



## AN EMPIRICAL DETERMINATION OF TARGET CONSUMER PROFILE FOR DAIRY PRODUCTS



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### ABSTRACT

India is the largest producer and consumer of milk and milk products in the world. With rapid economic growth, the demand for milk is expected to increase at a faster pace than supply and the resulting supply-demand gap. This creates competition to the existing dairy firms in a big way in the coming future. Unless, the dairy firms are competitive enough, it cannot sustain in the market for the long time. For this reason, the present study aimed to know the target group of dairy products which is an essential element in designing various marketing strategies for dairy firms. A questionnaire survey on a convenience sample of 600 respondents was conducted by selecting three major towns and six mandals (Villages) of Chittoor district, Andhra Pradesh. The questionnaire consists of consumer demographics, motivational factors in buying dairy products and consumer buying preferences. The present study selected two dairy products: milk and ghee, which are regularly purchased by most of the consumers in Chittoor district. The findings of the present study explore various factors that help the dairy firms to improve the consumption level of dairy products and to develop brand image in the dairy market.

**KEYWORDS:** Milk Products, Dairy Firms, Butter Milk, Milk Powders, Doodhpeda

### 1.INTRODUCTION

Milk production began approximately 6000 years ago and has been an integral part of the human diet ever since (Natalie, 1999). Milk products are the best source of energy to human being and especially for kids, and pregnant ladies. Milk products make people free from calcium deficiencies, dental plague, cancers etc.

Today, the milk is not just a product. It has taken shape of butter milk, curd and ghee. Further, the dairy industry has introduced other milk products such as ice

cream, yoghurt, milk powders, doodhpeda and flavored milk etc. Consumers while purchasing these dairy products look for freshness, quality, taste and texture, variety and convenience. "How to make the dairy products affordable for the large majority with limited purchasing power?" is the essence of the challenge in the present scenario.

In contrast, with a constant increase in disposable incomes among the strong middle income class also, the scope of marketing of dairy products has widened. Since the consumers are not homogeneous, the consumption



pattern of dairy products like quantum of purchase, mode of purchase, source of purchase, brand preference etc., is continually varying.

The dairy industry in India is not only providing employment opportunities to rural population, but also providing additional income to farmers, housewives and others. The agriculture, being only seasonal, the dairy industry provides off-season work, steady income and keeps the rural population employed throughout the year.

Though dairy industry is having important role in the national economic development and having good market share to capture, marketing was not given significant importance. Professionalism was absent in the marketing of dairy products. There is a need to examine the consumer behaviour towards dairy products to build effective marketing strategies to meet the future potential growth of this industry.

## **2.REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

There are plenty of research studies on characteristics of milk producers, cost and productivity in the milk production, milk procurement, cooperative societies and distribution of milk, constraints in milk production and marketing. There is a dearth of research studies in the area of consumer behaviour with reference to dairy products especially focusing on multiple dairy products in India. Some of the important studies were cited here:

**Raju (1996)** studied the consumer behaviour with reference to dairy products in India. Data was collected by using a questionnaire survey on 500 respondents from Madras City (Chennai). Respondents were classified into two kinds of segments such as income and age for the purpose of the study. The study investigated on the consumer motivation, purchasing preferences and peer influence in purchasing dairy product. Results found significant relationship between age and purchasing behaviour whereas mixed result with the income variable. **Fuller et al. (2007)** analysed demographics, cultural factors, and purchasing behaviors that influence the consumption of fresh milk, yogurt, ice cream, and powdered milk in Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou, China. A random sample of 314 households was selected covering all the selected cities for a questionnaire survey. Results showed that income and marketing channels are the key determinants of milk consumption levels; however, education, advertising, and convenience played a more important role in consumption of other dairy products. They argued that greater availability and improved quality of domestic dairy products may have a greater impact on the frequency and quantity of purchases. They opined

that milk powder, as a consumer good, may become an inferior product in urban China. Finally, the survey data suggested that the growing sophistication of China's retail sector is influencing consumption of dairy products.

**Sandeep et al. (2007)** argued that consumers are not homogeneous; the consumption pattern of milk like quantum of purchase, mode of purchase, source of purchase, and brand preference etc. is continually varying. They suggested to dairy companies to spend lot of effort on advertising and other promotional activities. Further suggested to strengthen their supply chain and other logistics and use intermediaries to promote and make their products available to the end consumer. They found freshness, quality, taste, variety and convenience as strong factors that consumers are looking for while purchasing dairy products. They found socio-economic profile of the consumers such as income status, occupational position, educational level, age and region as major determinants of the consumption patterns of milk.

**BabolianHendijani and AbKarim (2010)** studied the relationships between personal and environmental factors and beverage consumption preferences of primary school children in Malaysia. Consumption of milk relative to other beverages such as mineral water, Milo and fruit juice among children was relatively low; children preferred flavoured milk to plain milk. Individual positive attitudes about the sensory aspects of milk, social acceptability (e.g. having family and friends who regularly consumed milk), availability of milk at home and packaging were more likely to positively influence milk consumption among children than exposure to advertising or awareness of the health benefits. The study suggest that the most efficient way to increase milk intake of children is to focus on increasing the social acceptability of milk through marketing campaigns to increase consumers perceptions of the sensory aspects of milk.

**Hacer and Melike (2010)** examined the effect of socio-economic differences of rural and urban consumers on the consumption of milk, yoghurt, and cheese. Face-to-face interviews are conducted with 191 households in the city of Van (Eastern Turkey). Results of the evaluations show that there are socio-economical differences between urban and rural populations in terms of age, education, occupation, and income, which affect their consumption behaviour. The rural consumers generally have low income and literacy consumes raw (unpasteurized, unpackage) milk. The urban consumers, on the other hand, consume pasteurized milk and have higher incomes compared with the rural consumers and have a mid-level to university education. In the rural areas, consumers usually make

their own yoghurt but those who purchase their yoghurt pay attention to its packaging the most. In the rural areas, consumers who make their own cheese have mid-level income and primary school education.

**Boniface and Wendy (2012)** endeavours to investigate the drivers of increasing demand by examining the factors influencing Malaysian consumers' consumption and perceptions of various types of dairy products such as fluid milk, powdered milk, ice cream, butter, cheese and yogurt. The study considered four dimensions in perceptions about dairy products such as hedonic (sensory attributes such as taste or smell), health-related, convenience-related, and process-related. A survey of 435 respondents was conducted and the data were analysed using structured questionnaire. The results indicated that demographic variables such as age and ethnicity as well as other attitudinal variables significantly influence consumers' increasing consumption of dairy products. Further found retail stores were the main destination to buy dairy products which were influenced by cleanliness, convenient location and availability of higher quality products.

**Yayar (2012)** investigated on packed and unpacked fluid milk consumption and preferences among Turkish households using the data from a consumer survey and based on socio economical demographic characteristics of consumers that determine households' fluid milk consumption choices among packed, unpacked and both packed-unpacked milk consumption choices. A Stratified random sample of 347 households was surveyed using face to face questionnaire that consist of questions related to the choice of purchasing fluid milk alternatives and the socioeconomic information. Empirical results indicate that better educated household heads, higher income and larger households, and households with children under seven years of age consumed more packed milk than others. A similar result was found for unpacked milk consumption, except for a negative effect of education, working wife and income.

### 3.OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on understanding consumer of dairy products, which is important for dairy firms and government in the present Indian scenario to design effective marketing practices. With the background discussed and review of literature, the present has framed the following objectives:

1. To find out the target customer profile for marketing dairy products.
2. To study the purpose or need that motivates the consumer to buy dairy products.

### 4.RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study focuses on understanding consumer of dairy products, which is important for dairy firms and government in the present Indian scenario to design effective marketing practices. Further, the present study also considered consumer motivation or purpose and consumer food habits for better understand of consumer behaviour in dairy market.

#### Data Sources:-

Data sources of any scientific research include both primary and secondary. To collect secondary data, at first, the researchers reviewed articles related to research objectives that appeared in the scholarly literature. Published journals and proceedings of national and international conferences were systematically scanned for articles or studies related to the present topic of study and collected for review.

#### Questionnaire:-

For developing the data collection instrument, an extensive review of articles was carried out. Furthermore, interviews were conducted with twelve retailers and three experienced managers from Heritage, Dodla and Mother dairy were consulted to identify various factors that should be incorporated in the questionnaire to make the study more productive.

The initial format of the questionnaire prepared was pretested in the pilot study on 25 household consumers at Madanapalli (Chittoor District, Andhra Pradesh) in the first stage. Modifications were made based on the subjects' feedback to improve the clarity and presentation of questionnaire items. Further, questionnaire was also designed in regional language (Telugu) to ensure proper response from the respondents.

The questionnaire was distributed by personal contact method, where Telugu translation was given wherever the respondent felt ambiguous. A Telugu version of the questionnaire was also created for the respondents who have less educational qualification (below S.S.C). The questionnaires were distributed at the milk sales point's i.e. super markets, provision shops, and convenience stores etc. Majority of the respondents showed reluctance in filling the questionnaires. Some respondents have taken questionnaires to their homes and given to retailers later. At some areas, a free 500 ml milk packet was also offered to customers to motivate them filling questionnaire.

#### Sampling:-

The present study is confined to a sampling frame of consumers in Chittoor district. A convenience sample of 600 consumers were used in the present study, because it

is the best sampling method while dealing with large sample sizes and infinite population. To get a representative sample and better results, the sample of 600 consumers were divided into two groups, 300 from urban area and 300 from semi-urban areas. Based on the Census data, the high density populated three urban areas and six semi urban areas in Chittoor district were identified for conducting questionnaire survey.

A sample size of 664 was arrived by fitting the population in sample size calculator at 99% confidence level and 0.05% error (Rao's Sample Size Calculator - www.raosoft.com). The researchers have adjusted the sample size to 600 so as to get response from urban and semi urban areas equally and conveniently. Thus, the sampling method adapted is both convenience and quota sampling.

## 5. ANALYSIS

Earlier research studies represented that demographic factors of consumers have significant influence on the purchasing behaviour in dairy market. The questionnaire was designed to collect relevant demographic data of consumers such as gender, age, educational qualifications, location and area, monthly income, and family size. Further, the food habit (vegetarian / non-vegetarian) was also included in the questionnaire.

The present study has collected responses from 600 household consumers across various areas in Chittoor district. The respondents were selected from urban areas as well as from semi-urban areas and the number of responses drawn from these areas are shown in table 1.

**Table 1: Geographical Location-wise Distribution of Sample Respondents (N=600)**

Urban Area	Sample	Semi-Urban Area	Sample
Tirupati	100	Piler	50
		Srikalahasti	50
Madanapalli	100	Satyavedu	50
		Puttur	50
Chittoor	100	Kuppam	50
		Palamaner	50
<b>Urban</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>Semi-Urban</b>	<b>300</b>

The demographic characteristics of the respondents that are considered in the present study are gender, age, and educational qualifications. Distribution

of respondents based on their demographic characteristics, is shown in the table 2. Analytical aspects of these characteristics are worth noting.

**Table 2: Demographic Profile of the Respondents (N=600)**

Demographic Characteristics	Groups	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	377	62.8
	Female	223	37.2
	Total	600	100
Age of the Respondents	Less than 25	187	31.2
	25 - 40	213	35.5
	More than 40	200	33.3
	Total	600	100
Educational Qualifications	Under Graduate	74	12.3
	Graduation	153	25.5
	Post-Graduation	373	62.2
	Total	600	100

As dairy products mainly meant for families, it is important to gather the household characteristics of the respondents which give a greater understanding on their consumption patterns, motivations, perceptions and preferences in purchasing dairy products. Table 3 shows

the frequency details of household characteristics of the respondents such as family's monthly income, adult members in the family, children in the family, age of the family head and food habits.

**Table 3: Family Characteristics of the Respondents(N=600)**

Family Characteristics	Groups	Frequency	Percent
Family's Monthly Income (in rupees)	Less than Rs. 10,000	161	26.8
	Rs. 10,001 - 20,000	162	27.0
	Above Rs. 20,000	277	46.2
	Total	600	100
Age of the Family Head (in years)	Less than 30	27	4.5
	31 - 40	96	16.0
	41 - 50	264	44.0
	Above 51	213	35.5
	Total	600	100
Adult members in the Family (above 12 years of age)	Less than 3	153	25.5
	3 - 5	251	41.8
	More than 5	196	32.7
	Total	600	100
Children in the Family (less than 12 years)	No Children	359	59.8
	one child	130	21.7
	two or three children	111	18.5
	Total	600	100
Food Habits	Vegetarian	98	16.3
	Non-Vegetarian	502	83.7
	Total	600	100

The consumer motivations are caused by many complex factors: emotional, social, biological and physical. The consumer motivation can be measured by three different techniques: in-depth interviews, group discussions and questionnaire survey. On the other side, a consumer may not purchase certain products due to various reasons (de-motivators).

The present study has developed eight statements to measure consumer motivation in purchasing milk and ghee. Similarly, five statements to examine consumer demotivation.

The food habits were categorized as vegetarian and non-vegetarian. To test the relationship between food habits and purpose of buying dairy products, the independent sample 't' test was used. Table 4 shows the 't' test results with their corresponding means and standard deviations. From the table it can be noted that milk is a part of regular diet for vegetarians (mean=4.46) and ghee is a must dairy product for festivals and religious ceremonies for both vegetarians (mean=4.35) and non-vegetarians (mean=4.40).

**Table 4: t test results on consumer motivation factors in buying Milk between vegetarians and non-vegetarians**

MILK	Veg (n=98)		Non - Veg (n=502)		t - test results	
	M	S.D.	M	S.D.	t Value	Sig.
Purpose Statements						
Part of Regular Diet	4.46	0.943	3.96	1.382	<b>4.396</b>	<b>0.000</b>
Festivals and Religious Ceremonies	4.35	0.539	4.40	1.038	-0.720	0.472
Parties and Functions	4.21	0.736	4.11	1.180	1.128	0.261
Preparation of Sweets etc.	3.55	0.910	3.83	1.407	<b>-2.549</b>	<b>0.012</b>
Medical Advise	4.00	1.218	3.99	1.349	0.081	0.935
Casually	3.22	1.351	3.49	1.188	-1.814	0.072
As a matter of prestige	2.18	1.204	3.18	1.479	<b>-7.164</b>	<b>0.000</b>
Influence of others	2.13	1.081	2.83	1.331	<b>-5.632</b>	<b>0.000</b>

From the table 4, it is noted that there is no statistical significant differences found between vegetarians and non-vegetarians with respect to four purposes such as festivals and religious ceremonies, parties and functions, medical advice and casually. The test showed statistical significant relationship between food habits and four other purposes such as part of regular diet, preparation of sweets, as a matter of prestige and influence of others.

Table 5 shows the t test results between purpose of purchasing Ghee and food habits. It is noted that vegetarians prefer ghee in preparation of sweets (mean=4.38). For both vegetarians (mean=3.88) and non-vegetarians (mean=3.97) ghee is a must for festivals and religious ceremonies. Ghee is not a part of regular diet for non-vegetarians (mean=3.08) whereas it is a part of regular diet for vegetarians (mean=3.89). The influence of others is low in vegetarians than in non-vegetarians.

**Table 5: t test results on consumer motivation factors in buying Milk between vegetarians and non-vegetarians**

GHEE	Veg (n=98)		Non - Veg (n=502)		t - test results	
	M	S.D.	M	S.D.	t Value	Sig.
Purpose Statements						
Part of Regular Diet	3.89	1.014	3.08	1.216	<b>6.201</b>	<b>0.000</b>
Festivals and Religious Ceremonies	3.88	1.077	3.97	1.029	-0.808	0.419
Parties and Functions	3.97	0.879	3.82	1.235	1.423	0.156
Preparation of Sweets etc.	4.38	0.831	3.78	1.504	<b>5.587</b>	<b>0.000</b>
Medical Advise	2.76	1.046	2.88	1.235	-0.911	0.363
Casually	2.44	1.167	2.62	1.129	-1.426	0.154
As a matter of prestige	2.14	1.210	2.76	1.254	<b>-4.490</b>	<b>0.000</b>
Influence of others	1.87	1.190	2.46	1.286	<b>-4.481</b>	<b>0.000</b>

From the table, there is no statistical significant differences found between vegetarians and non-vegetarians with respect to four purposes such as festivals and religious ceremonies, parties and functions, medical advice and casually. The test showed statistical significant relationship between food habits and four other purposes such as part of regular diet, preparation of sweets, as a matter of prestige and influence of others.

Paired sample 't' test was employed in two different pair sets such as consumer motivation, consumer demotivation of milk and ghee was employed to note the statistical significance with respect to the type of dairy product. For each time the test employed, a correlation test was also included and listed in the same tables.

**Table 6: Paired 't' test results on consumer motivation of milk and ghee**

Pairs	Consumer Motive (Milk - Ghee)	Mean Diff.	t	Sig.	Corr.	Sig.
1	Part of Regular Diet	.833	12.911	<b>.000*</b>	.237	<b>.000*</b>
2	Festivals and Religious Ceremonies	.435	9.044	<b>.000*</b>	.315	<b>.000*</b>
3	Parties and Functions	.283	5.940	<b>.000*</b>	.487	<b>.000*</b>
4	Preparation of Sweets etc.	-.087	-1.645	.100	.569	<b>.000*</b>
5	Medical Advise	1.133	17.582	<b>.000*</b>	.226	<b>.000*</b>
6	Casually	.858	14.377	<b>.000*</b>	.231	<b>.000*</b>
7	As a matter of prestige	.353	5.716	<b>.000*</b>	.402	<b>.000*</b>
8	Influence of others	.352	6.925	<b>.000*</b>	.545	<b>.000*</b>

Note: \* Significant at 0.05 level

Table 6 displays the test results on consumer motivation sets. A total of 7 paired statements were considered and calculated the t value and correlation coefficient with its significance. From the table 6, it can be inferred that consumer motive or purpose of buying milk and ghee differs as significance values are all equal to 0.000. 'Preparation of sweets' was found to be insignificant in t test, but found as significant in correlation coefficient.

Table 7 exhibits the paired sample 't' test results employed on consumer demotivation factors. From the table, it can be inferred that consumer demotivation is also different with respect to the dairy product. A few factors such as 'no liking / taste', 'feel it costly' and 'on the advice of others' were found insignificant in one test, but found significant in another test. Hence, these insignificances can be ignored.

**Table 7: Paired 't' test results on consumer demotivation of milk and ghee**

Pairs	Consumer De-motive (Milk - Ghee)	Mean Difference	t	Sig.	Corr.	Sig.
1	Medical Advice (Health Grounds)	-.137	-4.678	.000*	-.167	.000*
2	No liking / taste	.020	1.266	.206	.256	.000*
3	Not known about the product	-.115	-8.681	.000*	.278	.000*
4	Feel it Costly	-.143	-6.207	.000*	-.040	.331
5	Not felt any need	-.047	-2.734	.006*	.118	.004*
6	On the advice of others	.080	4.891	.000*	.054	.183

Note: \* Significant at 0.05 level

## 6.FINDINGS

In a sample of 600 household respondents from Chittoor district, 62.8% are male and 31.2 % are females. The age of the respondents are evenly distributed into three groups: less than 25, 25 to 40 and above 40 by using quartile technique. Majority of the respondents are post graduates and graduates. The sample of respondents was drawn from major urban areas and semi-urban areas based on the density of population according to the census'2011.

It was found from the survey that majority of the family heads are above 40 years with family's monthly income above Rs. 20,000/-. The average family size found to be four with grown up children. Majority of the respondents are Non-vegetarians.

The major purpose of buying milk and ghee was revealed as 'festivals and religious ceremonies', 'parties and function' and 'part of regular diet'. 'Medical advice' is the major demotivating factor for milk consumption and 'feeling costly' or 'not feeling any need' are the major demotivating factors for ghee consumption.

The consumers in Chittoor district are spending around Rs. 1000/- for milk and Rs. 1000/- for ghee every month. They usually purchase the dairy products from the convenience stores and prefer to have door delivery especially for milk. The purchase quantity the consumers require is on an average of 1 litre per day for milk and 500 gms for ghee.

Ghee is purchased on monthly basis and milk is purchased on daily basis. Women (either wife or mother) are dominant in purchasing decisions with respect to dairy products. Women is acting as both initiator and decision makers for the products. Males (either husband or father) are active as shoppers. The age group of the decision makers in Chittoor district for dairy products is 40 - 50 years and the education is below graduation. Women are deciding on the quantity, brand and frequency of the purchase.

In Chittoor district, both milk and ghee are having a vital role in the household usage and are a part of regular diet for the consumers. The usage of milk and ghee is

more on festivals, religious ceremonies, parties and functions. These dairy products are must for preparing sweets. Though milk has many advantages and ghee adds taste to the food, consumers are more conscious on the cholesterol levels (fat contents). Marginal consumers also have no liking towards these products because of its smell or cost. Finally, food habits (vegetarian or non-vegetarian) have significant influence on the consumption of dairy products.

## 7.LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Any study based on the consumer survey through a predesigned questionnaire suffers from the basic limitation of the possibility of difference between what is recorded and what is truth, no matter how carefully the questionnaire has been designed and field study has been conducted. The other limitations of the present study are discussed as follows:

- ☞ Non-availability of secondary data regarding the marketing practices followed by various dairy firms in Chittoor district such as Heritage, Dodla, Balaji, and Tirumala
- ☞ Non-Probabilistic Sample used in conducting the survey covering various prominent places in Chittoor district. Relatedly, Quota sampling (with some stratification) was used while actual respondents were not randomly selected from the population
- ☞ Availability / Non availability of different brands in selected places during the survey.
- ☞ Lack of cooperation and willingness of some consumers completing the questionnaires

## 8.CONCLUSION

Factors affecting milk consumption came into the limelight of the scientific researches in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Marketing is too important in the life of the milk product that puts forward a proposal for the improvement of the products' characteristics and the turnover or sales of the product. The experiences of the developed countries made it clear that it is necessary to evaluate the consumers and marketing mix elements according to the product, so as to strategize suitable

marketing practices according to the changing consumer behaviour to tap, retain and to survive in the market.

The findings of the present study could provide some important information to its producers, retailers and marketers of dairy products, and this suggestions made could be used to develop the deterministic marketing tactics and strategies, and to design milk products based on the marketing mix for the target consumer segments.

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