

# A Systematic Review of the Relationship between Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction, and Brand Loyalty with special reference to Selected Dairy Companies in Delhi NCR

Vinod Kumar Rai

Research Scholar,  
Amity University,  
Uttar Pradesh, Noida, India  
<https://orcid.org/0009-0006-7712-2315>  
vkrai1205@gmail.com

R.S.Rai

Professor Decision Sciences,  
Amity Business School,  
Director, Internal Quality Assurance Cell  
Amity University,  
Uttar Pradesh, Noida, India  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0482-5168>

Ashok Sharma

Dean Academics  
IMT, DLC, Ghaziabad  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6551-7524>

## Abstract

Dairy products like milk, butter, cheese play significant role in human nutrition. Dairy products are rich in calcium and phosphorus which is required for the maintenance and development of healthy and strong teeth and bones. India ranks on the top among the milk producing countries of the world. Most of their milk production is consumed by themselves. The impact of service quality has been studied on brand loyalty and customer satisfaction in dairy companies. Dairy companies are in a competitive sector that should offer consistent quality, regular delivery, and other services to create brand loyalty and customer satisfaction. From a customer point of view buying milk through vending booth is a value proposition but there is customer satisfaction and service quality. People feel inconvenienced and spend extra time while buying milk from milk booths. Dairy companies can attract more consumers through their improvement in quality of service, increase in the level of customer satisfaction, and enhanced loyalty towards brand with their quality products, consistent service, immediate response to problems, and respect for the customers during doorstep delivery as well as in milk vending booths. A systematic review is performed for understanding the relationship between the variables like service quality, customer satisfaction, and brand loyalty with select dairy companies in Delhi NCR.

**Keywords:** Dairy Companies, service quality, customer satisfaction, brand loyalty, Delhi NCR

## Introduction

Milk and its derived products constitute an essential element of a family's dietary needs. This type of sustenance is precisely what provides the essential nourishment crucial for maintaining good health. Moreover, milk serves as a means of income for cattle owning farmers. Consumer perception pertains to the behavioral tendencies exhibited by consumers when acquiring products or services. Businesses meticulously attend to the desires and demands of their customers to

ensure satisfaction and capitalize on increased sales. Within each company, the marketing division is dedicated to formulating strategies that expand the network of customers through promotion and proper communication about their offerings. Nevertheless, customers exhibit a preference for local, non-branded milk vendors when purchasing milk and its derivatives. Their purchasing decisions are primarily influenced by their evaluations, irrespective of the potential availability of top-tier quality products (Pallathadka., 2022).

The dairy sector has demonstrated its influence on society, leading to enhanced financial conditions for farmers, improved infrastructure provisions, heightened food security, and better nutritional standards. The escalating demand for dairy goods in daily life has even prompted India, despite being a leading milk producer, to import such products. Against this backdrop, this study endeavors to evaluate the expansion of the dairy industry and its impact on the Indian economy (Shree & Prabhu., 2019).

Livestock rearing stands as the predominant economic endeavor in rural regions, given the crucial contribution of animals to the local economy. A substantial portion, exceeding 90 percent of milk production originates from small-scale farmers situated within these rural locales. The burgeoning human populace, escalating urbanization, enhanced domestic earnings, and evolving societal patterns within the nation have brought about a heightened need for dairy items. The dairy industry extends its reach to approximately 150 million agricultural households, proffering nourishing sustenance, additional income, and meaningful work opportunities, primarily for women labourers, thus fortifying the family unit (Jaiswal et al., 2018).

The service industry plays a crucial role in driving economic growth and societal advancement. Currently, service sector is experiencing rapid expansion worldwide and contributes significantly to global output compared to other sectors (Diao et al., 2019). This growth is primarily fuelled by urbanization and increased demand for consumer services. However, in developing nations, intense competition among service providers is escalating (Arshad et al., 2018). This heightened competition has

underscored the importance of branding for service-oriented organizations. Branding plays a pivotal role in establishing customer confidence (Iglesias et al., 2019), delivering customer value, and enabling differentiation among competitors. Additionally, these factors significantly contribute to enhancing a company's value, a process referred to as building brand equity.

Quality can also be delineated as the vigilant oversight of product and service outcomes to meet anticipated standards. (Meesala and Paul, 2018) emphasize that evaluating the process of design, development, or engineering performance can be conducted similarly to the management of time and cost. Success can be gauged from multiple vantage points. Let's approach this from a fresh perspective. Innate quality embodies the principle of integrity. All of these scholars concur that pricing is an unequivocal and recognizable factor (Filiari et al., 2018). According to (Dai and Lee, 2018), defining consistency as a facet of quality signifies that it is "previously defined... as a tangible reality, distinct from and preceding theoretical abstraction." The depth of insight derived from a product is determined by its pertinent content. Differences in quantity of material or attributes represent qualitative distinctions (Garvin, 1984). This approach is more structured than the tangible characteristics of the product. Performance encapsulates the extent to which a product/service meets or surpasses consumer expectations (Panigrahi et al., 2018).

A distinctive trait shared by numerous highly successful organizations is a supply chain that is genuinely linked to their clientele. A supply chain guided by customer preferences, commences by comprehending customer requisites and promptly discerns and reacts to demand cues from all partners involved. The task at hand is to adeptly establish the organizational structure, systems, and processes that effectively address the underlying causes of inefficiencies within the supply chain. Within the supply chain customer relationship management (CRM) is of utmost significance. The aim of the study is to delineate the factors which are responsible for increase or decrease in the level of customer satisfaction within the Indian dairy industry. The factor analysis helps us to categorise various elements into a more concise set of consistent factors. From

the outcomes of the factor analysis, carried out on the customer questionnaire's agreement spectrum, five major factors emerged prominently: customer services, the ability to resolve customer issues, value-oriented offers, product quality, and the dependability of products and services. Preeminent among these factors is customer services, closely followed by the ability to address customer concerns, value-driven propositions, product quality, and finally, the reliability of products and services (Kumar & Mohan., 2018).

The main objectives of the systematic review are given below;

1. Examine the relationship between service quality, customer satisfaction, and brand loyalty in Dairy Companies in Delhi NCR
2. To examine the service quality of the companies on various dimensions like tangibility, responsiveness, assurance, reliability and empathy
3. To analyse customer satisfaction with the dairy products
4. To understand the purchase intention, word-of-mouth communication, and price sensitivity among the dairy companies in Delhi NCR

#### **Research Question**

- What are the five dimensions of service quality of dairy companies?
- How does sensitivity to price and word-of-mouth communication affect the purchase intention of the customers?
- How do service quality, customer satisfaction, and brand loyalty is related in impacting each other in dairy companies?

#### **Background Study**

The main goal of the systematic literature is to identify the relationship between variables like service quality, customer satisfaction, and brand image of the dairy companies Delhi NCR. The research gap is revealed well using the literature review.

#### **Review of Service Quality**

Nowadays retail market is fiercely competitive, along with the improvement in the quality of service, customers' expectations and demands for service levels continue to rise over time. In Kenya, dairy milk processing companies are grappling with challenges in delivering satisfactory service quality. Customers are now unsatisfied, and some dairy milk processing companies have even consolidated which has led to job losses as a result of the closure of other businesses. By examining how perceived service quality affects customer satisfaction among milk sector companies, this research intends to close this knowledge gap. The study's conclusions showed a remarkable and favorable association between consumer satisfaction and perceived service quality. The respondents said that their degree of happiness and their opinion of service quality were in line. The findings indicate that customers of dairy milk products gave dairy milk processors excellent marks for the quality of their customer service, which resulted in high levels of satisfaction. As a result, the study's conclusion underscores, as to how the customer satisfaction is an important predictor of perceived service quality. Therefore, dairy companies make concentrated efforts to not only meet but also surpass their customers' expectations in terms of both product and service quality (Mwangi., 2018).

The rapid advancement in technology has significantly impacted consumer behavior. Every manufacturer strives to engage consumers using various methods such as advertising, appealing packaging, brand recognition, and competitive pricing. These efforts have emerged as the primary drivers of market competition. To achieve success, companies must possess a comprehensive and explicit understanding of the factors that motivate consumer purchases. This study is conducted to explore several aspects related to Jersey products and customer perception. The objectives encompass understanding customer perceptions of Jersey products, analyzing how customers perceive packaging and distribution systems associated with Jersey products, identifying factors influencing purchasing decisions regarding Jersey products, and assessing customer satisfaction with the quality of Jersey

products. For this study, data was collected in which 120 customers responded to the predesigned questionnaire. Those participated interacted with Jersey products. The findings indicate that customers express interest in accessing milk and products from Jersey Milk and Products through retailers. However, there is a need for the company to enhance services, advertisements, quality, replacement processes, and milk availability at retailers. By addressing these aspects, customer satisfaction can be improved, leading to enhanced market share. Employing effective promotional strategies will also help position the company distinctively in the market (Banu & Sultana., 2018).

Preservation of the environment stands as a paramount concern that has permeated all aspects of life. Consumers are progressively displaying heightened awareness about global environmental issues. This necessitates businesses to reevaluate and reinvigorate their eco-friendly endeavors. Against the backdrop of the ongoing global ecological crisis, particularly regarding climate change, it becomes crucial for corporations to steer themselves toward sustainable growth. Implementing environmentally conscious practices within corporate governance becomes vital for conserving natural resources and curtailing their depletion. Green initiatives encompass a broad spectrum of activities, including integrating ecologically sensitive and prudent methods of facilitating work so as to foster a healthier ambience for workers and reducing waste through measures such as product adjustments, modifications to production methods, changes in packaging, and alterations in advertising strategies. The present paper aims to assess the diverse green initiatives undertaken by leading Indian corporations and how these efforts contribute to establishing an environmentally conscious identity for these entities (Patel., 2022).

Not all variations in productivity can be attributed solely to the quantitative aspects of services provided. Service quality constitutes a significant factor in elucidating the differences in productivity between individuals who are members and those who are not. The survey gathered data on service quality, which is outlined below. The subsequent data illustrates the contentment levels of IK members regarding animal health services rendered by IK personnel

as compared to the satisfaction levels reported by non-members concerning services provided by the private sector and government veterinary staff. The distribution of satisfaction ratings among IK members is skewed towards higher satisfaction levels, whereas that of non-members is symmetrically centered around moderate levels of satisfaction (Riaz., 2008).

Given the increasing diversification and intense competition within the food industry, enhancing customer loyalty becomes crucial for improving competitiveness, which in turn is a consequence of customer satisfaction. This research was conducted within the food service sector of the Republic of Korea to identify the factors influencing perceived service quality and to examine the extent to which these factors explain overall customer satisfaction and loyalty. A total of 25 service quality factors, as perceived by food service providers, were grouped into 8 distinct dimensions ('Employee attitude', 'Cleanliness', 'Reputation', 'Reliability', 'Food', 'Price', 'Convenience', 'Variety') through factor analysis. By categorizing customers into three groups based on two criteria - "intention to repurchase the service" and "Customer willingness to recommend food service providers" the service quality perception factor of the food service provider was compared for each loyalty group. The group meets both the "intention to repurchase" and "willingness to recommend" criteria and exhibited score which were high as compared to other groups in the dimensions of "Employee attitude" and "Cleanliness". Regression analysis of the food service provider's perceived service quality and overall satisfaction revealed distinct regression models for each group, with 'Employee attitude' appearing to have a closer association with the group displaying higher loyalty ( $P < 0.05$ ). The dimension of 'Price' emerged as a significant factor for the group not meeting the criteria of "intention to repurchase" and "willingness to recommend to others" (Kim et al., 2020).

India stands as a valuable gem within the global dairy industry, presenting a wealth of opportunities to entrepreneurs across the globe, seeking to tap into one of the largest and most swiftly expanding markets for milk and its derivatives. A trove of potential rewards awaits

international dairy processors venturing into India. The country's dairy sector is experiencing rapid growth, endeavoring to match the swift progress observed globally. Forecasts predict that India's dairy industry is poised to triple its production over the next decade, particularly with an eye on increased export potential to Europe and Western markets. Furthermore, in anticipation of forthcoming WTO regulations, developed nations, which are major milk product exporters today, are expected to phase out support and subsidies for their domestic dairy sectors. Notably, India holds the distinction of being the world's most cost-efficient producer of milk per liter, priced at 27 cents, a remarkable contrast to the U.S. at 63 cents and Japan at 2.8 dollars per liters.

Parasuraman's work on service quality assessment commonly employs five dimensions to evaluate customer service quality, as outlined below:

### **Tangible**

Tangible elements manifest through observable aspects in the work environment and personnel. The work environment encompasses service amenities provided by service providers, such as front office spaces, waiting areas, tools, and equipment. From a physical standpoint, the appearance of the service facilities is crucial. The human component relates to the employee's presentation, including grooming, cleanliness, communication, and courteous behavior toward customers.

### **Reliability**

Reliability pertains to the capability of delivering promised services promptly, consistently, and efficiently. Handling customer complaints quickly and appropriately is a crucial aspect of reliability, involving: Accepting customer complaints. Prompt and accurate decision-making. Rendering impartial judgments.

### **Response**

Response entails the eagerness and willingness of employees to assist customers promptly. The level of attentiveness displayed by the company in aiding customers reflects its commitment. The ease with which customers can interact with the company includes: Willingness to share complaints, critiques, suggestions,

comments, or inquiries. Availability of accessible communication methods, such as hotlines.

### **Assurance**

Assurance encompasses the knowledge and demeanor (responsiveness, friendliness, courtesy) of employees. It also pertains to their capacity to inspire trust and maintain confidentiality in their service interactions. Fairness in resolving issues is significant, involving: Comprehension of problems and their resolution through appropriate compensation. Focusing on problem-solving through compassionate understanding. Taking into account the balance of long-term costs and performance.

### **Empathy**

Empathy measures the company's level of attentiveness and concern towards individual customers, who anticipate a personalized experience. Demonstrating empathy toward complaining customers entails: Addressing customer concerns promptly. Devoting time to listen to complaints. Treat customers with care and respect (Anggita & Ali., 2017).

Despite being the largest global milk producer, India's participation in the export market remains notably limited due to concerns related to the quality and safety of raw milk. Today's consumers worldwide prioritize product quality, prompting the need for high-quality offerings. The conditions of peri-urban dairies are deeply concerning, with milk sourced from these dairies posing safety risks for human consumption, while the animals inhabiting such places face subpar living conditions devoid of their basic natural requirements. These animals lack access to clean drinking water, proper nutrition, veterinary care, and adequate space for movement. To address this issue, a study was conducted in the national capital region (NCR), involving six districts selected through proportionately stratified random sampling. These districts include NE Delhi, NW Delhi, Panipat, Sonapat, Baghpat, and Alwar. A total of 120 marginalized dairy farmers were randomly selected, with 20 from each of the six districts. The study aimed to explore the perception of dairy farmers concerning practices for producing clean milk. The study's findings indicated a higher positive perception among

respondents regarding milker hygiene and milk quality attributes like natural flavor, high-fat content, and SNF (solid-not-fat). Conversely, a less favorable perception was observed regarding the isolation of diseased animals and the use of oil or lubricants on teats. To enhance awareness of clean milk production practices, the study recommends providing training and extension activities to dairy farmers, thereby promoting a deeper understanding of the importance of maintaining milk quality (Kandian & Kalyan., 2020).

Entrepreneurs engaged in the dairy sector within recognized value chains other than those driven by consumer households tend to achieve relatively lower profits. Dairy farmers have established direct connections with urban customers who are willing to pay premium prices for milk that is safe and of high quality. Adherence to food safety regulations is directly correlated with profitability, and entrepreneurs with formal dairy training prefer engaging in partnerships with established value chains. The likelihood of initiating a dairy venture is slightly higher in rural areas as compared to urban settings. The promotion of an entrepreneurial mindset and startup culture is a central focus of policymaking in India. The study's findings underscore that the emerging value chain not only bolsters the profits of dairy farmers by addressing consumer apprehensions about food safety and milk product quality but also fosters consumer confidence (Dixit et al., 2022).

### **Review on customer satisfaction**

Customer satisfaction refers to the actions exhibited by consumers during the processes of searching for, acquiring, using, evaluating, and refrain from using a service or product that they anticipate will meet or not meet their desires and requirements. In India, packaged milk is favoured due to its cleanliness, quality, and easy availability. It is conveniently accessible in suitable quantities at any required time and location. Additionally, it undergoes pasteurisation the necessary set of temperatures to ensure its quality meets the expectations of potential consumers, thus guaranteeing satisfaction in the market. This research study concentrates on a sample of one hundred consumers and examines their satisfaction with

packaged milk using primary data analysis (A Arumugam & Poongodi., 2023).

Measuring customer satisfaction within manufacturing or service supply chains holds significant importance in understanding the preferences of the end-users. Elevated customer satisfaction directly correlates with increased sales, subsequently enhancing the overall performance of the supply chain. This present research focuses on quantitatively assessing customer satisfaction within the dairy food supply chain context in India. The information gathered from customers has undergone a meticulous analysis, taking into account the reliability and representativeness of the research tool employed. Through a comprehensive evaluation of numerous indicators, factors have been identified using factor analysis, leading to the computation of the customer satisfaction index. These empirical discoveries are anticipated to provide insights into situations where shelf life of the product is very limited and necessitate maintaining cold chain during transportation at each phase (Mishra & Shekhar., 2013).

Consumer behavior pertains to the actions displayed by individuals as they try to search, purchase and use or stop using a product or service during the course of fulfilment of their needs and wants. In order to explore and understand as to how do individuals allocate scarce resources at their command and make choices, regarding time, money, and effort, towards items related to consumption. We will have to find out reasons for their purchase and not only what, why and when to buy but also from where to buy? What is its frequency and continuity? Cooperative dairies must grasp this concept thoroughly, especially since private entities are presenting formidable competition. In a study seeking to delve into the manifestation of behaviour by customers while buying Aanchal Milk, which is a brand of Uttarakhand Cooperative Dairy Federation. The research involved assessing customer satisfaction across various attributes of Aanchal milk and evaluating customer preferences based on diverse parameters (Jamwal & Pandey., 2020).

The era of globalization and the prevailing pursuit of maximum profitability drive numerous companies to nurture their retailers and distributors. The prime focus of

the late 1990s revolves around ensuring the contentment of retailers and distributors, reinforcing the prominence of service as a fulcrum around which marketing should evolve and revolve leading to retailers and agents gaining substantial role in important decisions along with customers. Such decisions become even more vital due to the unpredictability and uncertainty inherent in the operational environment. This research paper introduces a model inspired by the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) to assess the level of satisfaction among retailers and distributors. Satisfaction, a fundamental concept in marketing, has garnered increasing attention from retailers over recent decades. Retailers must possess comprehensive knowledge about diverse products and services, and they should receive timely guidance about upcoming launches to effectively communicate this information to customers. The Retailer Satisfaction Index sheds light on specific areas that managers can address. The role of various promotions and loyalty programme like exchange offers, pave the way for promising prospects. (Ali & Dubey., 2020).

This study aims to conduct a Comparative Analysis between Mother and Amul Dairy Products. The research document provides a concise introduction to Mother Dairy Limited and GCMMF Limited, along with an overview of their respective product offerings. The aims of the study are clearly outlined, and the employed methodology is explained. The data was collected using a questionnaire having multiple choice and open ended questions. The paper offers a comprehensive breakdown of the undertaken activities aimed at evaluating the market for Mother Dairy and Amul dairy products. Diverse sets of questionnaires have been devised to capture the perspectives of retailers and customers regarding dairy products (Shukla., 2015).

Milk supply chains primarily focus on managing milk quality and quantity supply gap, which is distinct characteristics of this industry. Time efficiency is crucial for the supply chain of perishable commodities like milk. This perishable nature introduces a challenge to the milk distribution system. Focusing on the efficient supply chain management is not only a sound business strategy but may give competitive superiority. Given the intensified

competition arising from the global integration of processing and supply chain networks, the competitive intensity has increased due to elevated service expectation and price sensitivity. The effectiveness of supply chain management is a prerequisite for the triumph of the dairy sector. Hence, the performance of processing units within the supply chain has become a necessary condition for success of these units. (Kumar R., 2015).

The Indian milk product supply chain confronts issues of excessive waste and subpar handling. Multiple handling points contribute to this wastage. Inadequate facilities for maintaining cold chain create pressure on efficient operation. Due to unavailability of refrigerated vehicle and cold storages at proper locations, cost optimisations efforts are constrained. The demand for suitable infrastructure such as temperature-controlled warehouses and vehicles for storage and transportation is evident. Through the implementation of enhanced supply chain management practices, a substantial reduction in milk and milk product wastage can be achieved. This improvement would subsequently benefit both farmers and consumers by increasing returns for farmers and decreasing prices for consumers (Huo et al., 2008).

The dynamics of the dairy market are in a flux due to shifting consumption patterns, an increasing emphasis on health consciousness among people, a rise in per capita income and aspirational consumer asking for variety of products. These transformations led to intensified competition within the dairy industry. Established national brands like Amul, Mother Dairy along with startups like Big Basket, Super Daily and Country Delight, were all striving to capture larger market shares. A significant unorganized market segment existed having customers who are patronising a particular set of suppliers. Various companies employed distinct competitive strategy, ranging from quality and purity to attractive packaging, all aimed at attracting consumers. In this context, two young entrepreneurs found themselves grappling with the challenge of determining the most effective approach for Indian consumers—whether to emphasize purity, freshness, taste, or health. These "milkpreneurs" sought to put up before the customers that resonated more deeply and

transformed Lakshya as popular brand. There was no clarity in the strategy for communication with customers. So many modes were used sporadically throughout the year to reach customers, resulting in scattered marketing efforts. Their ambition was to establish Lakshya as a pan India brand, yet it faced uncertainty about distinguishing Lakshya within the dairy market. They could not distinguish themselves from incumbent players to firmly position them in highly competitive market. (Chabra et al., 2022).

This study indicated that the demand for A2 Ghee in Udaipur has the potential to gain traction if its taste and quality can be improved. Making it available as per requirement and liking of customers and positioning it as a healthy option in place of regular ghee will help in boosting its demand. (Agarwal et al., 2023)

In a study of policy holders it was found that dimensions of service quality indicate satisfaction level among policy holders. (Muthukrishnan & Senthil, 2016)

Social norms and cultural practices need to be considered from an Indian perspective as the Indian religious and political mix presents a further case study from liberal economic setups worldwide. There is quantifiable evidence of culture, contextual elements, and contextual supports shaping individual capability to innovate, contain deviations from quality benchmarks, and create a quality water supply experience. (Kumar et al., 2023)

### **Review on Brand loyalty**

The research findings indicate that customers in Bangalore, India, are content with Nandini Shubham Milk, but they still desire attractive offers and discounts alongside high-quality products in the future. However, due to limited availability in various locations, customers are often unable to purchase it, despite recognizing its quality. Consequently, the company should concentrate on establishing robust distribution channels to encompass different areas within Bangalore, India. Typically, most customers prioritize convenience in milk purchases without giving significant thought to the brand or product quality, often influenced by retailers during the buying process. It's noteworthy that the company recognizes this

situation and is contemplating improvements in product quality to enhance brand preference among customers, ultimately bolstering their satisfaction. This points towards a potential avenue for future research, where a comparative analysis of neighboring cities in India could shed light on brand preferences and their impact on customer satisfaction. Such research could provide valuable insights for refining strategies and enhancing customer experiences (Poranki., 2015).

This study investigates the determinants of consumer preferences for dairy products within the research area and examines how socio-economic factors impact consumer brand preferences for dairy items. Furthermore, it assesses how these socio-economic factors influence the perception scores related to respondents' satisfaction levels with different dairy products. The research employs a descriptive research design, utilizing both primary sources and secondary sources. Interviews were conducted to primarily test the hypothesis at first while various publications were used to corroborate it further. The study employed a Selective Random sampling technique to identify the sample respondents, resulting in a sample size of 160 individuals. The chosen dairy product brands for analysis were Vijaya Dairy, Heritage Dairy, Sangam Dairy, and Dodla Dairy products. The study's findings suggest a significant difference in respondents' age, while no substantial relationship was found between respondents' monthly income and their satisfaction levels with various dairy products (Koduru & Krishna., 2021).

The objective of the study is to understand the enhancement of supply chain network by companies of FMCG sector around outer skirts of smart cities in India. The consumer demand is presumed to be increasing rapidly in smaller and medium category localities. The categorization of cities in India was examined based on information from various sources, with the product life cycle concept serving as the framework for city classification. This categorization shed light on why companies in FMCG sector are paying more attention to such areas in smart cities. Unorganised retail outlets were being used to enhance the availability of products which was evident from media reports and visual assessment in the field. This study comes out with its



suggestions for effective modes of operations based on the working in vogue in prominent companies operating in FMCG sector. Furthermore Indian cities are proposed to be categorised based on the supply chain practices of FMCG companies. Managers seeking to establish a sustainable business volume from these regions can succeed by ensuring that their products are readily available through smart and resourceful distribution innovations. Consistent availability is the key to embedding brand loyalty and brand equity in the evolving rural landscape at the grassroots level (Singh & Ahuja., 2017).

The project commenced on April 15th, 2015, on the day when a meeting was organised in the office of Amul at Janakpuri, New Delhi. During this meeting, I received a comprehensive briefing about Amul Ice Cream, encompassing information about ingredients, product varieties, the supply chain, and the ice cream market. The project was divided into two main segments. The first part focused on penetrating the areas of the market where ice cream is the main product. Around 60 retailers and their dealer Poonam Enterprises in Kalkaji were contacted. The primary objective was to identify any challenges faced by these retailers and to provide assistance in boosting their sales. During the initial store visits, it was observed that some outlets lacked visible branding for Amul Ice Cream. This was addressed in subsequent visits by enhancing their visual representation. Additionally, part of my fieldwork included addressing retailers' concerns. We found that expired and unfit products were kept in shops. When it was reported, it led to its successful resolution. After improving the visual appeal of the shops and resolving replacement issues, they persuaded retailers to have more stocks of various flavours of Ice cream including newly launched one. By properly displaying danglers and posters for these products and ensuring their availability at the outlets, post this, sales in the area saw an increase. Furthermore, while visiting these outlets the prevailing trade scheme offered by Amul was proposed for modification suitably, based the study of schemes of other brands. Secondly we had to study the product characteristics of Icecream which impact consumer behaviour. Through the survey of consumers, we found that

taste and quality were the most pivotal attributes influencing consumer buying decisions. Survey participants were also requested to rate on a scale of 1 to 5 the expectations as well as perceptions regarding Amul Ice cream. The survey indicated that consumers perception and expectations were aligned in many attributes such as price, availability, packaging and quality but in terms of taste and variety, there was a gap in perceptions and expectations. The findings of the study was communicated to bridge this gap about Amul Ice creams and consequently enhance their market share in India (Biswari., 2016).

The capability to place trust in a specific brand during routine purchases holds significant importance for survival. Brand loyalty has evolved into an integral component of marketing endeavours. The patronage provided by customers of Nestle, a prominent FMCG brand has been studied through this paper. To achieve this aim, the research employed a cross-sectional research approach. A random sample of 100 individuals from Nestle's customer base participated in the survey. A standardized questionnaire developed following an extensive analysis of existing literature, was employed to gather the required data. This study seeks to ascertain the most effective advertising channel for Nestle. To the Indian populace, Nestle is a prominent producer of nourishing and delightful food and beverages. Nestle frequently adapts its advertising methods to consistently capture customers' attention and stimulate their purchases. In order to identify the most efficacious promotional channel for Nestle, a survey will be conducted to gather data from respondents based on various factors (Khandelwal & Kothari., 2023).

### **Word-of-mouth communication**

Word of mouth (WOM) entails the informal sharing of opinions among customers regarding their experiences with products and services. This type of communication is often interactive, swift, and devoid of commercial motives. WOM wields significant influence over consumer behavior, impacting decisions about embracing new brand categories and selecting brands within existing categories (East et al., 2008). Arndt (1967) elucidated WOM as personal verbal exchanges between a recipient and a communicator perceived as non-commercial. Focusing on

the brand and its offerings (Arndt, 1967). Stokes & Lomax (2002) characterized WOM (Stokes & Lomax, 2002). The term "Word-of-Mouth is a direct interaction, where person communicating is perceived to be impartial about products and services " is employed within marketing and advertising to elucidate strategies employed by businesses to solicit individual endorsements for brands, products, and services. Communication by word -of-mouth garners inherent credibility since customers tend to believe voluntarily shared viewpoints devoid of coercion, solicitation, or personal gain (Khraim, 2011). Word of mouth can manifest as favorable or unfavorable commentary shared by potential, existing, or recent consumers regarding products/services or businesses, potentially conveyed through offline or online channels (Karjaluoto et al., 2016).

Efforts made by franchisors to enhance brand value through engagement and interaction with existing and potential customers on social media platforms yield advantages for both franchisors and franchisees within a franchise network. This endeavor also strengthens the bond between franchisors and franchisees by encouraging contact between customers, word-of-mouth (WOM) spreading, and cooperative value generation via social media networks. This study explores how WOM communication inside social media networks is influenced by the size of a franchise network. It empirically investigates theories linking WOM communication on social media platforms and franchise network scale, using brand loyalty and brand preference as mediators between two customer engagement behaviors. Using Twitter data for two distinct sample restaurants with tweets over a defined duration and eateries with a set tweet count; structural equation models are applied to data of franchise networks within the restaurants of U.S. who are ranked as top 200. The results show that the relationship between franchise network size and WOM communication in social media networks is mediated by brand preference and loyalty. Loyalty is also found to be having good relationship with franchise network sales. Loyalty is favourably related with brand preference and promotes more WOM. When the percentage of network-owned restaurants owned by franchisees exceeds 75%, a segmented analysis shows that the influence of franchise

network units is significant (Sashi & Brynildsen., 2022).

Loyalty programs find diverse applications within various industry sectors. Shopping malls have historically attracted visitors seeking entertainment, shopping opportunities, and a range of services. The prolonged lockdown experience has fundamentally reshaped individuals' perceptions of communal spaces like malls. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has prompted people to adopt cautious shopping behaviors, weighing their choices post-lockdown and opting for more isolated experiences. In this context, shopping malls could leverage loyalty programs to entice consumers with memorable encounters. Unlike normal circumstances, loyalty towards shopping malls has waned during the Covid-19 era. Consequently, this study introduces an innovative conceptual framework for post-lockdown digital marketing strategies aimed at cultivating loyalty and encouraging electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) for malls, thereby benefiting both entrepreneurs and customers (Singh et al., 2021).

Aligned with prior research, this study investigates word-of-mouth (WOM) and brand commitment are positively related and dependent on brand image and brand love. Therefore, managerial initiatives should focus on developing marketing plans that improve consumers' views about image of the brand and love for brand, supporting commitment towards brand and WOM communication which is positive. The results of present study provide managers with a roadmap for understanding the crucial role played by image of brand in connection to brand love, commitment towards brand, and favourable word-of-mouth (WOM). Consequently, professionals ought to formulate initiatives aimed at augmenting brand image, including tactics such as social media advertising, promotional activities, and other relevant strategies. A favorable brand image instills a positive inclination towards brand love, brand commitment, and positive WOM among customers. Furthermore, this research enlightens practitioners about the interplay between love for brand, commitment towards brand, and favourable WOM. Therefore, managerial efforts may be dedicated to crafting marketing plans that foster brand love. Amplified brand love can translate into heightened brand commitment and increased favourable WOM from clients. Lastly, the study

brings to light the influence of commitment towards brand on positive WOM, prompting professionals to develop market interventions tailored to enhancing commitment towards brand, thereby elevating positive WOM (Dam., 2020).

As suggested by Tjiptono (2015), buying decisions are influenced by presenting product benefits in a way that triggers a positive emotional response leading to purchase choices. When consumers are content with a product, they tend to make repeated purchases and may even engage in word-of-mouth promotion. According to research by Alfina and Triwardhani (2018), technology facilitates consumer access to information and judgments through electronic word of mouth, encompassing product reviews, ratings, and recommendations. The purpose of this study is to find whether e-commerce and purchase behaviour is influenced by electronic word of mouth in Lazada or not. The connection between the word of mouth through electronic medium and behaviour in purchase in Lazada is indeed significant, evidenced by numerous consumer reviews, favorable product ratings, positive reviews, and comprehensive product information, all influencing respondents' buying choices.

Contrary to the findings of Fihartini (2015), who proposed a positive impact of both word of mouth through electronic medium and activities to promote a purchasing behaviour in Bandar Lampung, this study only confirms the positive and significant influence of word of mouth in electronic medium. However, consumer purchasing decisions are not proved to be impacted by promotion which is deviation from Fihartini's stance. Drawing from Cheung, Christy M.K. Xiao, and Bo (2010), substantial sway over consumer buying behaviour is evidenced through word of mouth. Recommendations, references, and product benefits discussed in online forums are easily accessible to a wider audience, with readers potentially becoming advocates for the product, thereby influencing consumers online purchase. The increase in buying behaviour is evidenced. Conversely, negative word of mouth could deter prospective buyers, leading them to opt for alternative products. This underlines the persuasive role of online social interactions in shaping consumer purchasing decisions.

## Purchase Intention

The investigation of consumer responsiveness to prices is conducted within the framework of purchasing groceries at supermarkets. A survey is administered to individuals who frequent supermarkets as shoppers. The research reveals that the degree of price sensitivity is influenced by both the attributes of the products and the characteristics of the consumers themselves. This study empirically examines principles like Weber's law and the Weber-Fechner law in relation to pricing. Moreover, distinct shopper profiles are delineated based on their sensitivity to prices. This classification is achieved through discriminant analysis, employing variables that encompass aspects of consumer demographics, shopping habits, and awareness of pricing (Sirvanci., 1993).

The intention to make a purchase refers to a plan for acquiring a specific product or service (Mai, 2016). Another definition characterizes purchasing intention as an implicit commitment to repurchase an item during subsequent visits (Kudeshia and Kumar, 2017). Understanding the patronage by consumers for brand is very important because this indicates consumer retention. Aspects such as awareness of brand, image of brand, loyalty towards brand are influential factors that shape purchase intention (Kudeshia and Kumar, 2017), significantly impacting customers' likelihood to make a purchase.

Purchase intention arises from cognitive processes that shape perception (Astuti and Putri, 2018). It ignites motivation, becoming an enduring desire etched in the mind. Ultimately, customers, driven by their needs, actualize their thoughts (Astuti and Putri, 2018). According to Wang and Tsai (2014), purchase intention is the possibility that a client will make a particular purchase. A bigger desire to buy something implies a higher likelihood, though not necessarily a certainty, of doing so. On the other hand, less desire does not imply total abstinence from acquisition. Purchase intention, according to Nurhasanah and Hariyani (2018), is impacted due to various elements like selection of brands, quantity of product, timing of purchase and distributors. Customers use their distinct traits, characteristics, and decision-making processes as the

basis for their purchases; these factors are important markers of consumer behavior. Purchase intention essentially indicates what consumers anticipate purchasing (Wee et al., 2014). According to Wee et al. (2014), preference of customers manifested through purchase intention towards a specific product are more likely to follow through with the actual purchase compared to those who express no intention to buy it.

This current research centers on examining consumer preferences for milk and its derivatives in relation to Thiruvanamalai District. In order to gather data, 45 customers were chosen randomly. The data so collected was analysed using descriptive statistics and the Garret ranking technique. The principal aim of the study was to delve into purchasing behaviors and the factors impacting the choice of milk and related products. The consumption choices of households are influenced by the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of consumers. The findings indicated that approximately 58 percent of the respondents fell within the middle-age category and possessed a high school education. Females dominated the purchasing demographic, as they predominantly manage household affairs. A significant number of respondents were involved in their businesses, with an income exceeding 50,000. These consumers were non-vegetarians and had a food expenditure capacity of over 10,000. The majority displayed a preference for the Aavin brand over others, sourcing their product from Aavin retail outlets and consuming more than half a liter daily. Consumer choices were primarily driven by health benefits, followed by product quality and pricing considerations. From these findings, it can be concluded that there exists a noteworthy correlation between consumer preferences for milk products within Thiruvanamalai District (Revathi & Balaji., 2023).

### **Price sensitivity**

In order to thrive in markets that are perpetually evolving, it's crucial to address the volatility in demand. Factors like price fluctuations, enticing offers, and competitive strategies impact customers' preferences, often leading to shifts in demand patterns and causing a gap between supply and demand. In such situations, having an adaptable

production rate becomes vital to prevent unnecessary costs related to inventory or unfulfilled orders. This paper explores a model that involves varying the rate of production for a perishable product whose demand is price sensitive. The assumption here is that the perishability of the product can be managed through investment in technology which can preserve products for longer period. Additionally, the cost of producing each unit is influenced by the variable production rate. Likewise, the item's demand is influenced by its price. The study aims to maximize total profit by optimizing both production time and selling price. The paper includes numerical examples and sensitivity analyses to provide practical illustrations (Rini et al., 2021).

The "organic" characteristic of food products has emerged as a significant influencer in consumers' choices, aligning with their preferences for safety, sustainability and quality. Our research delved into the preferences of Italian consumers regarding various milk attributes, with a focus on understanding the significance of the organic attribute in order to create a more precise milk consumer profile. We conducted a survey in Piedmont, located in northwest Italy, wherein 328 milk consumers participated and were interviewed using a paper questionnaire. Through the Principal Component Analysis (PCA), we explored the factors driving consumers' choices when purchasing milk. The analysis of milk consumption yielded a five-factor solution that accounted for 58% of the original data's variability. Employing a clustering analysis, we identified three distinct clusters of milk consumers: those sensitive to organic attributes, those focused on price, and those who prioritize local origin and quality. Our findings underscore the importance of the organic attribute, particularly for a specific consumer profile characterized by youth, a high level of education, and above-average income. These individuals exhibit health consciousness, are attentive to brands, show minimal concern for the local origin of the product, and consider organic certification as a differentiating factor during the milk buying process (Merli no et al., 2019).

### **Relationship between service quality, customer satisfaction, and brand loyalty**

This research aimed to evaluate the psychological and physiological aspects of service quality, customer satisfaction, and brand loyalty concerning Taiwan's Superdry. It also sought to determine whether image of the brand is a positive factor in moderating the connection between service quality and brand loyalty. The study's outcomes affirmed that service quality directly influences customer satisfaction, and both customer satisfaction and service quality have a direct impact on brand loyalty, regardless of whether these dimensions are psychological or physiological. Additionally, the study found that brand image effectively moderates the relationship between service quality and brand loyalty positively (Yang et al., 2017).

### Conceptual framework

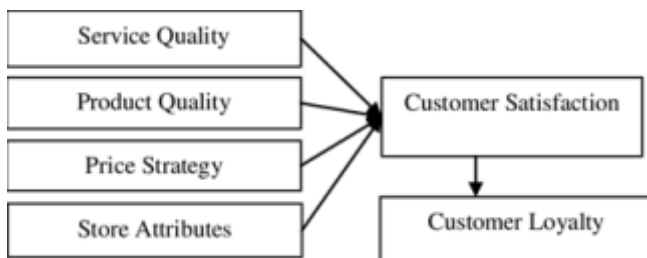


Figure conceptual framework of service quality, customer satisfaction brand loyalty of dairy companies (Rahman et al., 2014).

In the past decade, service quality has emerged as a prominent area of research. The competitive landscape of the retail industry now recognizes the utmost importance of delivering high-quality services as a pivotal retail strategy. Retailers are encouraged to leverage their warehousing capabilities to enhance their overall retail approach. Therefore, a thorough examination and assessment of the retail sector are warranted. In today's dynamic retail environment, the provision of high-quality services has gained prominence as a crucial retail strategy. In this context increasing attention of marketing professionals is focussed on retaining customers through loyalty initiatives. The term "value" is perceived by different individuals differently due to its complexity, subjectivity and intangibility. Customers may place emphasis on service quality or competitive dynamics prevalent in the market.

Manufacturers need to assess the gap between service as planned and executed (Dedeke., 2016).

Numerous factors contribute to delineating dimensions of quality. In order to gain a competitive edge in marketing and comprehend consumer purchase intentions with respect to quality, marketers should concentrate on variables like performance, tangible attributes, reliability, conformity, assurance, responsiveness, and empathy. Regression analyses revealed that purchase intention and the quality of retail services are directly related. Improved product quality inevitably results in a heightened inclination towards positive customer purchase intentions. Marketers should establish premium-quality offerings to align with customers' aspirational purchase intentions (Singh., 2020).

Consumers not only prioritize the value of a product but also take into account an organization's contributions to societal concerns. Consequently, organizations are shifting their focus from solely pursuing financial profits to also prioritizing Social Responsibility Practices as a means of ensuring their survival and growth. In this context, Corporate Social Responsibility initiative is being used as a means to influence customers, so that the corporate has a positive image. While satisfaction with the brand and loyalty towards brand has found important place in marketing discourse for a long time, the connection between CSR practices and satisfaction with a brand and loyalty towards it has emerged as a significant topic recently. Within marketing literature, it is widely recognized that brand satisfaction serves as a crucial precursor to brand loyalty. The purpose of the present research is to investigate the relationship between the activities done in CSR initiatives and its impact on satisfaction with the brand and increase in loyalty towards a brand. (Kumar & Bala., 2022).

Businesses are continuously exploring novel strategies to cultivate a base of devoted customers, aiming to circumvent the substantial expenses associated with attracting fresh customers. This thesis undertakes an analysis to determine whether service quality holds a substantial influence on brand loyalty, with customer satisfaction employed as a gauge for assessing brand loyalty. Additionally, the study

investigates whether generational factors and disparities between generations contribute to differing evaluations of service quality in relation to customer satisfaction and brand loyalty. To address these inquiries, an experiment encompassing two surveys was disseminated and completed by 99 participants, drawn from either Generation X or Generation Y. These participants experienced either neutral or exceptional service quality, and their levels of customer satisfaction were gauged as a result. The outcomes substantiated prior research by affirming that service quality indeed exerts a significant impact on both customer satisfaction and brand loyalty. The findings revealed that exceptional service quality notably enhanced participants' satisfaction and elevated their brand loyalty levels. Furthermore, the study's findings countered previous assertions by indicating that Generation X and Generation Y hold similar assessments of service quality's value, dispelling the notion of distinct generational disparities as previously proposed by some research (Hertzberg et al., 2020).

The research aims to determine how service quality impacts customer loyalty by way of consumer contentment in East Jakarta's PT. Ultrajaya Milk Industry Co. The study uses quantitative techniques and concentrates on the Ultrajaya Milk Industry Co Tbk clientele in East Jakarta. A technique called inadvertent sampling is used in the study. The data instrument is put through preliminary testing before the hypotheses are tested. Simple linear regression and path analysis are both used in the data analysis. The following list provides a summary of the research results: Customer loyalty is directly and favorably impacted by service quality in a statistically meaningful way. Customer satisfaction statistically significantly and directly influence increase in loyalty. Additionally, happiness directly and positively influence loyalty of customers in statistically important manner. Further, consumer loyalty is positively and indirectly impacted by service quality and customer satisfaction both. (Silitonga., 2021).

The research establishes and assesses the components of the marketing mix within the context of brand equity depending on consumers. The strategy combines quantitative research with direct interviews with 477

consumers as well as qualitative study through focus groups with 10 consumers. According to the results, a number of variables, such as brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality, brand trust, and brand loyalty, have an impact on brand equity. The study also shows that brand loyalty is influenced by brand awareness and brand trust. While brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality, and brand trust are all influenced by advertising, brand awareness, brand associations, and brand trust are all influenced by distribution intensity. Nevertheless, due to resource constraints, the research could only involve a relatively small sample size of 477 consumers. In terms of sampling, the study employs the method of direct interviews (Viet & Anh., 2021).

Brand awareness impacts the customers in a significant manner as the initial point of contact with brands. This research investigates the correlation between loyalty towards a brand and awareness of brand within the context of milk brands offering milk in packed form in urban Pakistan. The study establishes a link between consumer awareness of the brand and brand equity by analyzing these aspects within consumer households. The findings suggest that, in Pakistan, there is no discernible connection between brand awareness and consumer or brand loyalty in packaged milk brands. Furthermore, when examining the relationship while introducing perceptions as a mediating factor between awareness of brand among consumers or brand loyalty, the outcomes remain consistent. This underscores the need for managers and marketers to revise their comprehension of the role and nature of awareness of brand, particularly for products dominated by convenience factor, characterized by sporadic switch in purchasing patterns. In the contemporary business landscape, marketing professionals should devise plans and actions for branding of products like milk having dominant commodity features, focusing on augmenting supply chain systems to cultivate and enhance awareness of the brand. This, in turn, fosters consumer or brand loyalty, rather than solely relying on extensive investments in promotional tools to directly cultivate consumer or brand loyalty (Osman & Subhani., 2021).

Customer contentment and trust stand as significant

influencers in any market. In the contemporary era, locating a customer loyal to a single brand proves to be a challenge. Nonetheless, there exist cooperative companies that manage to generate an exclusive demand in the market, thereby establishing a natural monopoly. This accomplishment primarily arises from the trust that customers place in such entities. The central goal of this study is to assess the current status of MILMA concerning its market share, satisfaction level of customer and dealer, customer loyalty, knowledge of customers about the homogenization process, and to identify the factors impacting MILMA's brand share of market. The quantitative and Qualitative Research methods have been used in this study. Data collection included primary source and secondary sources as well. The data was collected from customers and agents through a predesigned questionnaire. It becomes evident from analysis that MILMA has cultivated a reasonable market for milk and customer base. However, considering it is the sole cooperative society in Kerala, its position could potentially be more robust. The primary reasons contributing to this situation include the lack of awareness among the public regarding the process of homogenization aimed at standardizing content of fat, insufficient remuneration rates for agents coupled with issues of leaking packets. By addressing these concerns through improved packaging, commission structures, and heightened customer education regarding the homogenization technique, MILMA could attract a larger pool of dealers and educate customers effectively (Joseph & Seema., 2016).

The assessment of perceived value, brand trust, and brand image is recognized as a crucial precursor to brand loyalty. The establishment of brand loyalty enables companies to achieve enhanced performance outcomes, resulting in elevated market share. This research study is conducted to investigate how perceived value, brand trust, and brand image influence brand loyalty within the context of Aavin milk consumers. The study collected data from a sample of 664 respondents hailing from the Tiruchengode region in the Namakkal District. Through a structured questionnaire, data was gathered and subsequently analysed using statistical tools. The findings unveiled a positive impact in

reposing faith in a brand and perceived value in loyalty towards a brand. This underscores the importance for companies to prioritize long-term profitability and brand loyalty, bolstered by brand trust and perceived value. The insights from this research can be harnessed by marketers to formulate strategies aimed at enhancing brand trust and perceived value in a more distinct manner (Suganya., 2019).

This study was conducted to explore the impact on buying behaviour and loyalty of consumers using Thai-Denmark Land products and their relationship with the image of the brand ,service quality and brand equity. It was found in the study that majority of female aged between 18-25, unmarried and educated upto bachelor level, falling in the income range from 15,001 to 30,000 Baht have a preference for coffee as their favorite menu item. The outcomes of hypothesis testing indicate that the elements of brand equity exert an influence on brand loyalty. Furthermore, it was found in the study that loyalty towards brand and its brand equity significantly influence buyer behaviour for the products and brand under study .However, it is noteworthy that some factors, aside from the brand image and service quality, do not impact loyalty or decisions related to Thai-Denmark Milk Land products. Insufficient recognition among consumers about the brand could be the reason behind such manifestation, which might not be substantial enough to drive decision-making and foster loyalty toward the brand (Sereewattana., 2020)

In the Indian context, milk has traditionally found a pride of place in the production and consumption basket. However, as per capita income level rises , there is a persistent surge in the demand for milk and its related products. Milk holds a position of great significance in the Indian diet, ranking alongside staples like wheat and rice. This nutrient-rich resource has an important role in catering to the nutritional needs of diverse sections of the population, while also serving as a livelihood source for countless small and marginal farmers across the country. This descriptive study is designed to gauge the extent of customer satisfaction and identify the factors influencing loyalty towards sale of milk in pouches in Kancheepuram. In the study 100 respondents

using a method of convenience sampling were contacted. Primary data was collected through questionnaires and subsequently summarized using the simple percentage approach. In conclusion, the findings highlight that a majority of respondents exhibit loyalty toward their preferred brand and demonstrate an unwillingness to switch brands (Selvarasu., 2019).

## Conclusion

The impact of service quality has been studied on brand loyalty and customer satisfaction in dairy companies. Dairy companies are in a competitive sector that should offer consistent quality, regular delivery, and other services to create brand loyalty and customer satisfaction. From the customer's point of view buying milk through vending booth is a value proposition but there is customer satisfaction and service quality. Dairy companies can attract more consumers through improvement in their quality of service, increase in satisfaction level of customers, and loyalty towards brand with their quality products, consistent service, immediate response to problems, and respect for the customers during doorstep delivery as well as in milk vending booths. A systematic review is performed for understanding the relationship between the variables like service quality, customer satisfaction, and brand loyalty with selected dairy companies in Delhi NCR. While the concepts of brand loyalty, customer satisfaction, and service quality have been extensively discussed in the marketing discourse, their interconnection remains relatively obscure within the context of the liquid milk and milk products market in India. To gain a clearer understanding of these concepts within the dairy sector, a comprehensive analysis based on data is essential. Notably, examining the sales data reveals the declining milk sales through bulk vending booths with an increase in sales of cow milk under the same brand. This shift is likely attributed to factors such as service quality, convenience, and customer satisfaction. However, a more thorough investigation involving in-depth studies, surveys, and research-based insights is required to uncover the underlying causes driving this phenomenon.

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