



A STUDY ON CONSUMER PERCEPTION ON PREFERRED BRAND OF PROCESSED CHEESE

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KeyWords

Brand, Consumer Perception, Durability, Processed Cheese, Quality, Shape, Taste.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to determine the consumer perception on preferred brand of processed cheese. Specifically, to investigate the perception towards the attractiveness, quality, taste, durability on preferred brand of processed cheese. Components like brand, shape, packaging material, weight, shop where consumers purchase processed cheese were also considered for finding the opinion differences among the consumers. Data were collected through questionnaire from 400 individuals. The study found a significant difference in consumers opinion on quality, taste of processed cheese among age category, income level, shape of cheese, packaging material, weight of cheese and shop where consumers purchased. It is observed that, there was a strong positive relationship between quality and taste of processed cheese for both male and female.

Introduction

Cheese is a dairy product derived from milk and mostly made from Cow's milk. It comprises mostly milk fat and protein. The milk is coagulated by use of the enzyme rennet and the solids are separated and pressed in the final form. Cheese is valued for its portability. The word cheese comes from the Latin word *caseus* from which the modern word casein is derived. Many types of cheeses are produced in different countries all over the world.

Processed cheese is made with the ingredients of Cheese, emulsifiers, saturated vegetable oils, salt, food colourings, whey or sugar. The use of emulsifiers in processed cheese results in a product that melts without separating when cooked. Processed cheese is often sold in blocks, cubes, slices, shreds & spreads.

Branding of food products is being done by manufacturers and brand awareness of these food products in packed form is gaining more value both for the manufacturers and the consumers. For consumers, the value delivered is by means of varieties, ease of shopping, lesser work and time in cooking, longer shelf life etc. For manufacturers it is a value addition in the process of converting commodity into a branded product by processing and packing thereby enhancing their opportunity to get more margins on processing, packaging and creating a value for their brand. Cheese is one of the fast-emerging dairy products that is being used by consumers in India.

"The Indian cheese market is worth around Rs.1700 Crores but is expected to grow at roughly 15-20 percent annually. By industry estimates, the current household penetration in terms of cheese consumption is less than 7-8 percent. The per capita consumption of cheese in India is a mere 200gm per year in contrast to the global average of 7 kg per year. The average per capita consumption for urban India, however, is 700g per person per year. Geographically, the top six cities consume approximately 60 percent of all the cheese sold in India."

The Indian organised Cheese market including its variants like Processed Cheese, Mozzarella Cheese spreads, Flavoured and Spiced Cheese is valued around Rs. 4.5 billion. Processed Cheese at 60% of overall market is Rs. 2.7 billion. The next most popular variant is Cheese spread claiming a share of around 30% of the total Processed Cheese Market. The market is primarily an urban

phenomenon and is known to be growing at around 15%. The market for Cheese Cubes, Slices and Tins is growing.

Literature Review

Tihomir Vranesevic and Ranko Stancec (2003) have done a study on the effect of the brand on perceived quality of food products. They had concluded that consumers do not value products based exclusively on their physical characteristics and that in the process of making a purchasing decision when choosing alternatives.

Olga Ampuero, Natalia Vila (2006) had done a study on Consumer perception of product packaging and concluded that Packaging colour, typography graphic forms, packaging illustrations with respect to class of customers summarised and positioning strategy with the combination of above to transmit the desired perception of consumer

A Colonna, C Durham and L Meunier Goddik (2011) had done a study on the factors affecting consumers' preferences for and purchasing decisions regarding pasteurised and raw speciality cheeses. They had concluded that a larger portion of consumers indicated preferences for the raw milk cheese when the cheeses were labelled and the importance of labelling in selection of a brand was highlighted.

Naser Azad and Mina Mohammadi (2013) had done an empirical survey on the factors influencing on packaging dairy products and determined five factors including infrastructure, awareness, design and communication as important factors influencing consumers.

J. Shilpa Shree, A. Serma Saravana Pandian (2017) had studied the factors influencing the consumption of Cheese in Chennai City, India and concluded that Family Size, Educational status of the head of the household, monthly family income positively influences the cheese consumption.

Gap Analysis

Researcher	Focus of study	Results	Gaps
J.M. Murray, C.M. Delahunty (2000).	Mapping consumer preference for the sensory and packaging attributes of Cheddar Cheese	Relationships between packaging and sensory attributes were established	Factors from several categories of preference towards product packaging could be analysed
Olga Ampuero, Natalia Vila (2006).	Consumer perception of product Packaging	Packaging colour, typography graphic forms, packaging illustrations with respect to class of customers summarised and positioning strategy with the combination of above to transmit the desired perception of consumer is found.	Perceptions were expressed for given point of time Positioning perception of packaging in accordance to the market and competitor brands for a product could be studied.
A. Colonna C. Durham, L. Meunier-Goddik (2011).	Factors affecting consumers' preferences for and purchasing decisions regarding pasteurized and raw milk speciality cheeses	Raw milk cheese with packaging and labelling has increased acceptance. Consumers of raw milk cheese and their purchase based on age and point of purchase is analysed	Study of labelling and purchase of cheese to be analysed.
Nazer Azad and Mina Mohammadi (2013)	An empirical survey on factors influencing on packaging dairy products	Infrastructure, awareness, design and communication Product data, technical details of producer information product specification and brand name are major factors influencing the packaging of dairy products	The study is limited to one brand and market could be extended to other brands and markets
J. Shilpa Shree, A. Serma Saravana Pandian (2017)	Factors influencing the consumption of Cheese in	Family size, Educational status of the head of the household,	The other factors influencing the purchase of

	Chennai City, India.	monthly family income positively influences the cheese consumption	cheese could be studied
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Objectives of the Study

- To study the demographic characteristics of the consumers.
- To find the association between the demographic characteristics and the components of processed cheese.
- To analyse the difference in opinion towards perception on preferred brand of processed cheese among consumers demographic (*Age, Gender, Marital Status, Monthly Income, Education Qualification, Family Type*) and components of processed cheese (*Brand, Shape, Packaging Material, Weight, Shop of Purchase*)
- To find the relationship among consumer perception of processed cheese: *attractiveness, quality, taste, durability on preferred brand*.

Methodology

The data was collected from the residents of the corporation limits of Coimbatore in the 100 wards in 5 Zones. The total population in the 5 zones is 15.86 Lakhs. The percentage of population in each zone to the total population was taken and the proportionate number of samples in each zone to be collected were arrived.

Table A – Distribution of number of respondent's zone wise

Zone	Total Population (No. of People)	% of Total Population	No. of Respondents
North	319865	20.16	81
East	323019	20.36	81
West	327123	20.62	82
Central	309161	19.49	78
South	307422	19.38	78
Total	1586590	100.00	400

Source: Coimbatore Corporation, Draft Ward Delimitation

The sample size as determined by the Krejcie Morgan table is 384 for a confidence level of 95%. The major streets in these zones were listed and every 3rd street was taken and households in these zones were contacted and at least one house per street were covered until the consumer for branded processed cheese were met.

Data Analysis

Table 1: Frequency Distribution for Demographic Characteristics of the Consumers

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	188	47.0
	Female	212	53.0
Age	<= 25	26	6.5
	26 - 35	136	34.0
	36 - 45	151	37.8
	46+	87	21.7
Marital Status	Married	353	88.3
	Un Married	47	11.7
Income	<= 25000	50	12.5
	25001 - 40000	153	38.3
	40001 - 55000	99	24.7
	55001+	98	24.5
Education Qualification	HSC	50	12.5
	UG	260	65.0
	PG	90	22.5
Family Type	Joint	165	41.3

	Nuclear	235	58.7
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(n=400)

The above table shows the frequency distribution of demographic characteristics of the consumers. Gender showed that, Female have the highest frequency value 212 (53%), while male have frequency value of 188 (47%). Among the age distribution of consumers, 72% (majority) of them are coming under the age category of 26 – 45 years. Majority (88%) of the consumers are married. Income category shows that 38.3 % of the consumers are earning between 25001-40000 per month. Coming to their educational level, most of them (65%) have completed their undergraduate programme. Majority (59%) of the consumers are in Nuclear family.

Table 2: Frequency Distribution for Processed Cheese

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percent
Brand	Amul	222	55.5
	Britannia	43	10.8
	Milky Mist	123	30.7
	Go	12	3.0
Shape	Block	55	13.8
	Cubes	186	46.5
	Slices	119	29.7
	Shredded	12	3.0
	Spreads	28	7.0
Packaging Material	Aluminium Foil	59	14.7
	Poly Pouches	115	28.7
	Carton Boxes	150	37.5
	Poly Rigid Container	49	12.3
	Squeezable Poly Tubes	11	2.8
	Tins	16	4.0
Weight	50 g	33	8.3
	100 g	185	46.3
	200 g	99	24.7
	500 g	83	20.7
Shop	Modern Retail Store	85	21.3
	Departmental Store	256	64.0
	Grocery Shop	30	7.4
	Dairy Store	29	7.3

The above table shows the frequency distribution for processed cheese regarding brand, shape preferred, type of packaging material, weight preferred and the shop from which the cheese is purchased by the consumers. Table shows that, Amul is the brand of processed cheese preferred by majority (55.5%) of the consumers and the next preferred brand is Milky Mist which is preferred by 30.7 % of the consumers. Coming to the shape of the processed cheese, 76.2% of the consumers prefer the shape of the processed cheese to be in cubes and slices. Carton Boxes and Poly Pouches are the preferred packaging material by majority (66.2%) of the consumers. Majority (46.3%) of the consumers purchase processed cheese weighting 100gms. Around 85.3% of the consumers purchase processed cheese at departmental store and modern retail store.

Table 3: Association between demographic characteristics and components of processed cheese

Variables	Pearson Chi-Square		Strength of Association	
	Value	p	Cramer's V	Strength
Gender * Brand	3.728	.292	.097	Small
Gender * Shape	13.745	.008	.185	Moderate
Gender * Packaging Material	44.590	.000	.334	Moderately Strong
Gender * Weight	11.206	.011	.167	Moderate
Gender * Shop	12.048	.007	.174	Moderate
Family Type * Weight	14.896	.013	.164	Moderate
Family Type * Shop	10.780	.002	.193	Moderate

The above table shows that, there is no association between gender of the consumers and the brand of the processed cheese they purchase. There is a significant moderate ($V=.185$) association between gender of the consumers and the shape of the processed cheese they purchase. There is a significant moderately strong ($V=.334$) association between gender of the consumers and the packaging material used for the processed cheese they purchase. There is a significant moderate ($V=.167$) association between gender of the consumers and the weight of the processed cheese they purchase. There is a significant moderate ($V=.174$) association between gender of the consumers and the shop they prefer for purchasing processed cheese. There is a significant moderate ($V=.164$) association between family type of the consumers and the weight of the processed cheese they purchase. There is a significant moderate ($V=.193$) association between family type of the consumers and the shop they prefer for purchasing processed cheese. Cubes is the major shape purchased by both Male and Female consumers. Males prefer more of poly pouches and Female respondents prefer the carton boxes. 100g pack is preferred by both the nuclear and joint family. Both the Nuclear and Joint families prefer to purchase from the departmental stores.

Table 4: Independent Sample t-Test between Gender and Consumer Perception on Preferred Brand of Processed Cheese

Consumer Perception on Preferred Brand	Gender	M	SD	t	p
The pack is attractive	Male	2.25	.675	.460	.645
	Female	2.22	.553		
Quality of the product is as expected	Male	2.50	.682	-2.181	.030
	Female	2.64	.572		
The taste of cheese is as desired	Male	2.59	.692	-.960	.338
	Female	2.65	.568		
The product tastes good for longer time	Male	2.28	.557	-.966	.335
	Female	2.33	.539		

The above table shows the independent sample t-test results between gender of the consumers and their perception on preferred brand scales of processed cheese. There exists a significant difference in opinion between male and female consumers on their perception on preferred brand scale 'Quality of the product is as expected'. In which, female consumers have higher mean score ($M=2.64$) than male consumers ($M=2.50$). For the scales: 'The pack is attractive', 'The taste of cheese is as desired' and 'The product tastes good for longer time', there is no significant difference among male and female consumers.

Table 5: Independent Sample t-Test between Marital Status and Consumer Perception on Preferred Brand of Processed Cheese

Consumer Perception on Preferred Brand	Marital Status	M	SD	t	p
The pack is attractive	Married	2.20	.606	-2.799	.005
	Un Married	2.47	.620		
Quality of the product is as expected	Married	2.56	.646	-.763	.446
	Un Married	2.64	.486		
The taste of cheese is as desired	Married	2.61	.640	-1.171	.242
	Un Married	2.72	.540		
The product tastes good for longer time	Married	2.28	.548	-2.696	.007
	Un Married	2.51	.505		

The above table shows the independent sample t-test results between marital status of the consumers and their perception on preferred brand scales of processed cheese. There exists a significant difference in opinion between married and unmarried consumers on their perception on preferred brand scales: 'The pack is attractive' and 'The product tastes good for longer time'. For the scale 'The pack is attractive' unmarried consumers ($M=2.47$) had highest score than married consumers ($M=2.20$). For the scale 'The product tastes good for longer time' unmarried consumers ($M=2.51$) had highest score than married consumers ($M=2.28$). For the scales: 'Quality of the product is as expected' and 'The taste of cheese is as desired', there is no significant difference among married and unmarried consumers.

Table 6: Independent Sample t-Test between Family Type and Consumer Perception on Preferred Brand of Processed Cheese

Consumer Perception on Preferred Brand	Family Type	M	SD	t	p
The pack is attractive	Joint	2.26	.643	.700	.485
	Nuclear	2.22	.592		
Quality of the product is as expected	Joint	2.62	.658	1.218	.224

	Nuclear	2.54	.608		
<i>The taste of cheese is as desired</i>	Joint	2.68	.552	1.501	.134
	Nuclear	2.58	.677		
<i>The product tastes good for longer time</i>	Joint	2.42	.508	3.548	.000
	Nuclear	2.23	.561		

The above table shows the independent sample t-test results between family type of the consumers and their perception on preferred brand scales of processed cheese. There exists a significant difference in opinion between joint family type and nuclear family type consumers on their perception on preferred brand scale 'The product tastes good for longer time'. In which, Joint family type consumers have higher mean score (M=2.42) than nuclear family type consumers (M=2.23). For the scales: 'The pack is attractive', 'Quality of the product is as expected' and 'The taste of cheese is as desired', there is no significant difference among joint family type and nuclear family type consumers.

Table 7: One Way ANOVA between Age and Consumer Perception on Preferred Brand of Processed Cheese

Consumer Perception on Preferred Brand	Age	M	SD	F	p
<i>The pack is attractive</i>	<= 25	2.38	.752	1.394	.244
	26 - 35	2.29	.620		
	36 - 45	2.17	.630		
	46+	2.22	.515		
<i>Quality of the product is as expected</i>	<= 25	2.42	.578	4.550	.004
	26 - 35	2.46	.719		
	36 - 45	2.59	.592		
	46+	2.76	.505		
<i>The taste of cheese is as desired</i>	<= 25	2.65	.745	2.624	.050
	26 - 35	2.55	.642		
	36 - 45	2.59	.686		
	46+	2.78	.416		
<i>The product tastes good for longer time</i>	<= 25	2.38	.496	2.458	.062
	26 - 35	2.25	.568		
	36 - 45	2.28	.505		
	46+	2.44	.585		

The above table shows the one-way ANOVA results between the age of the consumers and their perception on preferred brand scale of processed cheese. For the demographic of Age, results indicated statistically significant differences between the groups for two of the perception on preferred brand scales: 'Quality of the product is as expected' and 'The taste of cheese is as desired'. For the scale 'Quality of the product is as expected', those aged 46+ (M=2.76) had higher mean score than those aged 36-45 (M=2.59), those aged 26-35 (M=2.46) and those aged <=25 (M=2.42). For the scale 'The taste of cheese is as desired', those aged 46+ (M=2.78) had higher mean score than those aged 36-45 (M=2.59), those aged 26-35 (M=2.55) and those aged <=25 (M=2.65). For the scales: 'The pack is attractive' and 'The product tastes good for longer time', there is no significant differences among the age group of the consumers.

Table 8: One Way ANOVA between Income and Consumer Perception on Preferred Brand of Processed Cheese

Consumer Perception on Preferred Brand	Income	M	SD	F	p
<i>The pack is attractive</i>	<= 25000	2.30	.763	2.597	.052
	25001 - 40000	2.16	.623		
	40001 - 55000	2.36	.562		
	55001+	2.18	.544		
<i>Quality of the product is as expected</i>	<= 25000	2.34	.658	5.509	.001
	25001 - 40000	2.50	.689		
	40001 - 55000	2.70	.524		
	55001+	2.68	.567		

<i>The taste of cheese is as desired</i>	<= 25000	2.32	.844	7.747	.000
	25001 - 40000	2.56	.687		
	40001 - 55000	2.72	.453		
	55001+	2.79	.482		
<i>The product tastes good for longer time</i>	<= 25000	2.36	.563	.229	.876
	25001 - 40000	2.29	.534		
	40001 - 55000	2.31	.528		
	55001+	2.32	.585		

The above table shows the one-way ANOVA results between the income of the consumers and their perception on preferred brand scale of processed cheese. For the demographic of Income, results indicated statistically significant differences between the groups for two of the perception on preferred brand scales: 'Quality of the product is as expected' and 'The taste of cheese is as desired'. For the scale 'Quality of the product is as expected', those earning between 40001-55000 (M=2.70) had higher mean score than those earning 55001+ (M=2.68), those earning 225001-40000 (M=2.50) and those earning <=25000 (M=2.34). For the scale 'The taste of cheese is as desired', those earning 55001+ (M=2.79) had higher mean score than those earning 40001-55000 (M=2.72), those earning 25001-40000 (M=2.56) and those earning <=25000 (M=2.32). For the scales: 'The pack is attractive' and 'The product tastes good for longer time', there is no significant differences among the income group of the consumers.

Table 9: One Way ANOVA between Education Qualification and Consumer Perception on Preferred Brand of Processed Cheese

Consumer Perception on Preferred Brand	Education Qualification	M	SD	F	p
<i>The pack is attractive</i>	HSC	2.10	.580	2.720	.067
	UG	2.22	.618		
	PG	2.34	.603		
<i>Quality of the product is as expected</i>	HSC	2.66	.557	.589	.556
	UG	2.57	.657		
	PG	2.54	.584		
<i>The taste of cheese is as desired</i>	HSC	2.58	.731	.686	.504
	UG	2.61	.652		
	PG	2.69	.489		
<i>The product tastes good for longer time</i>	HSC	2.52	.580	4.399	.013
	UG	2.29	.518		
	PG	2.26	.591		

The above table shows the one-way ANOVA results between the education qualification of the consumers and their perception on preferred brand scales of processed cheese. For the demographic of Educational Qualification, results indicated statistically significant differences between the groups for one of the perceptions on preferred brand scales: 'The taste of cheese is as desired'. For the scale 'The taste of cheese is as desired', those having education qualification of HSC (M=2.52) had higher mean score than those having education qualification of UG (M=2.29) and those having education qualification of PG (M=2.26). For the scales: 'The pack is attractive', 'Quality of the product is as expected' and 'The taste of cheese is as desired', there is no significant differences among the education qualification of the consumers.

Table 10: One Way ANOVA between Brand and Consumer Perception on Preferred Brand of Processed Cheese

Consumer Perception on Preferred Brand	Brand	M	SD	F	p
<i>The pack is attractive</i>	Amul	2.18	.619	1.586	.192
	Britannia	2.37	.578		
	Milky Mist	2.28	.594		
	Go	2.25	.754		
<i>Quality of the product is as expected</i>	Amul	2.59	.615	1.048	.371
	Britannia	2.42	.587		

	Milky Mist	2.59	.651		
	Go	2.50	.798		
<i>The taste of cheese is as desired</i>	Amul	2.63	.679	.093	.964
	Britannia	2.58	.587		
	Milky Mist	2.63	.562		
	Go	2.58	.515		
<i>The product tastes good for longer time</i>	Amul	2.25	.546	2.201	.087
	Britannia	2.42	.499		
	Milky Mist	2.36	.560		
	Go	2.50	.522		

The above table shows the one-way ANOVA results between the brand of the processed cheese purchased and their perception on preferred brand scales of processed cheese. For the brand of processed cheese, results indicated no statistical significant differences between the groups of brand for any of the scales: 'The pack is attractive', 'Quality of the product is as expected', 'The taste of cheese is as desired' and 'The product tastes good for longer time'.

Table 11: One Way ANOVA between Shape and Consumer Perception on Preferred Brand of Processed Cheese

Consumer Perception on Preferred Brand	Shape	M	SD	F	p
<i>The pack is attractive</i>	Block	2.36	.557	2.319	.057
	Cubes	2.20	.642		
	Slices	2.24	.592		
	Shredded	1.83	.577		
	Spreads	2.36	.559		
<i>Quality of the product is as expected</i>	Block	2.84	.420	8.981	.000
	Cubes	2.65	.512		
	Slices	2.48	.723		
	Shredded	2.25	.452		
	Spreads	2.11	.916		
<i>The taste of cheese is as desired</i>	Block	2.76	.508	12.934	.000
	Cubes	2.59	.636		
	Slices	2.80	.403		
	Shredded	2.17	.718		
	Spreads	2.00	.981		
<i>The product tastes good for longer time</i>	Block	2.51	.573	7.080	.000
	Cubes	2.37	.526		
	Slices	2.22	.523		
	Shredded	1.75	.622		
	Spreads	2.18	.476		

The above table shows the one-way ANOVA results between the shape of the processed cheese preferred and their perception on preferred brand scales of processed cheese. For the shape of the processed cheese preferred, results indicated statistically significant differences between the groups for three of the perception on preferred brand scales: 'Quality of the product is as expected', 'The taste of cheese is as desired' and 'The product tastes good for longer time'. For the scale 'Quality of the product is as expected', those who prefer the shape as Block (M=2.84) had higher mean score than those who prefer the shape as Cubes (M=2.65), those who prefer the shape as Slices (M=2.48), those who prefer the shape as Shredded (M=2.25) and those who prefer the shape as Spreads (M=2.11). For the scale 'The taste of cheese is as desired', those who prefer the shape as Slices (M=2.80) had higher mean score than those who prefer the shape as Block (M=2.76), those who prefer the shape as Cubes (M=2.59), those who prefer the shape as Shredded (M=2.17) and those who prefer the shape as Spreads (M=2.00). For the scale 'The product tastes good for longer time', those who prefer the shape as Block (M=2.51) had higher mean score than those who prefer the shape as Cubes (M=2.37), those who prefer the shape as Slices (M=2.22), those who prefer the shape as Spreads (M=2.18) and those who prefer the shape as Shredded (M=1.75). For the scale 'The pack is attractive', there is no significant differences among the shape of the processed cheese.

Table 12: One Way ANOVA between Packaging Material and Consumer Perception on Preferred Brand of Processed Cheese

<i>Consumer Perception on Preferred Brand</i>	<i>Packaging Material</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>The pack is attractive</i>	Aluminium Foil	2.31	.623	8.412	.000
	Poly Pouches	2.10	.592		
	Carton Boxes	2.37	.523		
	Poly Rigid Container	2.02	.661		
	Squeezable Poly Tubes	1.73	.905		
	Tins	2.75	.447		
<i>Quality of the product is as expected</i>	Aluminium Foil	2.58	.532	7.652	.000
	Poly Pouches	2.50	.730		
	Carton Boxes	2.76	.552		
	Poly Rigid Container	2.24	.596		
	Squeezable Poly Tubes	2.09	.302		
	Tins	2.69	.479		
<i>The taste of cheese is as desired</i>	Aluminium Foil	2.64	.483	14.543	.000
	Poly Pouches	2.60	.698		
	Carton Boxes	2.75	.504		
	Poly Rigid Container	2.41	.643		
	Squeezable Poly Tubes	1.36	.809		
	Tins	3.00	.000		
<i>The product tastes good for longer time</i>	Aluminium Foil	2.39	.588	3.051	.000
	Poly Pouches	2.24	.506		
	Carton Boxes	2.41	.532		
	Poly Rigid Container	2.16	.624		
	Squeezable Poly Tubes	2.00	.447		
	Tins	2.25	.447		

The above table shows the one-way ANOVA results between the preferred packaging material used for the processed cheese and their perception on preferred brand scales of processed cheese. For the preferred packaging material used for the processed cheese, results indicated statistically significant differences between the groups for all the perception on preferred brand scales: 'The pack is attractive', 'Quality of the product is as expected', 'The taste of cheese is as desired' and 'The product tastes good for longer time'. For the scale 'The pack is attractive', those who prefer the packaging material as Carton Boxes (M=2.37) had higher mean score than others. For the scale 'Quality of the product is as expected', those who prefer the packaging material as Carton Boxes (M=2.76) had higher mean score than others. For the scale 'The taste of cheese is as desired', those who prefer the packaging material as Carton Boxes (M=2.75) had higher mean score than others. For the scale 'The product tastes good for longer time', those who prefer the packaging material as Carton Boxes (M=2.41) had higher mean score than others.

Table 13: One Way ANOVA between Weight and Consumer Perception on Preferred Brand of Processed Cheese

<i>Consumer Perception on Preferred Brand</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>The pack is attractive</i>	50 g	1.91	.522	5.370	.001
	100 g	2.27	.628		
	200 g	2.16	.618		
	500 g	2.37	.557		
<i>Quality of the product is as expected</i>	50 g	2.12	.857	13.646	.000
	100 g	2.59	.584		
	200 g	2.45	.627		
	500 g	2.86	.472		
<i>The taste of cheese is as desired</i>	50 g	2.42	.867	7.554	.000
	100 g	2.54	.683		

<i>The product tastes good for longer time</i>	200 g	2.62	.529	1.450	.228
	500 g	2.89	.383		
	50 g	2.18	.635		
	100 g	2.28	.539		
	200 g	2.38	.548		
	500 g	2.34	.524		

The above table shows the one-way ANOVA results between the preferred weight for purchasing processed cheese and their perception on preferred brand scales of processed cheese. For the preferred weight for purchasing processed cheese, results indicated statistically significant differences between the groups for three of the perception on preferred brand scales: 'The pack is attractive', 'Quality of the product is as expected' and 'The product tastes good for longer time'. For the scale 'The pack is attractive', those who prefer weight for purchasing processed cheese as 500 g (M=2.37) had higher mean score than others. For the scale 'Quality of the product is as expected', those who prefer weight for purchasing processed cheese as 500 g (M=2.86) had higher mean score than others. For the scale 'The taste of cheese is as desired', those who prefer weight for purchasing processed cheese as 500 g (M=2.89) had higher mean score than others. For the scale 'The product tastes good for longer time', there is no significant differences among the preferred weight for purchasing processed cheese.

Table 14: One Way ANOVA between Shop and Consumer Perception on Preferred Brand of Processed Cheese

<i>Consumer Perception on Preferred Brand</i>	<i>Shop</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>The pack is attractive</i>	Modern Retail Store	2.38	.597	3.294	.021
	Departmental Store	2.23	.570		
	Grocery Shop	2.00	.788		
	Dairy Store	2.14	.743		
<i>Quality of the product is as expected</i>	Modern Retail Store	2.27	.662	17.783	.000
	Departmental Store	2.73	.540		
	Grocery Shop	2.20	.761		
	Dairy Store	2.45	.632		
<i>The taste of cheese is as desired</i>	Modern Retail Store	2.41	.791	13.020	.000
	Departmental Store	2.76	.487		
	Grocery Shop	2.37	.669		
	Dairy Store	2.28	.797		
<i>The product tastes good for longer time</i>	Modern Retail Store	2.28	.548	1.516	.210
	Departmental Store	2.30	.551		
	Grocery Shop	2.30	.535		
	Dairy Store	2.52	.509		

The above table shows the one-way ANOVA results between the preferred shop for purchasing processed cheese and their perception on preferred brand scales of processed cheese. For the preferred shop for purchasing processed cheese, results indicated statistically significant differences between the groups for three of the perception on preferred brand scales: 'The pack is attractive', 'Quality of the product is as expected' and 'The product tastes good for longer time'. For the scale 'The pack is attractive', those who purchase processed cheese in Modern retail store (M=2.38) had higher mean score than others. For the scale 'Quality of the product is as expected', those who purchase processed cheese in Departmental Store (M=2.73) had higher mean score than others. For the scale 'The taste of cheese is as desired', those who purchase processed cheese in Departmental Store (M=2.76) had higher mean score than others. For the scale 'The product tastes good for longer time', there is no significant differences among the preferred shop for purchasing processed cheese.

Table 15: Correlation Coefficient between Consumer Perception on Preferred Brand Scales of processed cheese among male (n=188) and female (n = 212) consumers

Correlations

GENDER	Consumer Perception on Preferred Brand Scales	The pack is attractive	Quality of the product is as expected	The taste of cheese is as desired	The product tastes good for longer time
Male	The pack is attractive	1	.389**	.461**	-.060
	Quality of the product is as expected	.389**	1	.595**	.303**
	The taste of cheese is as desired	.461**	.595**	1	.107
	The product tastes good for longer time	-.060	.303**	.107	1
Female	The pack is attractive	1	.241**	.277**	.243**
	Quality of the product is as expected	.241**	1	.643**	.181**
	The taste of cheese is as desired	.277**	.643**	1	.229**
	The product tastes good for longer time	.243**	.181**	.229**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The above table represents the correlation among the four consumer perceptions on preferred brand. Pearson correlations was run to investigate the bivariate relationship among the four perceptions on preferred brand. Analysis of the results revealed that, all the bivariate relationships among the scales were significant for female. There exists a strong significant correlation between the scales 'The taste of cheese is as desired' and 'Quality of the product is as expected' ($r=.595$) for male consumers and ($r=.643$) for female consumers. For the scales 'The product tastes good for longer time' and 'The Pack is Attractive', female consumers had moderate significant correlation ($r=.243$) whereas male consumers had no significant correlation. Similarly, for the scales 'The product tastes good for longer time' and 'The taste of cheese is as desired', female consumers had moderate significant correlation ($r=.229$) whereas male consumers had no significant correlation. For the other scales: 'Quality of the product is as expected', 'The taste of cheese is as desired', 'The Pack is Attractive' and 'Quality of the product is as expected' both male and female consumers had significant correlation.

Findings

- The first objective was to study the demographic characteristics of the consumers. Almost 72% of the consumers are between the age group of 26 – 45. Data collected from male and female consumers was almost equal with difference of 6%. Income level of 87.5 % of the consumers are above Rs. 25000. Majority of the consumers were married. In which, 82% of them are having children of which 90% of them are having one or two children. Majority of the consumers education qualification was undergraduate (65%). Almost 72% of the consumers both in joint and nuclear family type are between the age group of 26-45.
- The second objective was to find the association between demographic characteristics of the consumers and components of processed cheese. Only gender with brand, shape, packaging material, weight and shop, family type with weight and shop satisfies the condition of all cells should have expected counts greater than or equal to five in crosstabs. Gender and packaging material had moderately strong association than others. In which majority of the males (66%) prefer poly pouches and majority of the females (61%) prefer carton boxes when it comes to packaging material used for processed cheese.
- The third objective was to analyse the difference in opinion towards perception on preferred brand of processed cheese among consumers demographic (*age, gender, marital status, monthly income, education qualification, family type*) and components of processed cheese (*brand, shape, packaging material, weight, shop of purchase*). There was a significant difference in consumers opinion on quality, taste of processed cheese among age category, income level, shape of cheese, packaging material, weight of cheese and shop where consumers purchased. There was a significant difference in consumers opinion on attractiveness of processed cheese among marital status, packaging material, weight of cheese, shop where consumers purchased. There was a significant difference in consumers opinion on durability of processed cheese among family type, education qualification, shape of cheese and packaging material.
- The fourth objective was to find the relationship among consumer perception of processed cheese: *attractiveness, quality, taste, durability on preferred brand*. There was a strong significant positive relationship between quality and taste of the processed cheese for both male and female consumers. For attractiveness and taste, female consumers had moderate significant positive correlation whereas male consumers had no significant correlation. Similarly, for durability and taste, female consumers had moderate significant positive correlation whereas male consumers had no significant correlation.

Suggestions

- Departmental stores and Modern Retail stores are the purchase points of both male and female consumers and the retailing of processed cheese to be maximised in these outlets.
- The retention of quality and taste in the brand of processed cheese is preferred by both male and female consumers. Also, both nuclear and joint families prefer the product to be good in the type of packaging chosen. Hence the packaging to be done such that the quality of the processed cheese is retained for longer time.
- The packaging of blocks and slices could be such that it is attractive, and the packaging should retain the quality and taste. These types of processed cheese to be in poly packs targeted towards male consumers and in carton boxes targeted towards the female consumers.

Conclusion

Consumer perception is a marketing concept that incorporates a consumer's impression, awareness and/or consciousness about the product offered. Due to the influence of several brands for a single product, marketers are trying to implement new strategies to sell their product in a competitive environment. This study took processed cheese as the product with aspects like brand, shape, weight, packaging material and shop where consumer purchase are considered. It is found that, packaging of processed cheese influences the consumer in their choice of preferred brand. In the aspect of shape, cubes are the majorly preferred by both male and female consumers. In the aspect of packaging material used for processed cheese, male consumers prefer poly pouches whereas female consumers prefer carton boxes. In the aspect of weight, majority of the consumer prefer to buy 100gms pack, those consumers buying 500gms pack prefer attractiveness and taste. Most of the male and female consumers buy processed cheese at departmental stores and modern retail stores. Consumers buying in modern retail store looks for attractiveness whereas consumers buying in departmental stores looks for quality and taste. Married consumers prefer taste whereas unmarried consumers prefer quality. Consumers in both joint and nuclear family prefer taste. Consumers earning between 40001-55000 prefer quality. This study reveals the consumers preference related to the attributes like attractiveness, quality, taste and durability on preferred brand of processed cheese in Coimbatore. The study suggested that a marketer should analyse different factors that influence the consumers perception on selecting their preferred brand of products.

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