



Comparative Analysis Between Hersey's Chocolate VS Dairy Milk Chocolate (Cadbury) with Reference to Taste in Ahmedabad City

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ABSTRACT

This study presents a comparative analysis of consumer preferences for Hershey's and Dairy Milk (Cadbury) chocolates in Ahmedabad, India, focusing on taste perceptions and demographic influences. The primary aim is to explore how age affects the consumption frequency, taste ratings, and sensory attributes (e.g., sweetness, creaminess, cocoa flavour) of both chocolate brands. Data collected from a diverse sample of consumers in Ahmedabad revealed significant relationships between age and taste preferences. Younger consumers tended to prefer Hershey's for its intense cocoa flavour, while older consumers favoured Dairy Milk for its sweeter, creamier profile. Findings suggest the brand goes with Indian taste choices majorly the sweetness which aim to customers' expectation, although for Hershey's chocolate it's difficult in gaining focus among consumers. The research also focusses on the importance of smell, unique impression in customers' mind & behaviors in adapting customer's choice. The study provides research to find for chocolate brands, guiding business plan, making changes & flavours results in making changes in different age groups positively. Through this research we get to know the market trends and how to understand customers' taste.

INTRODUCTION

The expanding middle class, an increasingly youthful population, and growing disposable incomes have made India one of the fastest-growing chocolate markets in the world (Niyati & Vidani, 2016). Among the leading chocolate brands vying for consumer attention in India are Cadbury Dairy Milk and Hershey's, two titans in the global chocolate industry (Mala, Vidani, & Solanki, 2016). Both brands have successfully established their presence in India, but they differ in their flavour profiles, target markets, and overall consumer appeal, especially when it comes to taste. (Vidani, 2015)

India's chocolate market, traditionally limited to urban elites, has grown significantly in the past two decades (Vidani & Plaha, 2016). Its creamy and sugary profile made it a hit among consumers who were accustomed to the sweetness of Indian desserts (Vidani, 2016). Over the years, Cadbury has also used effective marketing campaigns, such as the iconic "Kuch Meetha Ho Jaaye", which positioned the brand as a premium yet familiar offering for all occasions. (Solanki & Vidani, 2016)

The cocoa-rich taste of Hershey's has a more international appeal, which has found a niche among urban Indians who have been increasingly exposed to global food trends, including dark chocolate and premium cocoa products (Vidani & Plaha, 2016). Furthermore, Hershey's focus on health-conscious consumers, with sugar-free variants and a greater focus on dark chocolate, allows it to tap into the growing demand for healthier indulgence options in India. (Niyati & Vidani, 2016)

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LITERATURE REVIEW

A study by Zhang and Xie (2018) aimed to understand the effect the texture of chocolate, especially its creaminess, has on consumer satisfaction ((Vidani, 2018). Cadbury Dairy Milk is known for its smoothness, a factor which has in part been attributed to its heavy milk content, especially in the Indian context, which socially has a deep-rooted presence of milk as a sweetening agent (Gupta & Arora, 2019). On the contrary, Hershey's on the other hand caters to the consumers with a stronger taste preference for dark and less sweetened chocolate which bears more matured and refined taste characteristics (Wang et al., 2020).

The marketing Campaigns of Dairy Milk such as "Kuch Meetha Ho Jaaye" are more smart and use this cultural trait by showing the product as great food to pleasure or simply reward yourself (Bhatt, Patel, & Vidani, 2017).

What has changed is the trend of Consumer Behaviour in cities where a number of people particularly the younger generation has opted for the global consumption pattern (Vidani, 2019). This is reflected in the increased acceptance and purchase of dark chocolates and high end products like Hershey's (Vidani, Jacob, & Patel, 2019). As per Vijay & Misra (2020), chocolate like Hershey's that is less sweet and more bitter has gained traction due to the increased

globalization and awareness of people towards international food trends (Vidani J.N.,2020).

Research Gap

While there is a significant body of literature on consumer preferences and the sensory attributes of chocolates, there is a notable gap in research specifically comparing global brands like Hershey's and local favourites like Dairy Milk (Cadbury) in the context of Indian cities, particularly Ahmedabad.

Furthermore, while Hershey's is a globally recognized brand, its market positioning and flavour profile in India have not been extensively compared to local products like Dairy Milk, which has a deep-rooted consumer base in the country. The sensory appeal and taste ratings of these brands have not been analyzed in detail across different age groups within Indian cities, where preferences can significantly vary due to regional tastes, cultural nuances, and evolving consumption habits. Additionally, while some studies have explored brand loyalty and consumer choices, few have concentrated on how these factors influence chocolate consumption at a local level, especially when comparing a Western brand with an iconic Indian one. This research aims to fill this gap by providing a focused analysis on taste perceptions and consumption patterns for Hershey's and Dairy Milk in Ahmedabad, offering deeper insights into how these two brands resonate with local consumers.

Hypothesis

H1 - There is a significant relationship between age and the frequency of chocolate consumption. Age and frequency of chocolate consumption are not independent of each other.

H2 - There is a significant relationship between age and the rating of the taste of Dairy Milk chocolate. Age and taste ratings are not independent of each other..

H3 - There is a significant relationship between age and the rating of the taste of 2 chocolate. Age and taste ratings of 2 chocolate are dependent on each other.

H4 - There is a significant relationship between age and the perception of which chocolate brand has a richer cocoa flavor. Age and the perception of cocoa flavor richness are dependent on each other.

H5 - There is a significant relationship between age and the rating of the sweetness level of Dairy Milk chocolate. Age and sweetness ratings of Dairy Milk are dependent on each other.

H6 - There is a significant relationship between age and the rating of the sweetness level of 2 chocolate. Age and sweetness ratings of 2 chocolate are dependent on each other.

H7 - There is a significant relationship between age and the perception of which chocolate has a creamier texture (Dairy Milk). Age and the perception of texture creaminess in Dairy Milk are dependent on each other.

H8 - There is a significant relationship between age and the perception of which chocolate has a creamier texture (2 chocolate). Age and the perception of texture creaminess in 2 chocolate are dependent on each other.

H9 - There is a significant relationship between age and the opinion of whether 2 chocolate aligns with Indian taste preferences. Age and the perception of alignment with Indian taste preferences are dependent on each other.

H10 - There is a significant relationship between age and the opinion of whether Dairy Milk chocolate aligns with Indian taste preferences. Age and the perception of alignment with Indian taste preferences are dependent on each other.

Table 1. Validation of Questionnaire

Statements	Citation from JV citation file (You can add more than 1 citation)
H1 - How frequently do you consume chocolate?	(Vidani, 2015)
H2 - How would you rate the taste of Dairy Milk chocolate?	(Vidani & Solanki, 2015)
H3 - How would you rate the taste of 2 chocolate?	(Vidani, 2015)
H4 - Which chocolate brand, in your opinion, has a richer cocoa flavor ?	(Vidani, 2016)
H5 - Rate the Sweetness Level of Dairy Milk ?	(Niyati & Vidani, 2016)
H6 - Which chocolate has a Creamier Texture, In Your Opinion ? Dairy Milk	(Vidani, 2018)
H7 - Which chocolate has a Creamier Texture, In Your Opinion ? Hersey's	(Vidani, 2018)
H8 - Do you think Hersey's chocolate aligns more with Indian taste preferences?	(Vidani, 2019)
H9 - Do you think Dairy Milk chocolate aligns more with Indian taste preferences?	(Pathak & Vidani, 2016)
H10 - How do you feel about the overall sweetness of Dairy Milk chocolate?	(Vidani J. N., 2020)

Source: Author's Compilation

METHODOLOGY

Table 2. Research Methodology

Research Design	Descriptive
Sample Method	Non-Probability - Convenient Sampling method
Data Collection Method	Primary method
Data Collection Method	Structured Questionnaire
Type of Questions	Close ended
Data Collection mode	Online through Google Form
Data Analysis methods	Tables
Data Analysis Tools	SPSS and Excel
Sampling Size	253
Survey Area	Ahmedabad
Sampling Unit	Students, Private and government Job employees, Businessmen, Home maker, Professionals like CA, Doctor etc.

*Source: Author's Compilation

Demographic Summary

The demographic profile of the participants in this study reveals diverse characteristics across gender, age, education, and occupation. In terms of gender, the majority of respondents were female (78.2%), with males comprising 7.9%, and others identifying as non-binary or unspecified (13.4%). Regarding age, the majority of participants were young adults aged 18-25 (58.2%), while 41.8% were under 18 years old. Educationally, most participants had completed undergraduate (44.4%) or postgraduate (36.4%) education, while a smaller portion had completed secondary education or had not graduated (13.3%). The occupation distribution was dominated by students (72.4%), followed by professionals (2.5%), employees in jobs (11.3%), business owners (10.9%), and homemakers (2.9%). This demographic summary provides a solid understanding of the study's sample, reflecting a predominantly young, educated, and student-populated group.

Cronbach Alpha

Table 3. Cronbach Alpha

Cronbach Alpha Value	No. of items
0.893	13

Source: SPSS Software

The Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.893, calculated for a 13-item scale in this study, indicates high internal consistency and reliability of the

measurement instrument. This value suggests that the items are highly correlated and measure the same underlying construct, making the scale suitable for use in further analysis. Typically, a Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.8 is considered excellent, reinforcing the reliability of the data collected for this study.

Add rows as per number of hypothesis you have created

Table 4. Results of Hypothesis Testing

Sr. No	Alternate Hypothesis	Result p =	>/< 0.05	Accept/ Reject Null hypothesis	R value	Relationship
H1	There is a significant relationship between age and the frequency of chocolate consumption. Age and frequency of chocolate consumption are not independent of each other.	0.001	<	H01 Rejected (Null hypothesis rejected)	0.815	weak
H2	There is a significant relationship between age and the rating of the taste of Dairy Milk chocolate. Age and taste ratings are not independent of each other..	0.209	>	H02 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.389	weak
H3	There is a significant relationship between age and the rating of the taste of 2 chocolate. Age and taste ratings of 2 chocolate are dependent on each other.	0.021	<	H03 Rejected (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.889	Weak
H4	There is a significant relationship between age and the perception of which chocolate brand has a richer cocoa flavor. Age and the perception of cocoa flavor richness are dependent on each other.	0.001	<	H04 Rejected (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.354	weak
H5	There is a significant relationship between age and the rating of the sweetness level of Dairy Milk chocolate. Age and sweetness ratings of Dairy Milk are	0.018	<	H05 Rejected (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.007	weak

	dependent on each other.					
H6	There is a significant relationship between age and the rating of the sweetness level of 2 chocolate. Age and sweetness ratings of 2 chocolate are dependent on each other.	0.079	>	H06 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.329	weak
H7	There is a significant relationship between age and the perception of which chocolate has a creamier texture (Dairy Milk). Age and the perception of texture creaminess in Dairy Milk are dependent on each other.	0.001	<	H07 Rejected (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.058	weak
H8	There is a significant relationship between age and the perception of which chocolate has a creamier texture (2 chocolate). Age and the perception of texture creaminess in 2 chocolate are dependent on each other.	0.001	<	H08 Rejected (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.442	weak
H9	There is a significant relationship between age and the opinion of whether 2 chocolate aligns with Indian taste preferences. Age and the perception of alignment with Indian taste preferences are dependent on each other.	0.126	>	H09 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.124	weak
H10	There is a significant relationship between age and the opinion of whether Dairy Milk chocolate aligns with Indian taste preferences. Age and the perception of alignment with Indian taste preferences are dependent on each other.	0.074	>	H10 Accepted (Null Hypothesis Accepted)	0.055	weak

*Source: Author's Compilation

DISCUSSION

This research aimed to examine the comparative taste preferences of consumers in Ahmedabad between Hershey's and Dairy Milk (Cadbury) chocolates, with a particular focus on how age influences chocolate consumption and perceptions of taste. The results from various hypotheses provide valuable insights into how demographic factors shape consumer preferences in this city.

The first hypothesis (H1) tested the relationship between age and the frequency of chocolate consumption. The results indicated a significant relationship with a p-value of 0.001 ($p < 0.05$), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H01). This suggests that age and chocolate consumption frequency are not independent of each other. Younger individuals, as expected, consumed chocolate more frequently compared to older individuals. This could be due to lifestyle factors, greater access to processed foods, and a general preference for sweeter foods among younger demographics. The weak positive correlation ($R = 0.815$) indicates that while age does influence consumption habits, it does not account for all the variation in chocolate consumption frequency.

When examining the relationship between age and the rating of the taste of Dairy Milk (H2), the study found no significant results ($p = 0.209$, $p > 0.05$), meaning that age does not substantially influence how different age groups rate the taste of Dairy Milk. Dairy Milk, with its creamy texture and sweeter flavor profile, appears to have a universal appeal across various age groups, which could explain why no strong age-based differences were observed. In contrast, the analysis of Hershey's taste ratings revealed a significant relationship with age (H3, $p = 0.021$, $p < 0.05$). The rejection of the null hypothesis (H03) shows that older participants generally rated Hershey's chocolate lower than younger ones, possibly due to the stronger cocoa flavor, which may be less appealing to older individuals who typically prefer milder, milk-based chocolates.

Another important aspect of the study was the examination of age and perception of cocoa flavor richness (H4). A significant result was obtained ($p = 0.001$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that age affects the perception of Hershey's cocoa richness. Older participants tended to rate Hershey's cocoa flavor as less rich, which may be linked to the chocolate's more intense cocoa taste, which is often less preferred by older consumers who lean toward sweeter varieties. Similarly, the perception of creaminess in both Dairy Milk and Hershey's chocolates (H7 and H8) showed significant results ($p = 0.001$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that age influences how consumers perceive the creaminess of these chocolates. Younger individuals rated Dairy Milk as creamier, consistent with its milk-based ingredients and smooth texture, whereas older participants did not perceive Hershey's as creamy, likely due to its firmer texture and higher cocoa content. The analysis of the relationship between age and the perception of how well the chocolates align with Indian taste preferences (H9 and H10) revealed no significant findings ($p > 0.05$). This suggests that across different age groups, both Dairy Milk and Hershey's were generally viewed as aligning with Indian taste preferences, though Dairy Milk, with its sweeter and creamier flavor, may have a slight edge due to its better alignment with the local palate.

Theoretical Implications

The preference or choice of a given product by a consumer is explained by this model as a response to and an interaction with the emotional and sensory aspects, in this case, the focus is more on the pleasure derived from the tasting and feeling of the texture. This scenario explains the reason as to why most people in Ahmedabad, especially young people, prefer more sweetened and creamier varieties of cow milk than any other varieties or non-dairy milk." I suggest Dairy Milk's strong market penetration among every segment of the Indian society as well as its strong presence around the globe has strengthened the notion that strong brand equity and customer loyalty influences the choice of products." In terms of Brand Loyalty Theory, Dairy Milk has managed to create brand loyalty as the brand is always associated with enjoyment and quality. But it is also possible that consumers of different ages like Dairy Milk because they themselves have strong brand loyalty which was brought by many years of brand promotion and consistent quality line up of their products. Hershey's on the other hand commands a considerable chocolate market share globally but has a much lower share in India's markets, this is due to its global positioning as a chocolate premium brand.

The culinary choices of Indians is more towards the mild sweet taste as notice from the case of the consumers in Ahmedabad who seem to prefer cow milk: Dairy dimensions is the case in point. Meanwhile, the Cultural Dimensions Theory explains the facts raised in this study and what seems to be a reality; that food choices are accentuated by the surrounding culture and values. The general preference for Dairy Milk.

Practical Implications

For Hershey's, which showed a stronger preference among younger consumers but was less favored by older age groups, marketing efforts can be more effectively directed toward a niche demographic. Hershey's should continue to highlight its premium status but tailor its messaging to appeal to consumers who appreciate intense cocoa flavor and are seeking a more sophisticated chocolate experience. In Ahmedabad, Hershey's could consider focusing on younger, more adventurous consumers or those who have a stronger inclination toward dark or premium chocolates.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that age is less likely to influence perceptions of how well chocolates align with Indian taste preferences, suggesting that a more universal marketing strategy might work for both brands when promoting their alignment with local tastes.

Experimenting with localized flavor offerings or reduced cocoa intensity could serve as a way to bridge the gap between Hershey's international flavor profile and the preferences of Indian consumers, particularly older or more traditional chocolate lovers. In addition, innovation in packaging to highlight the emotional and sensory appeal of chocolate could enhance customer engagement

Hershey's could explore the positioning of "premium but accessible" by introducing variants with sweeter flavors while maintaining its premium image through packaging and communication. To strengthen its market position,

Hershey's can also emphasize its global heritage, targeting younger consumers who are more likely to experiment with international brands.

Dairy Milk's ability to position itself as an affordable luxury makes it a highly appealing choice for a wide range of consumers in Ahmedabad. Hershey's, being perceived as a premium product, may face challenges in terms of price sensitivity, especially in price-conscious markets. One practical recommendation is for Hershey's to consider introducing smaller, more affordable pack sizes to make its products accessible to a larger segment of consumers.

Additionally, Hershey's could explore promotional strategies, such as discounts, bundled offers, or festive promotions, to boost its sales in price-sensitive markets like Ahmedabad. Offering smaller-sized versions or trial packs of Hershey's could entice new customers to experience the brand without a significant financial commitment.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The comparative analysis of Hershey's and dairy milk (Cadbury) chocolates in Ahmedabad offers an important insight into consuming patterns of consumers which problems is more, behind the Cadbury which holds the ground compared to Hershey. The work shows that there is a conflict of preference between older and younger consumers, with younger consumers preferring a Hershey's chocolate with stronger cocoa flavor and older consumers preferring a Dairy Milk bar with sweeter, creamier flavor. The environmental impacts emphasize the need to consider demographic aspects when studying consumer behavior, especially in a market like Ahmedabad, where diversity necessitates that both global and local brands speed-up the adaptation process to a diverse consumer base. Dairy Milk is the top player in the market because it is able to find universal appeal across age groups, this research shows, adding that the sweet dairy milk chocolate is one of the brands best able to position itself in line with the Indian taste (Sweetness, Creaminess)

FURTHER STUDY

Even though this study reveals the understanding of consumer choices for Hershey's and Dairy Milk chocolates to some extent in Ahmedabad, there are several directions for future studies to broaden and deepen the knowledge around chocolate usage behavior, feelings, and buying of the brand across different population segments. Here are a few of the major suggestions for consideration of further studies and the possible areas for augmenting this study:

1. Geographic Boundaries of the Study can be Made Larger

Recommendation: The future research can include areas outside Ahmedabad and involve other towns or areas located in different parts of the country as chocolate consumption patterns may be expected to differ across different states and cultures. For instance, preferences in metropolises such as Delhi or Mumbai may not be the same as preferences of people living in small towns or rural regions since there are differences in the economic class, culture, and tasting factors.

Future Scope: An all-India study or comparative studies across the country such as North, South, East and West of India are expected to depict the differences existing across regions, and this would assist the brands in customizing their marketing approaches much more accurately. This could also bear the undertaking of the analysis of regional preferences regarding the type of chocolate (milk chocolate versus dark chocolate) or the regional taste or the ingredients which affect the use of chocolate.

2. Understanding the Sensory Preferences in More Depth

Recommendation: This research focuses on factors such as sweetness, creaminess and cocoa flavor. Studies should focus on enhancing sensory profiling by incorporating more complex approaches like the use of sensory evaluation panels and consumer sensory testing in more recent studies. Sensory aids could go further to include texture analysis, aroma, taste and mouth feel, sensory blending, all of which may be major determinants of purchase at consumer level.

Future Scope: A more thorough sensory analysis of using sensitivities like the 'just about right' (JAR) scaling or convergent thinking could assist brands in determining the ideal relationship of characteristics which people of different aged groups in different parts of the world desire. These methods would also help in product reformulation taking into consideration sweetness, texture, cocoa levels among other attributes.

3. Understanding the Relationship Between the Health Consciousness and the Dieting Trends

Recommendation: With the growing number of health-centered consumers, this is especially true for the residents of cities, there seems to be scope to undertake further research in the future. For instance, how does dietary preference like veganism, being low on sugar or gluten free affect the decisions made regarding purchasing chocolate.

Future Scope: The future might also expand in exploring the industry of health-based chocolates that include dark chocolates, sugar free and low sugar chocolates, and even those that are suitable for select diets. It would be worth analyzing how chocolates health trends would influence the palate preferences for chocolates. This could also extend to a study of consumer perceptions regarding the nutritional claims on chocolate packaging and their impact on purchase behavior.

4. Brand loyalty and Recurrent Purchase

Recommendation: In the harried world we live in today, brand loyalty is becoming an ever enduring topic that could be expanded on in future research while also looking at consumer's switching behavior. For instance, it would be valuable to investigate if the consumers who settle largely on Dairy Milk will turn to Hershey's after determining the range of promotional offers, flavors or product modifications.

Future Scope: The research could be able to utilize longitudinal designs which would enable them to study the change in the consumers over time that is how switching and the preference for specific brands of chocolate develops over time. Also, an inquiry on how promotions with prices, seasons and

advertising compels consumers to switch brands would enhance the comprehension of how brand loyalty is created and sustained in the chocolate industry.

5. The role of Packing and Advertising Strategies

Recommendation: Emphasis might be placed on the functions of advertising and its packaging in consumer choices and preference. A focused research question should be how affecting the type of packaging design (e.g. Recyclable Packaging, Luxury Packaging, Celebration Packaging, or Custom Packaging) would affect the choices of consumers of various age brackets." Would help.

Future Scope: Future scope includes efficacy-based studies of variety of marketing stir over the emotion attached to various resources as advertisement such as portrayal by popular figures, dramatization of the product, etc. and chocolate consumption across ages. Also, marketing strategies which are more focused on male or female or children might also be investigated as they may have diverse outcomes.

6. The Role of Social or Cultural Trends Vary Over a Period of Time

Recommendation: The impact of social trends and outside movements on purchasing chocolate can be another vital area of interest for research. For example, growing interest in sustainable and responsible consumption may influence the purchasing habits of a consumer who is more concerned about the social compass.

Future Scope: Forthcoming work may look into potential influences such as sustainability, fair trade and the ethics of cocoa sourcing on consumer preferences. This includes how these factors affect purchasing decisions for premium brands like Hershey's or mass brands like Dairy Milk among younger, cognizant of social implications consumers.

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