



## KEY ATTRIBUTES TOWARDS ICE CREAM PURCHASE BY CONSUMERS IN ERNAKULAM

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**Abstract:** India has seen a thriving dairy industry over the years. The growth of cold chain infrastructure and its related facilities have also watered the rapid increase in dairy product consumption. Ice cream is the most popular dessert among the masses. The growth of this industry has been exponential based on various reports. The main reason being the change in the consumer perception towards this product due to many contributing attributes of the product. This research tries to focus on the factors that influence the purchase of ice creams. The target group were consumers of ice creams. The sample size was 200 respondents. Exploratory factor analysis has been used to identify 2 factors which were reduced from 11 variables.

**Key Words:** Consumer perception, Ice cream, Factor analysis, Consumer Behaviour, Purchase decision.

### 1. INTRODUCTION:

When it comes to dairy products, India is the world's largest manufacturer related to the ice cream market. Growth in the urban population and disposable income has increased the growth potential of the Country's premium ice cream brands. The new generation has shown interest to experiment with flavours and styles which led to more variants in the ice cream industry. Ice cream has become the most popular dessert in India. The Climatic conditions of the region have added to the constantly increasing sales. Ice cream includes frozen desserts made from items like sugar, cream, egg and other flavours. Some ingredients are added to smoothen the texture of the product. The jump in demand in 2022 is expected to help the Rs 9,000-crore ice cream industry inch closer to the Rs 11,000-crore target, according to the Indian Ice Cream Manufacturers Association, a body representing 80 private ice cream makers.

For every business to succeed, it is necessary to understand the factors which are influencing consumers to buy ice creams and also how they are making their purchase decision to satisfy their needs. Every buyer will be having a different buying behaviour. So it is very important to know these factors. Consumer perception refers to the consumer's opinion towards your business and its products. It is to measure how customers feel about the brand and make necessary improvements in business. There have previous studies that highlighted that consumer perceptions of brand marketing communications on brand authenticity of fast-moving consumer goods (Dwivedi and Mc Donald, 2018). Similar research results on consumer perception about brands which leads to purchase decision related to FMCG has been found (Gopinath, 2019). For every business, customer is king and their experience matters the most. So business should be more focused on improving customer experience along with taking care of pricing and other factors. Customer perception plays an important role in company's ability to attract new customers and also retain old customers. There will be customers who have been purchasing the brand because of their trust in quality of the brand and also there will be customers who are always searching for varieties of flavours. So to make both of them satisfy, it is important for the company to find out the factors which have more influence on consumers and to give more importance to that factors.

#### 1.1. Statement of the Problem:

Nowadays, it is important for all the companies to make their consumers satisfy and so that they can retain their consumers for a long time. The Company needs to investigate the key contributors towards making a purchase decision by the consumers. It is a challenge for most of the marketers to stand out in the market when all other brands are equally powerful and competing. Building customer's loyalty by maintaining quality, quantity and fair pricing has been the major for years. Now the customers are not only looking for these factors, but they look for nutrition, advertisements, brand image etc. So it is necessary for marketers to know the response of customers towards their brand.



## 1.2 Purpose of The Study:

Meriiboy is one of the most famous brands in ice cream industry. Consumer perception towards Meriiboy ice-cream is an important element which marketers should know about. The study conducted portrays the perception of consumers towards 11 factors included in the Study.

**1.3 Objectives of The Study:** To ascertain the major factors contributing towards customer buying behaviour of Merribooy ice creams.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

There have been studies that linked the attributes of colour, taste as reasons for consumers to show interest in ice creams (Selvendran , 2018). This perception varied from person to person as per reports. Quality standards and promotional strategies used by companies create some impact adding to the above factors. Similar mention of contributing variables like attractiveness, brand, price has been stated in previous literature (Renuka et al, 2018; Muthuvelu, 2013). The ability to differ between fat levels of ice creams was difficult according to test results published in previous literature which was a part of the purchase decision among consumers.

There have been certain pointers in published reports that innovative flavours caught the interest of consumers. Some interesting results were published in literature which mentions that improve mood of the consumers ( Palka , 2017). Climatic factors and willingness to taste new flavours were found among consumers of ice creams in previous studies (Thomas, 2017). Previous investigation has identified the factors like freshness and flavours which also influenced purchase (Yallapragada, 2017). There were some additional factors like calories, fat and package have been mention in earlier research (Cornall, 2016). Certain psychological factors and social factors have been associated with purchase influence in this product as per reports (Hasan Babu & Shams, 2015).

Out of 14 different attributes identified in some research, appearance, nutrition and affordability have been listed to be the least important attributes leading to the consumption pattern of ice creams (Sivaram, 2015). Packaging design and labelling have been linked with purchase influence with different types of ice creams (Das & Hota, 2015; Kumar Singh, 2013; Harish , 2013). Some articles related to consumer perception cement the fact that this affects consumer buying behaviour (Subramanian et al, 2014, Maria Da Silva & Minim , 2014). There have been literature on brand awareness, positioning and customer perceptions about various brands (Shah and Chavda, 2021).

## 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

**3.1. Research Design:** The study uses descriptive research. This type of research design is used as this research describes a population of ice cream consumers and their perception towards it.

**3.2. Population of the Study:** Target population includes all the consumers of Meriiboy ice cream.

**3.3. Sample Size :** The sample size is 200 customers of Meriiboy ice creams in Ernakulam district.

**3.4. Data Collection:** Google forms were used to collect primary data. Secondary data are those which was collected from different articles, journals, books, magazines.

**3.5. Statistical Tools Used:** Primary data is analysed by using percentage analysis. Percentages are special kinds of ratios that express the relationship of one variable in comparison to another percentage analysis formula. Statistical tests used for the study are factor analysis for analysing the data which are collected through questionnaire with the help of Google forms. Other statistical tools used for this study are descriptive statistics, pie charts, and bar graphs. This was done by using the SPSS Software.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

### 4.1 Demographics

The demographic data of the respondents are given in table 1. From the data collected, majority of the respondents were from the younger generation (20 to 40 years). Males formed a major portion of the responses. The respondents were predominantly unmarried. Most of the respondents were graduates. The responses were concentrated from the student community which formed a significant number among the responses. The major share of the respondents were from the lower income band.

**Table 1 Demographics table of Respondents**

SL No.	Particulars	Classification	Frequenc y	Percentage
1	Age	Below 20	25	12.5



		20-40	160	80
		40-50	6	3
		Above 50	9	4.5
2	Marital status	Married	48	24
		Single	152	76
3	Gender	Male	121	60.5
		Female	79	39.5
4	Education	High school	9	4.5
		Undergraduate	119	59.5
		Post graduate	71	35.5
		PhD and above	1	0.5
5	Occupation	Self employed	66	33
		Business	4	2
		Student	108	54
		Unemployed	22	11
6	Yearly Income Level	Below 1,50,000	118	59
		1,50,000 – 4,00,000	59	29.5
		4,00,000 – 7,00,000	17	8.5
		7,00,000 – 10,00,000	3	1.5
		Above 10,00,000	3	1.5

#### 4.2 Exploratory Factor analysis: Factors influencing purchase of Ice Creams:

The KMO value is .856 and Bartlett's test is significant. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Bartlett, 1950) revealed a statistically significant number of correlations amid the variables. This indicates that factor analysis is permissible with given data. Eleven variables have been reduced to two factors which account for 71.737 % of the variance in the data.

**Table 2 KMO and Bartlett's Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.856
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	942.258
	df	55
	Sig.	0

**Table 3 Communalities**

Communalities		
	Initial	Extraction
Variety	1	0.72
Innovativeness	1	0.637
Availability	1	0.694
Quantity	1	0.496
Quality	1	0.693
Price	1	0.403
Appearance	1	0.613
Nutrition	1	0.522
Advertisements	1	0.611
Brand	1	0.439
Offers And Discounts	1	0.446



From the output of Communalities table which shows how much of the variance in the variables has been accounted for by the extracted factors. Normally accepted values of communalities are amid the range 0.40 to 0.70 (Costello and Osborne, 2005). In the current study, all communalities are within this range. Large communalities suggest that a large amount of variance has been accounted for by the factor solution. The variable -"Variety" accounts for 72% of the variance. The lowest variance was shown by the variable-"Price" with approximately 40.3 % was accounted for.

**Table 4 Component Matrix**

Component Matrix <sup>a</sup>		
	Component	
	1	2
Variety	0.804	-0.271
Innovativeness	0.772	-0.201
Availability	0.809	-0.198
Quantity	0.680	-0.181
Quality	0.778	-0.296
Price	0.619	-0.041
Appearance	0.783	0.18
Nutrition	0.514	0.508
Advertisements	0.622	0.474
Brand	0.489	0.447
Offers And Discounts	0.191	0.64

**Table 5 Rotated Component Matrix**

Rotated Component Matrix <sup>a</sup>		
	Component	
	1	2
Variety	0.841	0.109
Innovativeness	0.782	0.158
Availability	0.814	0.177
Quantity	0.691	0.136
Quality	0.829	0.075
Price	0.574	0.235
Appearance	0.695	0.359
Nutrition	0.239	0.682
Advertisements	0.351	0.699
Brand	0.244	0.616
Offers And Discounts	-0.109	0.659

The first component was identified as "Customer Preference Factors " which includes variety, innovativeness, availability, quantity, quality, price and appearance. The second component was identified as "Promotional factors"; which includes nutrition, advertisements, brand and Offers & Discounts. Previous studies have identified factors similar to this study namely "Marketing Programs" (Shariful Haque et al, 2018). Similar studies have identified brand name, variety and price as key factors in choice of ice creams (Shariful Haque et al, 2018; Ahmadi Kaliji et al, 2019). Quality, Quantity and availability have been cited as contributing factors to purchase of ice creams ( Renuka et al, 2018; Balaji et al, 2021; Priyadharshini et al, 2021 ). Advertisement has also been identified as an added factor in purchase influence (Sathya Santhy, 2022).

## 5. CONCLUSION:

This paper investigated the major contributing factors to purchase of ice creams. Here , various factors like variety, innovation, price, availability, etc.,was taken into consideration. The study was conducted among 200 customers. From the study, it was found that people choose to buy Meriiboy ice creams as they offers variety and innovative flavours to consumers. Also, it was found that most of the consumers are not familiar with Meriiboy ads in



social media and Meriiboy could fill this gap to get some more customer attention. Factor analysis was able to generate two factors which influenced the consumers most.

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