

Insights Into Consumer Preferences For Aavin Milk Products In Salem District

Mrs. T. Poongodi^{1*}, Dr. A. Arumugam²

¹M.Com., M.B.A., B. ed, M. Phil. Assistant professor, Department of Commerce, Pavai Arts and Science College for Women, Rasipuram, Tamilnadu, Email: poongodi.panneerselvam@gmail.com

²Principal, Jairam Arts And Science College, Salem, Tamilnadu

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ABSTRACT

The primary objective of this study is to examine the perceptions of consumers towards Aavin Milk and Milk Products in Salem District. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative research techniques. Surveys, interviews, and observational studies are conducted to gather data directly from consumers in Salem District. The findings reveal various aspects of consumer perception towards Aavin Milk Products. The findings of this study have implications for Aavin as well as other stakeholders in the dairy industry operating in Salem District. It provides valuable insights that can inform decision-making processes for Aavin and contribute to the overall enhancement of consumer satisfaction and brand loyalty in the dairy industry within the Salem District.

1. INTRODUCTION

Marketing is a crucial functional area in business, encompassing essential live activities that drive organizational success. It involves a systematic process designed to plan, price, promote, and distribute products and services to meet the needs and desires of both current and potential consumers, whether they are industrial users or end consumers. The success of any firm largely hinges on its ability to effectively sell its goods to a broad audience.

The consumer market encompasses all the goods and services purchased within a specific period by the inhabitants of a country or a particular region to fulfill their consumption needs.

Consumer satisfaction is determined by the overall feelings or attitude a person has about a product after purchase. Consumers constantly evaluate the products they buy as they incorporate them into their daily consumption activities [2-6]. This satisfaction depends on a product's perceived performance in delivering value relative to a buyer's expectations. If a product's performance falls short of expectations, the buyer is dissatisfied. Conversely, if the performance meets or exceeds expectations, the buyer is satisfied. A satisfied customer is likely to make repeat purchases and share their positive experiences with others [7,8]. The key to achieving customer satisfaction is aligning company performance with customer expectations.

Customer satisfaction is closely linked to quality, which directly impacts product performance and, consequently, consumer satisfaction. Consumers have drastically different expectations. This response is purely psychological, as it is based on an internal feeling about the product consumed [10,11].

In Tamilnadu state, several dairy industries have been established in major cities and towns. Among those, Aavin is a well-known brand of milk and dairy products in Tamil Nadu, operated by the Tamil Nadu Cooperative Milk Producers' Federation Limited. Aavin continues to play a vital role in Tamil Nadu's dairy market, offering a wide range of products that meet the needs of various consumer segments. In this context, there is a need to study consumers' satisfaction with the milk products supplied under the brand name Aavin. Thus, to investigate this, this work has chosen the topic "Consumer preferences towards Aavin Milk Products in Salem District."

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Balamurgan and Sindhu (2017) delved into the factors shaping consumer purchasing behavior, with a particular focus on dairy products. Their study aimed to understand consumer behavior towards milk products, assess consumer satisfaction levels, and analyze the factors influencing dairy product preferences. Employing a descriptive analysis, they concluded that effective sales promotion and a deep understanding of

consumer behavior are crucial for maximizing product sales in the market. Furthermore, they highlighted the significance of considering the occurrence and choice of place for purchasing dairy products. Such insights aid companies in identifying the most suitable distribution channels for their diverse range of dairy products, thereby optimizing their market reach and sales potential.

Abinaya and Santhi (2018) explored customer preferences for dairy products in Madurai district, Tamil Nadu. Their study aimed to uncover the consumption patterns of respondents, analyze brand preferences, examine influencing factors towards dairy products, and assess respondent satisfaction levels. Both primary and secondary data were utilized, with a Non-Probability method of convenience sampling employed to select 200 sample respondents. The collected data underwent analysis using percentage analysis, rank correlation, Garrett's ranking, and chi-square tests. Their findings concluded that respondents favored Aavin milk and milk products primarily due to factors such as price, taste, flavor, availability, and the location of purchase. Conversely, Hatsun milk and milk products were preferred for their quantity and brand image. This study sheds light on the nuanced reasons behind consumer preferences in the dairy products market, providing valuable insights for stakeholders in the industry.

Ramesh and Poornima (2016) assessed the level of consumer preference for Aavin products, determining the average expenditure on milk and dairy products, and identifying the factors influencing purchase decisions in the study area. They employed Non-Probability sampling, specifically convenience sampling techniques, to gather data. Analysis was conducted using percentage analysis, chi-square tests, among others. Their findings underscore the necessity of enhancing consumer awareness about milk and milk products, regardless of consumers' educational background. They emphasized the importance of milk producers improving promotional activities to establish their brand among consumers. Effective promotion not only stimulates sales but also fosters a positive image of Aavin milk and milk products, thereby enhancing their market presence and consumer loyalty.

Vairamuthu and Gokula Krishnan (2017) delved into brand positioning within the dairy product landscape in Villupuram, Tamil Nadu. Their primary focus was on understanding consumer involvement in brand positioning across various dairy product categories. Their study aimed to identify consumer expectations and perceptions regarding dairy brands, discern factors influencing consumer decisions in product selection, and uncover reasons for customer preference towards alternative milk brands. Both primary and secondary data sources were utilized in the study, and data analysis involved the use of statistical tools such as charts, graphs, and the F-test to validate the objectives. Their observations revealed that Aavin emerged in the market as a competitor targeting a diverse customer base. They highlighted that the extensive range of Aavin products meets international quality standards and is developed based on Indian consumer experiences. This study sheds light on the strategic positioning of Aavin within the dairy product market, offering valuable insights into consumer preferences and market dynamics in Villupuram and beyond.

Most studies in the dairy industry have primarily focused on procurement, logistics, and pricing issues. However, only a few have examined consumer perception of Aavin milk and milk products. Similarly, while much research has been conducted on product attributes and benefits, few studies address consumer perception in the formulation of marketing mix strategies. To address this research gap, the researcher has undertaken a study titled "Consumer Perception towards Aavin Milk and Milk Products in Salem District."

2.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the research problems, the following research questions are proposed to study consumer perception:

- Why do individuals prefer Aavin products?
- Where and how do they obtain information to make their purchase decisions?
- What are their consumption patterns?
- What types of behavior do individuals exhibit when making purchases?

2.2 Objectives of The Study

- To assess the level of awareness about Aavin milk and milk products in the study area.
- To determine consumer brand loyalty towards Aavin milk and milk products.
- To analyze the satisfaction levels of consumers regarding Aavin milk and milk products.

2.3 Scope of The Study

The aim of this study is to investigate the impact of socioeconomic characteristics on consumers, assess satisfaction levels regarding cooperative milk, and identify the challenges faced by consumers regarding Aavin products.

- This research holds significant value for milk product companies. It offers an opportunity to gauge consumer satisfaction in untapped areas, potentially leading to new market segmentation strategies in the marketing domain.
- The findings of this study can inform decision-makers, economists, academics, and social activists in fostering healthier communities. It opens avenues for producers and marketers of packaged milk to fulfill their corporate social responsibility towards the state government, society, and consumers.

- Additionally, this study may provide valuable insights to health departments and nutritionists, contributing to the enhancement of public health and nutritional awareness.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study focuses on understanding Consumer Perception towards Aavin Milk Products in Salem District. Samples were selected from consumers of Aavin products in Salem District. This research is exploratory in nature, hence the survey method was chosen for data collection.

3.1 Selection of Sample Units

In the final stage, 50 consumers were selected from four taluk of Salem district, totaling 150 consumers. Following data collection using questionnaires, each questionnaire was meticulously reviewed to ensure all necessary information was provided. Upon examination, it was discovered that 17 questionnaires lacked sufficient information. Thus, the final sample size was determined to be 133 consumers.

3.2 Tools for Data Collection

Both primary and secondary sources were used.

3.3 Tools for analysis of data

The various statistical tools like Mean, Friedman ANOVA with Kendall's Coefficient of Concordance, Chi-square test were used.

3.4. Socio Economic Profile and Consumer Perception

The Socio Economic Profile are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Demography Details

Democratic Features	No	%
Age		
<30	34	25.6
30 – 40	56	42.1
>40	43	32.3
Gender		
Male	63	47.4
Female	70	52.6
Marital status		
Married	76	57.1
Unmarried	57	42.9

The table indicates that among the 133 respondents, 52.6 % are female and 47.4 are male. Similarly, 42.1% belongs to age group of 30-40.

3.5 Factor preferences of the respondents

Various factor preferences among the sample respondents were identified by analyzing their opinions using statistical models, namely Friedman ANOVA and Kendall Coefficient of Concordance. These tests are employed to rank data and determine similarities in ranking among respondents regarding different items. Achieving conclusive results about the preferred item(s) among a group of related items is crucial, and this is evaluated by assessing the degree of similarity in ranking these items.

Kendall's coefficient of concordance, denoted as Kendall's W, ranges from 0.0 to 1.0, with 1.0 indicating perfect similarity and 0.0 indicating perfect dissimilarity among rankings. The statistical significance of Kendall's W is determined using Friedman ANOVA chi-square value. Table 2 presents the results of Friedman ANOVA and Kendall Coefficient of Concordance, highlighting the factor preferences for Aavin milk products.

Table 2: Friedman ANOVA and Kendall Coefficient Analysis

Factor	Average Rank	Sum of Ranks	Rank
Quality	1.43	552	1
Price	3.51	1350	2
Quantity	4.49	1731	5
Brand Image	3.82	1469	3
Content(Fat)	4.75	1831	6
Availability	4.24	1634	4
Seller	5.74	2220	7
Kendall Coefficient of Concordance	0.3756		

'W'	
Friedman ANOVA Chi-Square	1213.42***

***Significant at 1% level.

Source: Primary Data

3.6 Perception about quality of Aavin milk products

The study unveils the respondents' perception regarding the quality of Aavin milk products across five quality-related variables.

Table 3: Opinion about quality of product

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Mean Rank
Aavin upholds higher quality standards in its products compared to its competitors.	16 (12.03)	12 (9.02)	12 (9.02)	44 (33.08)	49 (36.84)	3.59	1 st
The product consistently maintains high quality.	12 (9.02)	14 (10.53)	12 (9.02)	42 (31.58)	53 (39.85)	3.56	2 nd
Aavin offers a diverse range of products, each known for its unique and high quality.	12 (9.02)	13 (9.77)	10 (7.52)	55 (41.35)	43 (32.33)	3.35	3 rd
The product has a distinctive taste compared to other products.	10 (7.52)	11 (8.27)	13 (9.77)	45 (33.83)	54 (40.60)	3.14	4 th
Aavin milk and milk products boast an ideal consistency.	10 (7.52)	12 (9.02)	14 (10.53)	51 (38.35)	46 (34.59)	2.98	5 th

The initial statement in Table 3 indicates the customer perception regarding the quality of Aavin milk products. Specifically, 36.84 % respondents strongly agreed that Aavin maintains product quality compared to its competitors, 33.08% agreed, 9.02% were neutral, 9.02% disagreed and the remaining 12.03% strongly disagreed.

The second statement in the table indicates that 9.02% expressed neutrality regarding the consistency of the product, feeling it remains the same at all times. Additionally, 39.85% strongly agreed, 31.58% agreed, 10.35% disagreed, and the remaining 9.02% strongly disagreed.

The third statement reveals that over 32.33% respondents strongly agreed that all kinds of Aavin products possess unique and high quality. Furthermore, 7.52% were neutral, 41.35% agreed, 9.77% disagreed and the remaining 9.02% strongly disagreed.

In the fourth statement, 40.60% respondents strongly agreed that the product offers a unique taste compared to others. Additionally, 9.77% were neutral, 7.52% strongly disagreed, 33.83% agreed, and the remaining 8.27% disagreed.

Lastly, the fifth statement illustrates that 21.9 percent of respondents felt neutral about the perfect consistency of Aavin milk and milk products. Moreover, 20.1 percent strongly disagreed, 19.8 percent agreed, 19.3 percent disagreed, and the remaining 19 percent strongly agreed.

Table 4: Opinion about availability of Aavin products

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Mean Rank
Products are readily available near my place of residence.	11 (8.27)	10 (7.52)	13 (9.77)	45 (33.83)	54 (40.60)	3.28	5 th
The required quantities of the products are available.	12 (9.02)	9 (6.77)	14 (10.53)	45 (33.83)	53 (39.85)	3.55	1 st
The products are always available.	9 (6.77)	9 (6.77)	14 (10.53)	48 (36.09)	53 (39.85)	3.53	2 nd
The products are available in all kinds of stores.	8 (6.02)	9 (6.77)	15 (11.28)	46 (34.59)	55 (41.35)	3.46	3 rd
Availability of extra quantities on special days/occasions	20 (15.04)	12 (9.02)	9 (6.77)	41 (30.83)	51 (38.35)	3.42	4 th

Source: Computed data, Figures in parentheses are percentage

Table 4 illustrates customer perception regarding the availability of Aavin milk and milk products.

The first statement indicates that 25 percent of respondents strongly agreed that the products are easily accessible in their nearby residential area. Additionally, 23.7 percent felt neutral, 22.7 percent agreed, 16.4 percent strongly disagreed, and the remaining 12.2 percent disagreed.

The second statement reveals that 32.8 percent of respondents strongly agreed that the products are available in the required quantities. Meanwhile, 25.8 percent felt neutral, 22.4 percent agreed, 13.8 percent strongly disagreed, and the remaining 5.2 percent disagreed.

In the third statement, 32 percent of respondents strongly agreed that the products are available at all times. Furthermore, 24 percent felt neutral, 22.9 percent agreed, 13.3 percent strongly disagreed, and the remaining 7.8 percent disagreed.

The fourth statement illustrates that 34.1 percent of respondents strongly agreed that the products are available in all types of stores. Additionally, 20.6 percent agreed, 19.5 percent felt neutral, 17.4 percent strongly disagreed, and the remaining 8.3 percent disagreed.

Lastly, the fifth statement indicates that 27.9 percent of respondents strongly agreed about the availability of additional quantity on special days or occasions. Furthermore, 26.8 percent were neutral, 23.2 percent agreed, 14.3 percent strongly disagreed, and the remaining 7.8 percent disagreed.

Table 5: Opinion about package

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Mean Rank
All Aavin products boast impeccable packaging, serving as an emblem of superior quality.	12 (9.02)	13 (9.77)	14 (10.53)	45 (33.83)	49 (36.84)	3.50	2 nd
All Aavin products prioritize durability and safety.	10 (7.52)	9 (6.77)	9 (6.77)	43 (32.33)	62 (46.62)	3.39	5 th
Aavin offers a vibrant array of products presented in diverse and eye-catching packaging.	13 (9.77)	10 (7.52)	16 (12.03)	45 (33.83)	51 (38.35)	3.61	1 st
Aavin ensures that all its products are conveniently accessible, simple to store, and easy to discard.	10 (7.52)	10 (7.52)	12 (9.02)	41 (30.83)	60 (45.11)	3.46	3 rd
All Aavin products come in packets that retain resale value even after use.	15 (11.28)	20 (15.04)	14 (10.53)	36 (27.07)	48 (36.09)	3.41	4 th

Source: Computed data, Figures in parentheses are percentage

Table 5 outlines respondents' opinions regarding the packaging of Aavin milk and milk products, reflecting customer perceptions. In the first statement, over 29.2% of respondents strongly agreed that all Aavin products are well-packaged and symbolize quality. 26.8% expressed neutrality towards the packaging, while 24.5% agreed, 13.3% strongly disagreed, and the remaining 6.3% disagreed.

The second statement indicates that 26.3% of respondents were neutral, and an equal proportion strongly agreed that Aavin products are well-packaged and symbolize quality. Additionally, 20.8% agreed, 18.8% disagreed, and 7.8% strongly disagreed.

In the third statement, 31% of respondents strongly agreed that Aavin products are colorful and come in a variety of packaging. 26% felt neutral, 24.7% agreed, 10.7% disagreed, and 7.6% strongly disagreed.

The fourth statement reveals that 33.9% of respondents strongly agreed that Aavin products are easy to open, store, and dispose of. 21.6% were neutral, 18.5% agreed, 13.8% strongly disagreed, and 12.2% disagreed.

Lastly, the fifth statement shows that 31% of respondents strongly agreed that Aavin product packets have resale value after use. 24.7% were neutral, 18.8% agreed, 13.8% strongly disagreed, and 11.7% disagreed.

Table 6: Distribution of the respondents and their opinion about price

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Mean Rank
Aavin offers competitive prices that are reasonable.	12 (9.02)	10 (7.52)	14 (10.53)	47 (35.34)	50 (37.59)	2.86	4 th

Aavin all products are reasonable price range	10 (7.52)	10 (7.52)	13 (9.77)	49 (36.84)	49 (36.84)	2.76	5 th
The prices of Aavin products vary across different regions.	10 (7.52)	12 (9.02)	15 (11.28)	41 (30.83)	55 (41.35)	3.49	1 st
Reduced prices or discounts can motivate me to make a purchase.	12 (9.02)	10 (7.52)	14 (10.53)	50 (37.59)	47 (35.34)	3.35	3 rd
I of ten find myself purchasing items from the Aavin range.	13 (9.77)	15 (11.28)	19 (14.29)	35 (26.32)	51 (38.35)	3.48	2 nd

Source: Computed data, Figures in parentheses are percentage

Table 6 illustrates customer perceptions regarding the pricing of Aavin milk and milk products. In the first statement, 24% of respondents strongly disagreed that Aavin provides products at reasonable competitive prices. 21.4% were neutral, while 18.8% each disagreed and agreed, and the remaining 17.2% strongly agreed. The second statement indicates that 31% of respondents disagreed regarding Aavin's provision of reasonable prices compared to competitors. 20.1% agreed, 19.3% strongly disagreed, 17.2% were neutral, and 12.5% strongly agreed.

The third statement shows that 30.5% of respondents strongly agreed that Aavin products' prices vary across different regions. 26.3% were neutral, 22.7% agreed, 14.1% strongly disagreed, and 6.5% disagreed.

In the fourth statement, 27.9% of respondents strongly agreed that price reductions or discounts can stimulate their purchases. 22.9% agreed, 22.1% were neutral, 16.7% strongly disagreed, and 6.8% disagreed.

Lastly, the fifth statement reveals that 32% of respondents strongly agreed about frequently purchasing Aavin products. 22.9% were neutral, 22.4% agreed, 15.9% strongly disagreed, and 6.8% disagreed.

Table 7: Distribution of the respondents and their opinion about brand image

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Mean Rank
Aavin offers competitive prices that are reasonable.	12 (9.02)	10 (7.52)	14 (10.53)	47 (35.34)	50 (37.59)	2.86	4 th
Aavin all products are reasonable price range	10 (7.52)	10 (7.52)	13 (9.77)	49 (36.84)	49 (36.84)	2.76	5 th
The prices of Aavin products vary across different regions.	10 (7.52)	12 (9.02)	15 (11.28)	41 (30.83)	55 (41.35)	3.49	1 st
Reduced prices or discounts can motivate me to make a purchase.	12 (9.02)	10 (7.52)	14 (10.53)	50 (37.59)	47 (35.34)	3.35	3 rd
I of ten find myself purchasing items from the Aavin range.	13 (9.77)	15 (11.28)	19 (14.29)	35 (26.32)	51 (38.35)	3.48	2 nd

Source: Primary data, Figures in parentheses are percentage

Table 7 depicts customer perceptions regarding the brand image of Aavin milk and milk products.

In the first statement, 31% of respondents strongly disagreed that they like the Aavin brand more than any other brand. 24.5% agreed, 24% were neutral, 15.9% strongly disagreed, and the remaining 4.7% disagreed.

The second statement reveals that 30.7% of respondents strongly disagreed that the Aavin brand is their preferred choice over any other brand. 26.3% were neutral, 25.8% agreed, 12.5% strongly disagreed, and 4.7% disagreed.

In the third statement, 29.7% of respondents strongly agreed that they are interested in trying other milk products. 22.4% agreed, 19.8% were neutral, 16.7% strongly disagreed, and 11.5% disagreed.

The fourth statement shows that over 28.9% of respondents strongly agreed that making a purchase of the Aavin brand is their first preference. 28.6% were neutral, 24.7% agreed, 9.4% disagreed, and 8.3% strongly disagreed.

Lastly, the fifth statement indicates that over 27.3% of respondents strongly agreed that they will probably buy the same brand again. 26.8% were neutral, 26.3% agreed, 10.4% disagreed, and 9.1% strongly disagreed.

Table 8: Distribution of the respondents and their opinion about various dimensions of consumer perception

Various dimensions of consumer perception	Low	High	Min.	Max.	Median	S.D	Mean	Mean Rank
Quality	47.0	53.0	6	25	16.51	3.051	16.61	4
Availability	49.2	50.8	6	23	18.01	3.094	17.24	3
Package	48.7	51.3	7	24	18.02	2.997	17.39	2
Price	46.0	54.0	11	25	15.51	3.142	15.93	5
Brand image	46.6	53.4	8	23	18.04	2.981	17.54	1
Overall	46.3	53.6	58	101	85.04	7.834	84.70	-

Source: Computed Data

Table 8 presents various dimensions of consumer perception towards Aavin milk and milk products. Regarding Quality, 47% of respondents held a low-level opinion, while the other 53% had a high-level opinion about quality. The mean and standard deviation (S.D.) value is 16.61 ± 3.051 .

Concerning availability, illustrates that 50.8% of respondents had a high opinion, while 49.2% had a low opinion. The mean and S.D. value is 17.24 ± 3.094 .

Regarding the package dimension, 51.3% of respondents held a high-level opinion, while 48.7% had a low opinion. The mean and S.D. value is 17.39 ± 2.997 .

In the dimension concerning price, 46% of respondents had a low opinion, and the remaining 54% had a high-level opinion. The mean and S.D. value is 15.93 ± 3.142 .

4. DISCUSSION

An endeavor has been made to evaluate the level of awareness, analyze consumption patterns, identify factors influencing brand preference, consumer brand loyalty, and satisfaction levels among consumers of Aavin milk products in Salem District. To achieve this, primary data were collected from 133 respondents in Salem District and organized in tabular format. Percentage analysis, mean, standard deviation and ANOVA were employed as statistical tools for analysis.

The competitiveness of Aavin milk products, offered at competitive prices through effective market segmentation, plays a crucial role in retaining brand-loyal consumers. To enhance consumer retention, several suggestions are proposed for Aavin brand suppliers and the government. The government can enhance its advertising policies to boost sales. Continuous monitoring of taste and milk quality should be ensured at regular intervals. Additionally, there is a pressing need for significant investment in milk production, technical equipment, chilling and refrigeration facilities, and training for personnel to meet international standards.

5. CONCLUSION

The study underscores the significance of comprehending consumer behavior, particularly within the dairy industry in Salem District. This research aimed to pinpoint the factors influencing the exclusive purchase of Aavin milk products. It suggests that dairies should scrutinize their marketing mix elements and enhance marketing efforts to nurture a loyal customer base and achieve their objectives.

The findings revealed a preference among respondents of Aavin milk products. It is imperative for Aavin brand sellers to maintain a consistent stock of goods to cater to consumer convenience. Moreover, regular advertisement campaigns highlighting new product ranges and market expansions are expected from brand sellers.

Additionally, there is an expectation for the government to adopt more liberal policies towards cattle breeders to bolster milk production. This supportive regulatory environment could significantly contribute to meeting consumer demand and ensuring a steady supply of Aavin milk products.

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