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Consumer perception and satisfaction towards packed milk in Coimbatore: An exploratory study

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Abstract
India's prepared dairy section is developing due to the expanded request for bundled liquid Milk and expanded dairy items. This study is mainly conducted to evaluate consumer's perception, and various factors influencing brand loyalty of consumers towards branded packed milk. Coimbatore was one among the top district having high level of milk procurement and selling district in Tamil Nadu. The major factor influencing the brand loyalty of the packed milk was taste. Price of the branded packed milk is the most important expectation among the sample respondents towards branded packed milk. There is no significant difference between the consumer expectation and perception in the packed milk brands, it showed that the perception is more than expectation, consumers is satisfied on preferred packed milk brands and variables with P-value less than 0.05 were only two variables such as Price and Variety. There is no significant relationship between demographic variables (age, income, gender) and price. There is no significant relationship between demographic variables (age, income, gender) and preferred size. The packed milk brands should adopt new and effective measures in door delivery services to distribute their brands to every area of the city. Evolving quality standards and measures for the packed milk would help to go in a long way to promote and attract the customers. Such efforts will help for value creation in terms of branding, quality certification which will ultimately result in better competitiveness.

Keywords: Consumer perception, satisfaction, packed milk, consumer expectations

Introduction
India's prepared dairy section is developing due to the expanded request for bundled liquid Milk and expanded dairy items. Agreeing to NDDB, the entire introduced handling capacity of the dairy agreeable division is approximately 43 million liters per day whereas the whole enrolled handling capacity of the private dairy division is 73 million liters per day. Agreeing to industry gauges around 70 percent of the handled Milk is sold as a liquid Milk with the remaining utilized by the value-added items. The bundled Milk in India is, for the most part, promoted as the pasteurized Milk in different variations depending on the fat substance. Accessible variations within the advertise incorporate: full cream Milk (6 percent fat and 9.0 percent strong not fat (SNF)), standardized Milk (4.5 percent fat and 8.5 percent SNF), conditioned Milk (3. percent fat and 8.5 percent SNF), twofold conditioned Milk (1.5 percent fat and 9 percent SNF) and skim Milk (not more than 0.5 percent fat and 8.7 percent SNF). It can be bought at any time from a basic need shop additionally great from wellbeing point of seeing because it is decontaminated and the cholesterol substance is evacuated from it. Nowadays, several brands are accessible in Indian market within the frame of bundle Milk.

Allport (1952) argued that although perception involved coming to a degree of understanding and awareness of objects, it was the way of things look or the way of they sound, feel. Taste or smell. Loudon and Della Bitta (1988) [16] said that the customer's expectations are the interpretations that the customer derives from their previous experiences of a store. Rao Akshay and Monroe (1989) [20] defined perception is the intellectual process by which a person acquires the information from the environment, organize it and obtain the meaning from it. Singh and Prabhakar (1989) [25] explained perception as the process by which an individual select, organize and interpret stimuli into a meaningful and coherent picture of the world. Schiffman and Kanuk (1992) [23] stated that consumer expectation was usually based on familiarity, previous experience or pre conditioned "set". Boon and Lin (1997) [7] in their study on Competition among the "Big Six" department stores in Singapore concluded that customer's perception was directly related to the store attributes i.e. high level of store attributes increased the ability to attract customers. Kotler (2000) [14] opined that customers' expectation were usually experience, word of mouth and advertising.

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Erdem *et al.* (2004) [9] found a solid proof for buyer learning around quality; buyer quality desires, seen chance, and shopper inclination for cost, quality, and chance to clarify shopper brand choice. Gomez *et al.* (2004) [10] in their think about found that are three primary forerunners to client fulfillment in nourishment retailing i.e. client benefit, quality of distinctive items and esteem for cash. Aswathappa (2004) [5] defined perception as a process by which individuals organized and interpret their sensory impressions in order to give meaning to their environment. Kotler (2005) [13] defined discernment as the method by which a person chooses organizes and interprets data inputs to form a significant picture of the world. Recognition depends not as it were on the physical jolts but moreover on the stimuli's response to the encompassing field and on conditions inside the person. The key point is that discernment can shift broadly among people uncovered to the same reality.

Revealed that the way deals workforce treated clients might impact the customers' fulfillment of retail store shopping encounters. Homburg *et al.* (2005) [11] in their study revealed that there is an existence of a strong positive impact of customer satisfaction on the willingness to pay. Murugananthi (2005) [18] stated that quality, taste, and price were the factors considered important for preferring a particular brand of masala products. Smith *et al.* (2006) [26] in the think about found that client fulfillment or disappointment does not work within the decision-making prepare. In fact, the more the client is fulfilled with the item, the more prominent the desire raised when it is acquired once more Disappointment to meet the desire can result in at slightest mellow disappointment. Abdeldayem and Khanfar (2007) [1] in their study on 'Consumer Expectation and Consumer Satisfaction Measurements: A case Study from India' found that impact of expectation is very high on satisfaction. Ashokan and Hariharan (2008) [4] in theirs ponder conducted totally different retail outlets in Palakkad locale found out that the client was fulfilled with the stock they bought and anticipate the stores to progress the client benefit additionally to design the planogram in such a way that the items might be found effectively. Defined expectations were the requirements of the consumers to be met by the companies with respect to

particular products or attributes. Ravi (2008) [21] defined perception as the felt experience about various attributes of products or services by the customer from the point of view of experiences, requirements and convenience.

The essential objective of this consideration is to get it the shopper discernment and fulfillment in considering the mindfulness of the items inside the buyers and the number of customers who customers the Homegrown Beauty care products. The article endeavors to look at the customer state of mind and inclination for Natural Nourishments Items, which makes a difference to get it the consumer's recognition towards the natural nourishment within the Coimbatore City. Natural nourishment insurgency and natural advancement subsequently offer assistance in ensuring the personal wellbeing and the environment as well. Barad and Mehta (2017) [6] studied the consumer preference towards packed and unpacked milk in veravel city and concluded that quality, freshness and price were the factors influencing the purchase decision of packed and unpacked milk in veravel city. Roy and Malhotra (2018) [22] studied the urban brand awareness of milk products in Kolkata. Jabeen *et al.*, (2022) [12] analyzed the socio economic determinants of packed milk in Faisalabad. Studied the marketing mix antecedents of milk powder. Chukwu *et al.*, (2023) [8] studied the packaging attributes of packed milk and suggested that packaging is the foremost one in determining the consumer purchase decision.

Materials and Methods

Coimbatore was one among the top district having high level of milk procurement and selling district in Tamil Nadu. This study is mainly conducted to evaluate consumer's perception, and various factors influencing brand loyalty of consumers towards branded packed milk. Sample is selected based on convenience sampling. Coimbatore Municipal Corporation has 100 wards. In the first stage, from these 100 wards, 10 wards were selected at randomly. Totally 120 consumers who consumed packed milk were selected based on the convenience of researcher in selected wards, each wards 12 packed milk consumers were selected and is represented in the Table 1.

Table 1: Selected wards and distribution of sample households

S. No	Ward No.	Name of the ward	Total households	Total no of Respondents
1.	4	Singanallur	25497	12
2.	10	Peelamedu	20916	12
3.	13	Uppilipalayam	23107	12
4.	25	Race course	4781	12
5.	31	Gandhipuram	10667	12
6.	54	Saibaba colony	17637	12
7.	56	Perur	9127	12
8.	59	Vadavalli	8208	12
9.	66	Thudiyalur	15927	12
10.	72	Ganapathy	24811	12
		Total	160678	120

Source: www.coimbatore.nic.in

For the purpose of research, the required primary data will be collected by personal interview method with the help of well-defined questionnaire. The sample respondents will be selected based on who buys the packed milk in the retail shops, milk booths and it depends upon convenience of the researcher for the data collection. All the aspects will be explained to them before going for the questionnaire. The

respondents were contacted individually and a single customer was interviewed at a time. Most of the information was collected by recall by the consumers; hence careful attention was taken while preparing the interview schedule, by including appropriate terminologies and also expressing the words during interview the bias. Information were collected under two sub-headings; Consumer profile, and

brand preference. Consumer profile covered general particulars like age, educational qualification, marital status, occupation, monthly income, and family size. The brand preference covered specific particulars like awareness about different packed milk brands, factor influences, frequency of purchase, satisfaction level.

Tools for analysis
Percentage analysis
Percentage analysis will be used to make the comparison of different groups to analyses the demographic variables such as gender, age, level of education, marital status, family size, occupation, family income, and family type.

Chi - Square Test
"Chi-square test is applied to test the goodness of fit, to verify the distribution of observed data with assumed theoretical distribution. Therefore it is a measure to study the divergence of actual and expected frequencies; Karl Pearson's has developed a method to test the difference between the theoretical (hypothesis) and the observed value.

Chi – square test $(X^2) = (O – E)^2 / E$
Degrees Of Freedom $= V = (R – 1) (C -1)$

Where,
O' = Observed Frequency
E' = Expected Frequency
R' = Number of Rows
C' = Number of Columns
For all the chi-square test the table value has taken @ 5% level of significance".

Garrett's ranking technique
In the context of Garrett's ranking, the sample respondents will be asked to rank each factor and those ranks would be converted into present position by using the formula. (Garret and Woods worth, 1996). "Garrett's ranking technique was used to rank the preference indicated by the respondents on different factors. As per this method, respondents have been asked to assign the rank for all factors and the outcomes of such ranking have been converted into score value with the help of following formula.

Percent position $= \dfrac{100 \times (R_{ij} – 0.5)}{N_j}$

Where,
R_{ij} = Ranking given for the i th variable by the j th respondents
N_j = Number of variable ranked by j th respondents.

With the help of Garrett's table, the percent position estimated is converted into scores. Then for the each factor, the scores of each individual are added and then total value of scores and mean values of score is calculated. The factors having highest mean value is considered to be the most important factor".

Gap analysis - Wilcoxon signed-rank test
The Wilcoxon test is the nonparametric equivalent to the paired or dependent sample t-test and the appropriate analysis to compare differences derived from the same population when the dependent variable is ordinal or continuous. The Wilcoxon Signed Rank test compares the number of times a score from one sample is ranked higher than a score from another sample.

In particular, we assume n=120 subjects from a given population with two observations x_i – perception and y_i – expectation for each subject i. This results in two paired samples

(x1,…,x10) and (y1,…,y10) as described in Paired Sample t Test. The requirements for the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Tests for Paired Samples where $z_i = y_i – x_i$ for all i = 1, …, n, are as follows.
1. z_i are independent variables (customer satisfaction)
2. x_i and y_i are interval data (and so a ranking can be applied and differences can be taken)
3. The distribution of the z_i is symmetric.

Results and Discussion
Factors influencing the Brand loyalty of packed milk
The major factor influencing the brand loyalty of the packed milk was taste with mean score 80.03 by the sample respondents. The factors such as quality, price, availability, friends and relatives, advertisement, fat control and freshness had a Garrett score of 76.80, 66.38, 66.20, 64.09, 63.78, 62.15 and 56.12 respectively were other major factors influencing the brand loyalty of packed milk. Health condition, packaging and doctors had a Garrett score of 55.09, 41.33 and 31.33 respectively were the least factors influencing the brand loyalty of packed milk among the sample respondents

Table 2: Factors influencing the Brand loyalty of sample respondents

S. No.	Factors	Mean Score	Rank
1.	Taste	80.03	I
2.	Quality	76.80	II
3.	Price	66.38	III
4.	Availability	66.20	IV
5.	Friends and Relatives	64.09	V
6.	Advertisement	63.78	VI
7.	Fat control	62.15	VII
8.	Freshness	56.12	VIII
9.	Health condition	55.09	IX
10.	Packaging	41.33	X
11.	Doctors	31.33	XI

Consumers Expectation and Perception towards preferred packed milk brand
In this section discuss about the consumers expectation and perception towards the branded packed milk in selected area, in this study, consumers were asked to rank the 12 factors according to the both expectation and perception about the branded packed milk using the multidimensional scaling technique.

Consumers Expectation towards preferred packed milk brand: It is a most important to study the expectation of the consumers in order to meet their requirements of what consumer really express in the branded packed milk and there services. Consumer expectation about branded packed milk were measured and their expectation rating was discussed in this section. In this study, consumers were asked to rank 12 factors according to their expectation on branded packed milk using multidimensional scaling technique.

Table 3: Consumers expectation towards preferred packed milk brand

S. No.	Characteristics	Branded packed milk buyers (n=120)	
		Mean score	Rank
1.	Price	4.30	I
2.	Variety	3.97	II
3.	Taste	3.95	III
4.	Advertisement	3.81	IV
5.	Packaging	3.78	V
6.	Availability	3.73	VI
7.	Quality	3.67	VII
8.	Preferred pack size	3.65	VIII
9.	Freshness	3.61	IX
10.	Accessibility	3.58	X
11.	Health condition	3.51	XI
12.	Door delivery	3.42	XII

Price of the packed milk was ranked 1st with a mean score of 4.30 followed by variety of packed milk and taste of the packed milk holds the 2nd and 3rd rank, respectively. Followed by the advertisement, packaging, availability, quality, Preferred pack size and freshness has been holds the 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th ranks with the mean score of 3.81, 3.78, 3.73, 3.67, 3.65, and 3.61 respectively. The least mean score in Accessibility (3.58), health condition (3.51) and door delivery (3.42) was comes in to ranked 10th, 11th and 12th respectively. Hence, it is concluded that Price of the branded packed milk is the most important expectation among the sample respondents towards branded packed milk. Because Indian consumers are always price sensitive in at the time of purchasing. So the packed milk brands should concentrate on introduction of new varieties and price fixation to maintain the sales as well as attracting the new consumers.

Consumers Perception towards preferred packed milk brand

Consumer's perception is another most important factor for analyzing the consumers satisfaction level, depends upon the result the consumers satisfaction level has been measured. Consumer's perception about purchase of branded packed milk were measured and their perception rating was discussed in this section. In this study, consumers were asked to rank 12 factors according to their perception on branded packed milk

using multidimensional scaling technique.

Table 4: Consumers Perception towards preferred packed milk brand

S. No.	Characteristics	Branded packed milk buyers (n=120)	
		Mean score	Rank
1.	Taste	4.04	I
2.	Quality	3.97	II
3.	Advertisement	3.93	III
4.	Preferred pack size	3.83	IV
5.	Packaging	3.81	V
6.	Freshness	3.73	VI
7.	Availability	3.71	VII
8.	Health condition	3.67	VIII
9.	Price	3.67	IX
10.	Accessibility	3.59	X
11.	Door delivery	3.55	XI
12.	Variety	3.09	XII

Taste of the branded packed milk had the highest mean score (4.04), followed by quality (3.97), advertisement (3.93), preferred pack size (3.83), packaging (3.81), freshness (3.73), availability (3.71), health condition and price both had the mean score (3.67). The three least mean score in branded packed milk has comes to accessibility (3.59), door delivery (3.55) and variety (3.09). Hence it was concluded that Taste of the branded packed milk is the most important factor of consumer perceived about the packed milk brand. So, the packed milk brands has to improve the taste of packed milk and to develop the quality of the packed milk.

Gap analysis

The gap analysis was carried out between the expected level and derived level of satisfaction on various aspects of the packed milk buyers. The table provides means difference between expected level and perception level on consumers brand preferences in packed milk brands, its Z-value and P-value on various aspects such as price, quality, taste, packaging, advertisement, availability, freshness, preferred pack size, health condition, accessibility, variety, and door delivery. This analysis was carried out using the P-value based on the average score of the values obtained for each factor.

Table 5: Gap analysis on expected and derived level of consumer's brand preference in Brand packed milk

S. No.	Characteristics	Mean score		Gap value	Z value	P value	S/NS
		Expectation (E)	Perception (P)	(E-P)			
1.	Price	4.3	3.67	0.62	-5.448	0.000	*
2.	Quality	3.67	3.97	-0.3	-0.176	0.860	NS
3.	Taste	3.95	4.04	-0.08	-0.79	0.428	NS
4.	Packaging	3.78	3.81	-0.03	-0.431	0.666	NS
5.	Advertisement	3.81	3.93	-0.11	-1.147	0.251	NS
6.	Availability	3.73	3.71	0.01	-0.038	0.969	NS
7.	Freshness	3.61	3.73	-0.11	-1.388	0.165	NS
8.	Preferred pack size	3.65	3.83	-0.18	-1.704	0.088	NS
9.	Health condition	3.51	3.67	-0.15	-1.602	0.109	NS
10.	Accessibility	3.58	3.59	-0.008	-0.216	0.828	NS
11.	Variety	3.97	3.09	0.88	-6.284	0.000	*
12.	Door delivery	3.42	3.55	-0.13	-1.384	0.166	NS

P value <0.05 = Significant and>0.005 = Non Significant "* "- 5% level of significance, NS – Non Significance.

It could be inferred that, P-value is more than 0.05 for variables such as quality, taste, packaging, advertisement, availability, freshness, preferred pack size, health condition,

accessibility, and door delivery. This results indicates that there is no significant difference between the consumer expectation and perception in the packed milk brands, it

showed that the perception is more than expectation, consumers is satisfied on preferred packed milk brands and variables with P-value less than 0.05 were only two variables such as Price and Variety. This indicates that for these variables there is significant difference between the consumer expectation and perception in the preferred packed milk brands, it showed that there expectation is more than perception, consumers are not satisfied in preferred packed milk brand on that factors. So, the packed milk brands should concentrate on reasonable price fixation, more variety of packed milk, availability in all local shops and develop market promotion activities to improve the consumers'

satisfaction level.

Chi-square test

H_0: There is a significant relationship between demographic variables and price.

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between Age and Price

H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between Income and Price

H_{03}: There is no significant relationship between Gender and Price.

Table 6: Chi-square test between demographic variables and price

S. No.	Chi-Square- Comparison between demographic variables and Price	Chi – Square Value	Degree of Freedom	Sig.
1.	Age and Price	10.800	12	0.546
2.	Income and Price	16.934	15	0.323
3.	Gender and Price	0.799	3	0.850

P value is greater than 0.05 for Age (0.546), Income (0.323) and Gender (0.850). The Null Hypothesis (H_0) is rejected hence there is a significant relationship between demographic variables (Age, Gender and Income) and price. From the table, P value is greater than 0.05 for Age (0.546), Income

(0.323) and Gender (0.850). Null Hypotheses (H_{01}, H_{02} and H_{03}) accepted hence there is no significant relationship between demographic variables (age, income, gender) and price.

Table 7: Chi-Square Test between Demographic variables and preferred size

S. No.	Chi-Square- Comparison between demographic variables and Price	Chi – Square Value	Degree of Freedom	Sig.
1.	Age and Size	6.706	8	0.569
2.	Income and Size	15.232	10	0.124
3.	Gender and Size	0.153	2	0.926

H_0: There is a significant relationship between demographic variables and preferred size.

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between Age and preferred size.

H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between Income and preferred size.

H_{03}: There is no significant relationship between Gender and preferred size.

P value is greater than 0.05 for Age (0.569), Income (0.124) and Gender (0.926). The Null Hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, hence there is a significant relationship between demographic variables (Age, Gender and Income) and size. From the table, P value is greater than 0.05 for Age (0.569), Income (0.124) and Gender (0.926). Null Hypotheses (H_{01}, H_{02} and H_{03}) accepted hence there is no significant relationship between demographic variables (age, income, gender) and preferred size.

Conclusion and Policy suggestions

The major factor influencing the brand loyalty of the packed milk was taste with mean score 80.03 by the sample respondents. Health condition, packaging and doctors had a Garrett score of 55.09, 41.33 and 31.33 respectively were the least factors influencing the brand loyalty of packed milk among the sample respondents. Price of the packed milk was ranked 1st with a mean score of 4.30 followed by variety of packed milk and taste of the packed milk holds the 2nd and 3rd rank, respectively. The least mean score in Accessibility (3.58), health condition (3.51) and door delivery (3.42) was comes in to ranked 10th, 11th and 12th respectively

Price of the branded packed milk is the most important

expectation among the sample respondents towards branded packed milk. Taste of the branded packed milk had the highest mean score (4.04), followed by quality (3.97), advertisement (3.93), preferred pack size (3.83), packaging (3.81), freshness (3.73), availability (3.71), health condition and price both had the mean score (3.67). There is no significant difference between the consumer expectation and perception in the packed milk brands, it showed that the perception is more than expectation, consumers is satisfied on preferred packed milk brands and variables with P-value less than 0.05 were only two variables such as Price and Variety. There is no significant relationship between demographic variables (age, income, gender) and price. There is no significant relationship between demographic variables (age, income, gender) and preferred size.

Increasing the number of varieties in packed milk helps in better market for the packed milk. Making sure the availability of the packed milk in all shops. Availability in different size of packets, it will helps to attract various types of consumers. Developing competitive promotional measures in market to create awareness about the packed milk brands. Introduction of new designs in packaging is helps to attracting the all the type of consumers. Proper labelling and date of expiry should be mentioned on the packed milk packets. Providing discounts and offers with related products. Example one liter packed milk with free of 50 gram coffee powder. Advertisement through social media, leaflets, and awareness programme in public places to creating curiosity about packed milk brands and new offers. The packed milk brands should adopt new and effective measures in door delivery services to distribute their brands to every area of the city. Evolving quality standards and measures for the packed milk would

help to go in a long way to promote and attract the customers. Such efforts will help for value creation in terms of branding, quality certification which will ultimately result in better competitiveness.

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