27	15.00%	15.00%	82.78%
Ghee	18	10.00%	10.00%	92.78%
Flavored Milk	13	7.22%	7.22%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	

Interpretation:

Milk is the most frequently purchased product (46.11%), followed by curd (21.67%) and paneer (15%). The data reflects traditional household consumption patterns, where milk is essential and consumed daily, while products like flavored milk have a niche appeal.

Table 12: What influences your purchase decision the most?

Influencing Factor	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Brand Name	41	22.78%	22.78%	22.78%
Price	36	20.00%	20.00%	42.78%
Quality	65	36.11%	36.11%	78.89%
Availability	22	12.22%	12.22%	91.11%
Packaging	16	8.89%	8.89%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	

Interpretation:

Quality is the top influencing factor (36.11%), showing that consumers prioritize product integrity over other aspects. Brand name (22.78%) and price (20%) are also major considerations. Packaging, though important, influences a smaller segment (8.89%).

Category 4: Perceived Quality and Trust**Table 13: How would you rate the quality of your preferred dairy brand?**

Rating	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Excellent	58	32.22%	32.22%	32.22%
Good	67	37.22%	37.22%	69.44%
Average	42	23.33%	23.33%	92.78%
Poor	13	7.22%	7.22%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	–

Interpretation:

A majority of 67 respondents (37.22%) rated the quality as “Good”, followed by 58 respondents (32.22%) who rated it “Excellent”, indicating strong consumer satisfaction with their preferred dairy brand. Only 7.22% found the quality poor.

Table 14: Do you trust the brand for product purity and hygiene?

Trust Level	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Yes, always	66	36.67%	36.67%	36.67%
Most of the time	72	40.00%	40.00%	76.67%
Sometimes	35	19.44%	19.44%	96.11%
Never	7	3.89%	3.89%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	–

Interpretation:

Around 76.67% of the respondents expressed strong trust in their dairy brands, with only 3.89% saying they never trust them. This reinforces the perceived brand reliability regarding purity and hygiene.

Table 15: Do you believe branded dairy products are more hygienic than unbranded ones?

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Strongly Agree	60	33.33%	33.33%	33.33%
Agree	74	41.11%	41.11%	74.44%
Neutral	26	14.44%	14.44%	88.89%
Disagree	13	7.22%	7.22%	96.11%
Strongly Disagree	7	3.89%	3.89%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	–

Interpretation:

A combined 74.44% either agreed or strongly agreed that branded products are more hygienic, highlighting the role of branding in building consumer perception about cleanliness and health standards.

Category 5: Brand Loyalty**Table 16: Have you continued using the same dairy brand for more than 1 year?**

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Yes	128	71.11%	71.11%	71.11%
No	52	28.89%	28.89%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	–

Interpretation:

A significant 71.11% of consumers stayed loyal to the same brand for over a year, suggesting brand consistency and satisfaction.

Table 17: Would you switch your preferred dairy brand if another offered a lower price?

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Definitely	36	20.00%	20.00%	20.00%
Maybe	69	38.33%	38.33%	58.33%
Unlikely	51	28.33%	28.33%	86.67%
Never	24	13.33%	13.33%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	–

Interpretation:

While 58.33% showed some openness to switch for lower prices, 41.66% indicated they are unlikely or never willing to switch, emphasizing loyalty based on value beyond price.

Table 18: Would you recommend your preferred dairy brand to others?

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Yes	122	67.78%	67.78%	67.78%
No	29	16.11%	16.11%	83.89%
Not Sure	29	16.11%	16.11%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	–

Interpretation:

Two-thirds of respondents would recommend their dairy brand to others, showcasing strong brand advocacy and satisfaction among consumers.

Category 6: Packaging and Communication**Table 19: How appealing is the packaging of your preferred dairy brand?**

Packaging Appeal	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Very Appealing	51	28.33%	28.33%	28.33%
Somewhat Appealing	67	37.22%	37.22%	65.56%
Neutral	40	22.22%	22.22%	87.78%
Not Appealing	22	12.22%	12.22%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	–

Interpretation:

A majority of respondents (37.22%) considered the packaging of their preferred dairy brand to be somewhat appealing, followed by 28.33% who found it very appealing. Only 12.22% rated it as not appealing, indicating a generally positive perception of packaging aesthetics among consumers.

Table 20: How important is packaging design in your purchase decision?

Packaging Importance	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Very Important	58	32.22%	32.22%	32.22%
Important	64	35.56%	35.56%	67.78%
Neutral	38	21.11%	21.11%	88.89%
Not Important	20	11.11%	11.11%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	–

Interpretation:

Around 67.78% of respondents rated packaging as important or very important in their purchase decisions, revealing that visual design and presentation significantly influence buying behavior. A smaller segment (11.11%) considered packaging to have no impact on their decision.

Table 21: Have you seen advertisements of your preferred dairy brand in the last 3 months?

Seen Advertisement	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Yes	124	68.89%	68.89%	68.89%
No	56	31.11%	31.11%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	–

Interpretation:

A significant majority of respondents (68.89%) had seen advertisements of their preferred dairy brand in the last three months, indicating effective brand visibility through marketing efforts. Only about one-third had not been exposed to such ads recently.

Table 22: Which type of advertisement attracts you the most for dairy products?

Advertisement Type	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
TV Commercials	49	27.22%	27.22%	27.22%
Social Media Promotions	42	23.33%	23.33%	50.56%
Celebrity Endorsements	33	18.33%	18.33%	68.89%
Health-related Messages	38	21.11%	21.11%	90.00%
Children-focused Ads	18	10.00%	10.00%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	–

Interpretation:

Television commercials (27.22%) and social media promotions (23.33%) were the most attractive advertisement formats for dairy products. A significant proportion also found health-focused messaging influential (21.11%), highlighting the growing consumer concern with wellness and lifestyle. Children-focused ads attracted the least attention.

Category 7: Emotional and Value Perception

Table 23: Do you feel emotionally connected to your preferred dairy brand?

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Strongly Agree	39	21.67%	21.67%	21.67%
Agree	53	29.44%	29.44%	51.11%
Neutral	41	22.78%	22.78%	73.89%
Disagree	29	16.11%	16.11%	90.00%
Strongly Disagree	18	10.00%	10.00%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	–

Interpretation:

Majority of respondents (51.11%) either strongly agreed or agreed that they feel emotionally connected to their dairy brand, indicating that emotional branding plays a substantial role. Only 26.11% expressed disagreement or strong disagreement, suggesting a smaller segment lacks emotional engagement with the brand.

Table 24: Does branding influence your perception of product freshness?

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Strongly Agree	42	23.33%	23.33%	23.33%
Agree	58	32.22%	32.22%	55.56%
Neutral	39	21.67%	21.67%	77.22%
Disagree	26	14.44%	14.44%	91.67%
Strongly Disagree	15	8.33%	8.33%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	–

Interpretation:

A combined 55.56% agreed that branding affects how they perceive freshness, indicating a strong association between brand identity and perceived product quality. Only 22.77% disagreed or strongly disagreed, highlighting limited skepticism.

Table 25: How likely are you to try a new product from the same dairy brand?

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Very Likely	46	25.56%	25.56%	25.56%
Likely	52	28.89%	28.89%	54.44%
Neutral	38	21.11%	21.11%	75.56%
Unlikely	27	15.00%	15.00%	90.56%
Never	17	9.44%	9.44%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	–

Interpretation:

Over 54% of respondents showed a willingness to try new products from their existing dairy brand, reflecting trust and satisfaction. About 24.44% were either unlikely or completely disinterested, indicating a cautious or brand-loyal mindset.

Table 26: Do you believe branded dairy products are safer for children?

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Strongly Agree	49	27.22%	27.22%	27.22%
Agree	51	28.33%	28.33%	55.56%
Neutral	34	18.89%	18.89%	74.44%
Disagree	26	14.44%	14.44%	88.89%
Strongly Disagree	20	11.11%	11.11%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	–

Interpretation:

A majority of 55.56% believed that branded dairy products offer greater safety for children, reinforcing the impact of branding on health perceptions. Around 25.55% disagreed or strongly disagreed, indicating concerns or a lack of brand trust among some.

Table 27: Do you associate your preferred dairy brand with ethical practices?

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Yes	76	42.22%	42.22%	42.22%
No	54	30.00%	30.00%	72.22%
Not Sure	50	27.78%	27.78%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	–

Interpretation:

42.22% of respondents positively associated their preferred brand with ethical values, while 30% did not. Nearly 28% were uncertain, indicating a communication gap in brand messaging around ethical standards.

Table 28: Do promotional offers impact your brand preference?

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Yes, significantly	64	35.56%	35.56%	35.56%
To some extent	72	40.00%	40.00%	75.56%
No impact	44	24.44%	24.44%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	–

Interpretation:

A combined 75.56% acknowledged that promotional offers influence their brand preference at least to some extent, showing that price incentives remain effective. Only 24.44% were indifferent to promotions, indicating strong brand loyalty or value-based preferences.

Table 29: How would you describe your overall satisfaction with your preferred dairy brand?

Response	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Very Satisfied	48	26.67%	26.67%	26.67%
Satisfied	61	33.89%	33.89%	60.56%
Neutral	37	20.56%	20.56%	81.11%
Dissatisfied	21	11.67%	11.67%	92.78%
Very Dissatisfied	13	7.22%	7.22%	100.00%
Total	180	100.00%	100.00%	–

Interpretation:

A significant 60.56% expressed satisfaction with their preferred brand, while only 18.89% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. This indicates a largely positive consumer experience, validating strong brand positioning and product consistency.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1

Table 30: Chi-Square Test for Association Between Brand Awareness and Consumer Preference

Value	df	Asymp. Sig.
Pearson Chi-Square	21.342	4
Likelihood Ratio	22.980	4
N of Valid Cases	180	

Interpretation:

A Chi-Square Test for Independence was performed to evaluate the association between brand awareness and consumer preference for dairy products. The Pearson Chi-Square statistic was 21.342 with 4 degrees of freedom, resulting in a significance value ($p = 0.000$), which is less than the 0.05 threshold. This suggests a statistically significant correlation between brand awareness and consumer preference. Consequently, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted.

Hypothesis 2

Table 31: Chi-Square Test for Association Between Brand Trust and Repeat Purchase Behavior

Value	df	Asymp. Sig.
Pearson Chi-Square	16.578	3
Likelihood Ratio	17.214	3
N of Valid Cases	180	

Interpretation:

The Chi-Square test result reveals a Pearson Chi-Square value of 16.578 with 3 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.001. Since this p-value is less than 0.05, there is a statistically significant association between brand trust and repeat purchase behavior. Hence, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is accepted.

Hypothesis 3

Table 32: Chi-Square Test for Differences in Brand Loyalty Based on Age and Income

Value	df	Asymp. Sig.
Pearson Chi-Square	19.687	6
Likelihood Ratio	20.942	6
N of Valid Cases	180	

Interpretation:

To determine whether brand loyalty differs based on age and income, the Chi-Square Test was applied. The Pearson Chi-Square value of 19.687 with 6 degrees of freedom yielded a p-value of 0.003, indicating a statistically significant difference. This leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0), supporting the alternative hypothesis (H_1).

Hypothesis 4

Table 33: Chi-Square Test for Effect of Packaging and Advertising on Brand Quality Perception

Value	df	Asymp. Sig.
Pearson Chi-Square	23.764	4
Likelihood Ratio	24.932	4
N of Valid Cases	180	

Interpretation:

A Chi-Square Test for Independence was performed to assess whether packaging and advertising influence consumers' perception of dairy brand quality. The test produced a Pearson Chi-Square value of 23.764 with 4 degrees of freedom and a significance level of 0.000. Since this is less than 0.05, the effect is statistically significant, and the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected in favor of the alternative (H_1).

6. Conclusion

This study examined the influence of brand-related factors—namely awareness, trust, packaging, advertising, and emotional value—on consumer preferences and purchase behavior within the dairy sector. The findings indicated a substantial correlation between brand awareness and consumer preference, affirming that consumers generally choose dairy products from reputable companies. Moreover, trust in a dairy brand

surfaced as a pivotal factor in repeat purchases, underscoring the significance of brand credibility in consumer loyalty.

Demographic factors, including age and wealth, revealed notable disparities in brand loyalty trends, suggesting that tailored branding strategies might be more efficacious for certain consumer categories. Moreover, packaging and advertising were found to substantially affect consumers' perceptions of dairy product quality, emphasizing their significance in defining brand image and market positioning.

The study faced limitations due to a sample size of 180 respondents and its focus on a specific geographic or consumer sector, which may affect the generalizability of the results. Additionally, it relied on self-reported data, which could be vulnerable to response bias or social desirability effects.

Future research should expand the sample to encompass additional geographic regions and a more diverse demographic profile to enhance generalizability. Longitudinal studies can be conducted to examine the development of branding strategies over time and their enduring impact on consumer behavior in the dairy sector. Qualitative insights enhance the comprehension of consumer emotions and values associated with dairy branding.

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