

**EVALUATING CONSUMER PREFERENCES FOR COOKING OIL
BRANDS: A STUDY FOR KPL SHUDHI OIL**

Project Report

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DECLARATION

I, **AMAL N MENON (Reg. No. YPAWMBA042)**, hereby declare that the Project Report entitled “**EVALUATING CONSUMER PREFERENCES FOR COOKING OIL BRANDS: A STUDY FOR KPL SHUDHI OIL**” has been prepared by me and submitted to the University of Calicut in partial fulfilment of requirements for the award of the Master of Business Administration, is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of **Ms. Nayana S, Assistant Professor**, of Naipunnya Business School, Pongam, Koratty East, Thrissur. I also declare that this Project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any Degree, Diploma, Title or recognition before any authority.

Place: Koratty East, Thrissur

Date:

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The cooking oil industry is a dynamic realm where purity, quality, and flavour converge to define culinary experiences worldwide. Among the myriad players in this industry, KPL SHUDHI emerges as a beacon of excellence, setting new standards for purity, innovation, and customer satisfaction.

Rooted in a legacy of uncompromising quality and commitment to consumer well-being, KPL SHUDHI has carved a niche for itself in the competitive landscape of the cooking oil industry. With a focus on sourcing the finest raw materials and employing state-of-the-art manufacturing processes, KPL SHUDHI ensures that every drop of its cooking oil upholds the highest standards of purity and nutritional integrity.

At the heart of KPL SHUDHI's philosophy lies a deep understanding of the importance of health and wellness in today's fast-paced world. By offering cooking oils that are not only pure and natural but also rich in essential nutrients, KPL SHUDHI aims to empower consumers to make healthier choices without compromising on taste or quality.

Moreover, KPL SHUDHI's commitment to innovation drives its continuous quest for excellence in product development and customer satisfaction. Whether it's introducing new variants to cater to evolving consumer preferences or leveraging cutting-edge technology to enhance production processes, KPL SHUDHI remains at the forefront of innovation, anticipating and exceeding the needs of its discerning clientele. In addition to its unwavering focus on quality and innovation, KPL SHUDHI also prides itself on its customer-centric approach. By fostering strong relationships with its customers and prioritizing their feedback and concerns, KPL SHUDHI strives to create a seamless and enriching experience for every consumer who chooses its cooking oils.

In conclusion, KPL SHUDHI stands as a shining example of purity, quality, and innovation in the cooking oil industry. With a rich legacy rooted in tradition and a relentless pursuit of excellence, KPL SHUDHI has redefined the standards for cooking oils, setting new benchmarks for purity, nutritional integrity, and customer satisfaction.

Through its unwavering commitment to sourcing the finest raw materials, employing state-of-the-art manufacturing processes, and prioritizing customer feedback, KPL SHUDHI has earned the trust and loyalty of consumers worldwide. Its range of cooking oils not only enhances the flavours and aromas of culinary creations but also promotes health and wellness, empowering consumers to make healthier choices without compromising on taste or quality.

Moreover, KPL SHUDHI's dedication to innovation ensures that it remains at the forefront of the industry, constantly evolving to meet the changing needs and preferences of consumers. Whether it's introducing new variants, leveraging advanced technology, or fostering strong relationships with customers, KPL SHUDHI continues to push the boundaries of excellence, driving positive change in the culinary landscape.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study aims into the purchase behaviour of consumers concerning KPL SHUDHI products, specifically focusing on cooking oil. Understanding these behaviours involves analyzing the factors that influence consumer preferences for various types of cooking oil available at KPL SHUDHI. Additionally, the study seeks to ascertain the level of consumer satisfaction with these cooking oils. By investigating these objectives, the research will provide a comprehensive understanding of the key drivers behind consumer choices and their satisfaction levels. This insight will be crucial for enhancing product offerings and tailoring marketing strategies to better meet consumer needs and preferences, ultimately improving the overall consumer experience with KPL SHUDHI products.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To understand purchase behaviour of consumers towards KPL SHUDHI products.
2. To determine the importance of each factor that influences the consumer preference towards cooking oil at KPL SHUDHI.
3. To evaluate the level of consumer satisfaction towards these factors of KPL SHUDHI.

1.4 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of this study encompasses a detailed examination of consumer purchase behaviour related to KPL SHUDHI products, with a particular emphasis on cooking oil. It will involve an analysis of the various factors that influence consumer preferences for different types of cooking oil at KPL SHUDHI, including price, quality, brand reputation, health considerations, and marketing efforts. Furthermore, the study will assess the level of satisfaction among consumers regarding these cooking oils. Data will be collected through surveys, interviews, and sales analysis, providing a comprehensive view of consumer attitudes and behaviors. The findings will offer actionable insights to improve product offerings, enhance customer satisfaction, and guide strategic marketing decisions at KPL SHUDHI.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a descriptive research methodology to evaluate consumer preferences for cooking oil brands, focusing specifically on KPL Shudhi oil. The research is conducted in the Irinjalakuda municipality, situated near the KPL Oil Mills in Thrissur district, Kerala. This location is chosen due to its proximity to the oil mills and the significant presence of consumers familiar with KPL Shudhi oil. The sample design includes a total of 120 respondents, selected using a convenient sampling technique. This method ensures that the study captures a diverse and representative cross-section of cooking oil consumers within the area, providing valuable insights into their preferences and purchasing behaviors.

The duration of the study is set for 56 days, allowing sufficient time to gather comprehensive data and analyze consumer trends effectively. Data collection is conducted using both primary and secondary sources. Primary data is gathered through a Google Form questionnaire, specifically designed for consumers of KPL Shudhi oil. The questionnaire incorporates questions based on a 5-point Likert scale, which measures various aspects of consumer preferences, satisfaction levels, and purchasing decisions. This scale helps in quantifying the attitudes and opinions of the respondents towards KPL Shudhi oil, facilitating a more precise analysis.

Secondary data is sourced from articles, research papers, and company websites, providing additional context and supporting information to complement the primary data. This dual approach ensures a robust and well-rounded dataset, enhancing the reliability and validity of the research findings. For data analysis, the study employs percentage analysis, graphical representations, and tables. These tools help in visualizing the data and presenting the results in an easily interpretable manner. Graphs and charts are used to depict consumer preferences and trends, while tables provide detailed numerical summaries, making the findings accessible and comprehensible to a broad audience.

The measurement utilized for the investigation is 'Five Point Likert scale. Scaling is the area of measurement that involves the development of a tool that connects qualitative ideas with quantitative metric units. A Likert scale is a technique used to portray individuals' viewpoints toward a topic. It is the most frequently used technique for scaling responses in survey research. The Likert Scale is used to allow individuals to express the degree to which they agree or disagree with a specific statement.

The format of a five-point Likert scale, for example, could be:

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neutral
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree

TOOLS USED FOR THE STUDY

To accomplish the objective of the study, the researcher had to depend on the primary data. Primary data refers to information that is collected firsthand and for the first time using a questionnaire. To guarantee that respondents answered the questions candidly and truthfully, they were informed that there were no right or wrong answers to these questions and that their professional standing would be held in complete secrecy.

➤ **Percentage Analysis**

The percentage method was used for data analysis. In percentage analysis, the information is condensed into a standardized format with a base of 100, making it easier to compare. The main purpose of percentage analysis is to standardize the responses of the participants. This analysis is conducted on all the data collected through the survey, primarily to understand the distribution of respondents in each category. Percentage analysis utilizes percentages to process the data. This approach converts the numbers into a range of 0-100 using percentages.

The formula used is:

$$\text{Percentage of Respondent} = \frac{\text{No. of Respondent}}{\text{Total no. of respondent}} \times 100$$

Tools used for the presentation of data

Tables, graphs, and charts were used for the presentation of data.

- **Pie chart**

A pie chart shows data, information, and statistics in an easily readable pie slice format with various pie widths that indicate the number of instances of a certain data component. More of that particular data was acquired the larger the slice.

- **Bar chart**

A bar graph is a type of mathematical visualization of data. A bar graph is a chart that compares two categories of data using bars; there are two types of bar graphs: vertical and horizontal.

DATA COLLECTION

Data collection involves the systematic recording and accounting of information gathered during an investigation. Only primary data is used for the study. Primary data refers to original materials that serve as the basis for research. They consist of first-hand testimonies or direct evidence related to the topic being studied.

Primary data presents information in its original form, without any interpretation, summarization, or assessment by other authors. In this study, surveys are used to collect primary data from the participants. Employee feedback is obtained through the use of

questionnaires. The study participants are allowed to complete the questionnaire themselves. The primary data for this study is collected through the use of questionnaires.

Secondary data in this study includes both published and unpublished information. Published data are sourced from technical and trade journals, books, magazines, newspapers, reports, and publications from various business and industry associations, among other published sources of information. Unpublished data sources include scholars, researchers, trade associations, labor bureaus, and other public or private individuals and organizations.

1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study may face several limitations. First, the data collected might not be representative of all KPL SHUDHI consumers, leading to potential bias. Second, respondents' self-reported data can be influenced by social desirability bias, affecting the accuracy of their responses. Third, the study may not account for external factors such as market trends or economic conditions that influence consumer behavior. Additionally, time constraints and limited resources could restrict the depth of the analysis. Finally, the rapidly changing consumer preferences in the market may limit the study's findings to a specific time frame, reducing their long-term applicability.

1.7 INDUSTRY PROFILE

Introduction to the oil industry

The coconut oil production sector is an essential industry in the worldwide market for consumer goods, offering a variety of products made from coconuts. Coconut oil, with its diverse uses in the food, personal care, and industrial fields, has become widely favoured because of its nutritional advantages and adaptable characteristics. This inclusive overview of the coconut oil production sector will examine its past origins, manufacturing methods, international market patterns, health advantages, eco-friendly initiatives, and future possibilities. Within the country's agricultural sector and consumer goods market, India's coconut oil manufacturing sector is of utmost significance. India is one of the world's top producers and users of coconut oil, and the sector is important to the economy since it creates jobs and supports both domestic and worldwide markets. The processing sector's traditional industry has been the extraction

of coconut oil. The cost of coconut oil continues to affect the cost of the coconut. The three major processes used to create coconut oil are rotaries, oil expellers, and chakkus. The sector is dominated by the expellers. Statistics indicate that there are over 1400 oil mills in India, which produce nearly 450000 tons of coconut oil annually, of which 40% are used for personal care products and the remainder for industrial uses. The updated facilities contribute to both the highest level of coconut oil extraction and the lowest potential production costs.

The demand for branded packaged coconut oil has increased as a result of modern packing techniques and emerging uses for coconut oil. The market's various brands compete fiercely with one another. The introduction of coconut oil to the country's northern region, where other edible oils were previously utilized for cooking, as well as the product's increased popularity, have made it a threat to other edible oils. Presently, more than 50 businesses in India produce and sell branded coconut oil. Many of these businesses, including Kerafed, have Kerala roots. Additionally joining the market is the state trading corporation

The majority of large-scale enterprises promote their goods in eye-catching packs and pouches, which are well-liked by urban consumers. Most of the products sold by the small scale units are sold in loose form. Large-scale industrial production facilities, medium-scale contemporary manufacturing facilities, small-scale traditional oil mills, and other players make up India's coconut oil manufacturing business.

Several Indian states, including Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Maharashtra, which are renowned for their coconut farming, are involved in the sector. In India, coconut oil is used in a variety of consumer goods, including soaps, shampoos, cosmetics, and candies. It is an essential component of the nation's cultural and culinary traditions. In addition, coconut oil is used to make a variety of consumer goods, including soaps, shampoos, cosmetics, and candies. The sector has both potential and difficulties. On the plus side, rising interest in natural and organic products, increased focus on the health advantages of coconut oil, and the acceptance of traditional treatments have all increased demand for coconut oil in India. Additionally, coconut oil's adaptability and variety of uses have contributed to its continuing adoption across numerous industries.

However, there are difficulties in India's coconut oil manufacturing sector as well. Weather, pests, and disease changes that affect coconut production can affect the cost and availability of raw materials, causing price volatility and supply chain disruptions.

Responsible sourcing and production methods within the sector are required due to sustainability issues like deforestation, land degradation, and water usage. Promoting organic cultivation techniques, sustainable agricultural practices, and effective supply chain management have all been undertaken in an effort to address these issues.

To increase the competitiveness of Indian coconut oil in domestic and international markets, government initiatives and industry groups have concentrated on advancing technology, infrastructure, and quality control procedures. Value-added coconut products, such as virgin coconut oil (VCO), extra virgin coconut oil, and cold-pressed coconut oil, have been increasingly popular in India in recent years.

Customers who are interested in better quality and purity standards and who are health-conscious are catered to by these premium products. It's vital to keep in mind that since my previous update, the situation of India's coconut oil production industry may have changed. I advise consulting industry publications, market research studies, and trustworthy news sources pertaining to the area for the most recent and accurate information on the state of the sector in India today.

Historical Background of Coconut Oil Manufacturing

The utilization of palm nuts and palm nut oil can be traced back countless years, with a bountiful past firmly established in tropical areas where palm nuts naturally flourish. Palm nut oil has played a vital role in customary nourishment, remedial customs, and cultural heritage in these regions for ages. In the past, palm nut oil was obtained through conventional techniques like shredding the palm nut flesh, desiccating it, and manually squeezing it to acquire the oil. Nevertheless, with progress in technology, the manufacturing procedure has become more refined and effective. Over 3000 years have passed since the first mention of coconut in India.

With millions of nuts produced each year, India is one of the world's top producers of coconuts. In the past, it was mostly grown along the West and East coasts' coastal belts. From the coastal districts, it extended to interior regions and a number of North and North Eastern states. Under various agroclimatic conditions, the Indian coastline region is dispersed throughout 18 states and 3 union territories. According to the current survey, India produces roughly Rs. 12000 crores worth of coconuts annually.

Strengths of Indian Coconut Oil Industry

- Producer of coconut oil with the best milking copra in the world, renowned for its flavor and aroma.
- Numerous cooperative societies and farmers are involved in primary processing and commercialization.
- A wide variety of coconut products, both edible and non-edible, are available for export.
- Technical know-how and trained manpower are required for the production of coconut-based products.
- Hundreds of reputable and established private enterprises have won the manufacturing and marketing of coconut oil.

Types of Coconut Oil

1. Refined coconut oil is a type of coconut oil that undergoes a refining process to remove impurities, flavour, and aroma. Coconut oil is derived from the meat of mature coconuts and is known for its high content of saturated fats, particularly medium-chain triglycerides (MCTs). Refined coconut oil is one of the two main types of coconut oil available on the market, the other being virgin (unrefined) coconut oil.

The process of refining coconut oil involves several steps:

- **Drying:** The coconut meat is first dried using various methods like sun drying, kiln drying, or mechanical drying. This step reduces the moisture content in the coconut, which is essential for oil extraction.
- **Extraction:** The dried coconut meat is then mechanically pressed or extracted using solvent extraction methods to obtain coconut oil. This initial extraction produces what is known as "crude coconut oil."
- **Degumming:** Crude coconut oil contains impurities such as gums, proteins, and other undesirable substances. The oil is subjected to a degumming process to remove these impurities, resulting in a clearer oil.
- **Bleaching:** In the bleaching process, the oil is passed through a filter to remove any

remaining impurities, pigments, and colour compounds. This step results in a more neutral-coloured oil.

- **Deodorization:** Refined coconut oil is further deodorized to remove any residual odour or taste. Steam or other methods are used to deodorize the oil, making it virtually odourless and tasteless.
 - **Hydrogenation:** Some refined coconut oils may undergo a hydrogenation process to increase their melting point and create a more solid consistency. Hydrogenation converts some of the unsaturated fats into saturated fats, making the oil more stable at higher temperatures. However, this process also produces trans fats, which are considered unhealthy. Therefore, hydrogenated coconut oil is generally not recommended for consumption.
2. **Virgin coconut oil** is a type of coconut oil that is extracted from fresh coconut meat without undergoing any chemical refining or bleaching processes. It is often referred to as "unrefined" coconut oil. Virgin coconut oil is considered to be of higher quality compared to its refined counterpart because it retains more of the natural nutrients, flavor, and aroma present in fresh coconuts.

The process of obtaining virgin coconut oil involves the following steps:

- **Harvesting:** Mature coconuts are harvested from coconut palm trees.
- **Extraction:** The white meat from the fresh coconuts is carefully removed from the shell and then grated or shredded to create coconut gratings.
- **Pressing or Cold-Pressing:** The coconut gratings are then subjected to mechanical pressing or cold-pressing to extract the coconut milk from the coconut meat. This coconut milk contains the oil content.
- **Separation:** After the coconut milk is extracted, it is allowed to stand for a period, during which the oil naturally separates from the water content of the milk. The oil is then collected and filtered to remove any remaining coconut solids.

The resulting virgin coconut oil retains its natural coconut flavor and aroma, making it a popular choice for cooking, baking, and various culinary applications. It has a rich, tropical coconut scent and taste, which can add a distinctive flavor to dishes.

Virgin coconut oil is known for its potential health benefits due to its high content of medium-chain fatty acids (MCFAs), particularly lauric acid. MCFAs are easily digestible and quickly metabolized by the body, providing a readily available source of energy.

In addition to its culinary uses, virgin coconut oil has found applications in skincare, hair care, and as a natural moisturizer due to its moisturizing and emollient properties. It is often used in natural beauty products and home remedies for skin and hair care.

When purchasing virgin coconut oil, it's essential to look for high-quality, organic, and cold-pressed varieties to ensure that the oil is minimally processed and retains its natural goodness.

3. Organic coconut oil is a type of coconut oil that is produced from coconuts grown without the use of synthetic chemicals, pesticides, or genetically modified organisms (GMOs). It is considered a more natural and environmentally friendly option compared to conventionally produced coconut oil. The production of organic coconut oil follows strict organic farming practices, which prioritize sustainability, biodiversity, and ecological balance. The key characteristics and features of organic coconut oil include:
 - **Organic Farming Practices:** Organic coconut oil is derived from coconuts cultivated using organic farming methods. This means that the coconuts are grown without the use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, or synthetic additives. Organic farmers rely on natural compost, crop rotation, and biological pest control to maintain soil fertility and control pests.
 - **Non-GMO:** Organic coconut oil is sourced from coconuts that are not genetically modified. It is free from genetically engineered crops or ingredients.
 - **No Chemical Processing:** The production of organic coconut oil does not involve any chemical refining, bleaching, or deodorizing. It is typically extracted using mechanical methods like cold-pressing, ensuring that the oil retains its natural nutrients and flavor.
 - **Health Benefits:** Organic coconut oil, like other types of coconut oil, contains medium-chain fatty acids (MCFAs) such as lauric acid, which are believed to have potential health benefits. These MCFAs are easily digestible and can provide a quick source of energy.

- **Nutrient-Rich:** Organic coconut oil retains more of the natural nutrients, antioxidants, and beneficial compounds present in coconuts due to its minimal processing. It is rich in vitamins, minerals, and essential fatty acids.
- **Culinary and Beauty Uses:** Organic coconut oil is versatile and can be used for various culinary applications, such as cooking, baking, and frying. It is also popular for skincare and hair care due to its moisturizing and nourishing properties.
- **Environmental and Social Responsibility:** Organic coconut farming practices prioritize environmental sustainability and the well-being of farmers and communities. Organic agriculture aims to minimize the impact on the environment, conserve natural resources, and promote fair trade practices.

When purchasing organic coconut oil, look for reputable brands or certifications that indicate its organic status, such as the USDA Organic seal or other recognized organic certification labels. These certifications ensure that the coconut oil meets strict organic standards and has been produced according to organic farming principles. It's important to note that while organic coconut oil is generally regarded as a healthier and more environmentally friendly choice, it should still be used in moderation as it is high in saturated fats. As with any dietary or skincare product, individual preferences and health considerations should be taken into account when incorporating organic coconut oil into one's lifestyle.

The process of refining coconut oil involves several steps: Production Processes in the Coconut Oil Manufacturing Industry

The production of coconut oil involves several important steps, including gathering, extraction, purification, and packaging. Let's explore each of these steps:

1. **Harvesting:** Coconuts are gathered when they are fully mature. Skilled workers either climb coconut trees or use long poles to collect the coconuts, making sure not to damage them during the gathering process.
2. **Extraction:** There are multiple techniques for extracting coconut oil from the gathered coconuts. The traditional technique involves grating the coconut flesh and then using mechanical pressure or pressing to extract the oil. This process produces virgin coconut oil (VCO) known for its unique scent and taste.

3. **Purification:** The purification process involves further refining the extracted oil to improve its quality, eliminate impurities, and ensure a longer shelf life. This process typically includes steps such as degumming, neutralization, bleaching, and deodorization.
4. **Packaging:** Once the oil has been purified, it is packaged in various forms such as bottles, jars, cans, or large containers, depending on the target market and distribution channels.

Global Market Trends and Demand for Coconut Oil

The demand for coconut oil has experienced substantial growth in recent years due to several factors:

1. **Health Benefits:** Coconut oil is well-known for its health advantages. It contains medium-chain fatty acids (MCFAs), which are believed to offer quick energy, support digestion, and contribute to overall well-being. The increasing awareness of these health benefits has propelled consumer demand for coconut oil as a wholesome cooking oil alternative.
2. **Versatility and Applications:** Coconut oil's adaptable properties have contributed to its popularity in various industries. In the food sector, it is utilized in cooking, baking, and as an ingredient in food items. It is also widely employed in the personal care industry for skincare, haircare, and cosmetic products due to its moisturizing and nourishing properties. Moreover, coconut oil is utilized in the industrial sector, such as for biofuel production and as a raw material for various manufacturing processes.
3. **Natural and Plant-Based Trend:** The growing demand for natural and plant based products has significantly influenced the coconut oil market. Consumers are increasingly seeking natural alternatives to conventional oils and petroleum products, driving the demand for coconut oil as a sustainable and environmentally-friendly choice.
4. **Regional and Cultural Significance:** Coconut oil holds cultural significance in regions where coconuts are indigenous, such as Southeast Asia, India, and parts of Africa. In these regions, coconut oil is extensively used in traditional cooking, religious rituals, and cultural practices, contributing to its consistent demand.

Sustainability Initiatives in the Coconut Oil Manufacturing Industry

The coconut oil manufacturing sector has taken action to address these issues in light of the increasing emphasis on sustainability and environmental responsibility:

1. **Responsible Sourcing:** To guarantee that coconuts are sourced from ethically and sustainably run plantations, several coconut oil firms are using responsible sourcing processes. This includes encouraging organic farming methods, backing fair trade activities, and preventing habitat degradation and deforestation.
2. **Waste Management:** Efforts are being made to reduce waste output and increase resource use in the manufacturing process. The environmental impact of production can be minimized by turning coconut waste, such as coconut shells and husks, into goods like activated charcoal, coir- based compounds, and biofuel.
3. **Certification Programs:** A variety of certification programs, including organic and fairtrade certificates, give customers reassurance about ethical sourcing and sustainable production methods. These accreditations encourage businesses committed to sustainability and assist consumers in making informed decisions.

Future Prospects of the Coconut Oil Manufacturing Industry

In the upcoming years, the coconut oil manufacturing sector is anticipated to expand steadily. The following factors affect its prospects for the future:

1. **Health and Wellness Trends:** The demand for natural and healthier alternatives, such as coconut oil, is probably being driven by the growing consumer focus on health and wellness. The demand for coconut oil as a cooking oil, dietary supplement, and component of functional foods is anticipated to increase as consumers become more health-conscious.
2. **Sustainable and ethical consumerism:** The endeavors of the coconut oil manufacturing business are in line with consumers' growing preference for goods that are produced in a sustainable and ethical manner.
3. **Businesses that place a strong emphasis on sustainability, ethical sourcing, and environmental stewardship** are more likely to draw in ethical customers and acquire a competitive edge.
4. **Technological Advancements:** Ongoing technological developments present potential to improve productivity, boost efficiency, and broaden the range of

available products. The industry's growth prospects can be further improved by cutting-edge technology like cold-pressed extraction techniques, energy efficient refining procedures, and innovative packaging options.

5. **Market Expansion:** Both established markets and rising economies are driving up demand for coconut oil, which is good news for businesses who produce it. Manufacturers can expand their reach and take advantage of the rising demand by looking into new markets and distribution avenues as coconut-based products become more and more popular on a worldwide scale.

Demand and consumption trends in coconut oil market

1. **Growing Health and Wellness Awareness:** Consumers' increasing awareness of health and wellness has driven the demand for natural and minimally processed food products. Organic, virgin, and unrefined coconut oil variants have witnessed strong demand as consumers seek products with fewer additives and chemical processing.
2. **Rising Demand in Personal Care and Cosmetics:** Coconut oil's moisturizing and nourishing properties have made it a popular ingredient in personal care and cosmetic products. It is commonly used in skincare lotions, hair care products, and natural cosmetics.
3. **Shift Towards Sustainable and Ethical Sourcing:** Consumers' growing interest in sustainability and ethical sourcing has prompted some manufacturers to focus on sourcing coconut oil from certified organic and fairtrade suppliers. This trend caters to consumers who value products with a positive environmental and social impact.
4. **Competing Vegetable Oils Market:** While coconut oil gained popularity, it faced competition from other vegetable oils, such as olive oil, avocado oil, and various nut oils, which also gained recognition for their potential health benefits and culinary versatility.
5. **Fluctuations in Supply and Prices:** The coconut oil market has been subject to supply fluctuations due to factors such as weather conditions affecting coconut crops, disease outbreaks in coconut plantations, and changes in production volumes in key producing countries.
6. **Regional Demand and Consumption Patterns:** Demand for coconut oil varies regionally based on culinary traditions, cultural preferences, and awareness of health benefits. Coconut oil is a staple in some tropical regions, while in other parts of the world, its use has been influenced by changing dietary trends.

Technological advancement in coconut oil extractions

- **Mechanical Extraction Techniques:** Traditional coconut oil extraction methods involved manual or simple mechanical pressing of coconut meat to extract the oil. However, technological advancements have led to the development of more efficient and automated mechanical extraction techniques. These methods involve the use of hydraulic or screw presses, which can extract a higher percentage of oil from coconut meat, leading to increased productivity and reduced wastage.
- **Cold-Pressing Technology:** Cold-pressing is a gentle extraction method that involves applying pressure to coconut meat without the use of heat or chemicals. This technique helps retain more of the natural nutrients, flavor, and aroma of the coconut oil. Cold-pressed coconut oil is often marketed as premium or virgin coconut oil due to its superior quality and health benefits.
- **Centrifugation and Decanting:** Modern centrifugation and decanting techniques are used to separate the oil from the coconut milk or coconut cream more efficiently. These processes help achieve higher yields of oil while ensuring better separation of water and impurities.
- **Continuous Extraction Systems:** Continuous extraction systems have been developed to streamline the coconut oil extraction process. These systems can process large quantities of coconut meat continuously, resulting in higher production volumes and improved productivity.
- **Improved Pre-Treatment Processes:** Pre-treatment of coconut meat is crucial to facilitate oil extraction. Technological advancements in pre-treatment methods, such as drying techniques and grating technologies, have optimized the efficiency of the oil extraction process.
- **Solvent Extraction:** While solvent extraction is not commonly used for coconut oil extraction due to the preference for mechanical or cold-pressing methods, some modern solvent extraction techniques have been explored to extract oil from coconut residues or copra meal after mechanical extraction.
- **Automation and Control Systems:** Automation and control systems have been introduced to monitor and regulate the various stages of coconut oil extraction processes. These systems help ensure consistent product quality, reduce human error, and improve overall process efficiency.

- **Waste and Byproduct Management:** Technological advancements have also focused on finding innovative ways to utilize coconut oil extraction byproducts, such as coconut cake or coconut meal. These byproducts can be processed into value-added products like animal feed, biofuels, or food additives.

Challenges faced by coconut oil manufacturing company

1. **Supply and Demand Variations:** A number of variables, including the climate, pests and diseases, and consumer demand, have an impact on coconut production. Changes in the supply of coconuts can affect the profitability and stability of the industry by causing price volatility and supply chain disruptions.
2. **Agricultural Practices and Productivity:** To ensure the best yields and quality, coconut production requires suitable agricultural practices. Productivity levels and quality standards can be impacted by issues such as limited access to contemporary agricultural methods, sparing use of pesticides and fertilizers, and aged coconut plantations.
3. **Sustainability and Environmental Concerns:** Coconut manufacturing companies face increasing pressure to adopt sustainable practices. Challenges include deforestation, land degradation, water usage, and chemical pollution from pesticide and fertilizer application. Sustainable farming methods and responsible sourcing initiatives are necessary to address these concerns and ensure the long-term viability of the industry.
4. **Market Competition and Price Pressures:** The coconut manufacturing industry operates in a competitive market, with various players vying for market share. Companies face challenges in differentiating their products, maintaining competitive pricing, and dealing with price pressures driven by market dynamics and changing consumer preferences.
5. **Supply Chain Management:** The manufacturing of coconuts takes place within intricate supply networks that include a variety of parties, from farmers and middlemen through producers, distributors, and retailers. To guarantee the timely availability of coconuts, optimize processing and distribution, and satisfy consumer demands, effective supply chain management is essential.
6. **Product quality and safety:** Consistently ensuring is essential for the coconut production sector. Maintaining hygienic standards during processing, avoiding contamination, and fulfilling legal obligations for food safety and quality control are among the difficulties.

7. **Technology and Infrastructure:** The production of coconuts has difficulties with regard to access to technology and the growth of the infrastructure. Lack of access to sophisticated machinery, transportation systems, and processing facilities can make it more difficult for businesses to operate efficiently and expand to meet demand.
8. **Product Diversification and Innovation:** Businesses that produce coconuts must diversify their product lines and innovate to meet shifting consumer tastes. Research & development efforts, market knowledge, and successful product differentiation strategies are needed to create value-added items including snacks, beverages, and cosmetics made from coconut.
9. **International Trade Barriers:** Manufacturers of coconut products with an export focus encounter obstacles such tariffs, import limitations, and sanitary and requirements. For businesses looking to develop globally, navigating complex trade legislation and adhering to international standards can be difficult.
10. **Consumer Education and Perception:** There are issues with consumer education and perception when it comes to coconut products, particularly coconut oil. Consumer trust and purchase decisions may be impacted by false information on health advantages, sustainability strategies, and product quality. To deal with these issues and increase consumer confidence in their products, businesses must invest in consumer education programs.

World's status of the Oil Industry

The production of coconut oil on a global scale is an important component of the consumer products sector. Cooking, skincare, haircare, and industrial uses are just a few of the many uses for this extensively used and adaptable substance. Every place where the sector operates has its unique market dynamics and manufacturing capacities. Ones of the world's top producers of coconut oil include the Philippines, Indonesia, and India. These nations are key players in the business thanks to their huge coconut plantations and long history of coconut cultivation. Southeast Asian nations including Thailand, Vietnam, and Malaysia, as well as areas in Africa and Latin America, are some of the other major producers.

Over the years, the demand for coconut oil has increased steadily on a global scale. The popularity of coconut oil among consumers can be attributed to its health advantages, such as its medium-chain fatty acids and potential antibacterial qualities. The demand for coconut oil has also been bolstered by the developing personal care and cosmetics sectors, the growth of plant-based alternatives, and the rising demand for natural and organic products. The production of coconut oil, though, has recently faced difficulties and undergone adjustments. Changes in coconut production brought on by weather, pests, and illnesses may have an effect on the cost and availability of raw materials.

The demand for sustainable sourcing and production methods within the sector has been motivated by challenges with deforestation, land use, and water scarcity. To overcome these obstacles and advance sustainable practices, efforts have been made. Numerous producers of coconut oil have embraced organic farming practices, backed fair trade campaigns, and implemented certifications like organic and fairtrade standards. These programs seek to safeguard the ethical source of coconuts, save the environment, and enhance the standard of living for coconut farmers.

Trends toward value-added goods and premium offerings have also been observed in the market for coconut oil internationally. The use of virgin coconut oil extra virgin coconut oil, and cold-pressed coconut oil has grown among customers who are concerned about their health. These high-end goods frequently have higher asking prices and target specific markets. The COVID-19 pandemic has also had an effect on

the coconut oil manufacturing sector, causing supply chain disruptions, changes in customer behavior, and modifications to market dynamics. In some markets, the closure of the hospitality and foodservice industries as well as travel restrictions have reduced demand for coconut oil, whereas, in others, the growing emphasis on health and wellbeing has raised demand.

Indian Scenario

Within the country's agricultural sector and consumer goods market, India's coconut oil manufacturing sector is of utmost significance. India is one of the world's top producers and users of coconut oil, and the sector is important to the economy since it creates jobs and supports both domestic and worldwide markets. Large-scale industrial production facilities, medium-scale contemporary manufacturing facilities, small-scale traditional oil mills, and other players make up India's coconut oil manufacturing business. Several Indian states, including Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Maharashtra, which are renowned for their coconut farming, are involved in the sector. In India, coconut oil is widely used in cooking, Ayurvedic medicine, hair care, and cosmetic products. It is an essential component of the nation's cultural and culinary traditions. In addition, coconut oil is used to make a variety of consumer goods, including soaps, shampoos, cosmetics, and candies. The sector has both potential and difficulties. On the plus side, rising interest in natural and organic products, increased focus on the health advantages of coconut oil, and the acceptance of traditional treatments have all increased demand for coconut oil in India. Additionally, coconut oil's adaptability and variety of uses have contributed to its continuing adoption across numerous industries. However, there are difficulties in India's coconut oil manufacturing sector as well. Weather, pests, and disease changes that affect coconut production can affect the cost and availability of raw materials, causing price volatility and supply chain disruptions. Responsible sourcing and production methods within the sector are required due to sustainability issues like deforestation, land degradation, and water usage.

Promoting organic cultivation techniques, sustainable agricultural practices, and effective supply chain management have all been undertaken in an effort to address these issues. To increase the competitiveness of Indian coconut oil in domestic and international markets, government initiatives and industry groups have concentrated on

advancing technology, infrastructure, and quality control procedures. Value-added coconut products, such as virgin coconut oil (VCO), extra virgin coconut oil, and coldpressed coconut oil, have been increasingly popular in India in recent years. Customers who are interested in better quality and purity standards and who are health-conscious are catered to by these premium products.

Kerala Scenario

The cultivation of coconuts has a long history in Kerala, which is also renowned for having a large number of coconut plantations. Kerala's agriculture sector includes a sizable industry that produces coconut oil, which supports the state's economy and creates jobs. The majority of small and medium-sized businesses in Kerala, including both conventional oil mills and contemporary industrial facilities, are responsible for the production of coconut oil. These machines use a variety of procedures to extract coconut oil, including conventional ones like cold-pressing and contemporary ones like expeller pressing and solvent extraction. The coconut oil manufacturing sector in Kerala serves both home and foreign markets. Due to its numerous uses in Ayurvedic medicine, cosmetics, and haircare products, coconut oil is in high demand. The need for traditional and genuine coconut-based items, as well as the growing consumer interest in natural and organic products, have both helped Kerala's coconut oil business. Manufacturers of coconut oil in the region have benefited from these developments by emphasizing the cleanliness, health advantages, and conventional production processes of their goods. Keram (coconut) is where Kerala or Keralam gets its name. Coconuts and coconut trees have been essential to the state's economy and way of life for ages. In Kerala's rural economy, the coconut previously had the value of money. The monopoly of Kerala in this crop has been shattered in recent years by the entry of numerous southern states with high producing types into cultivation. In addition, these states now produce coconut all year round. Since Kerala was the primary producer with an 80–85% share, the price cycle of coconut goods was in reality correlated with production there until 1980. But recently, the scenario has changed as a result of an increase in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, which lowered Kerala's share to 40-50% plus Karnataka. When copra is crushed to make oil, 30.25% of the cake is typically produced as a byproduct along with 64.75% of the oil. The process waste makes up the difference of 5%. In the instance of gingelly oil, 45.5% of the oil is produced, while 53.5% of the cake is a by-product, and only 1% is wasted. Since ancient times, Kerala has been renowned as the origin of

coconuts. The visionary industrialist Late Shri. K.P. Lonappan established KPL Oil Mills PVT. LTD in 1941 in this land of coconuts, popularly known as "God's own country." The brilliant visionary Late Sri.K.P. Lonappan Kandamkulathi left his linear descendants with a lasting legacy that has flourished and will continue to do so in the days ahead.

Started as a rice and coconut oil mill, it quickly became successful by taking advantage of the benefits of its location, which were appropriate for the nature of the sector due to the abundance of raw materials and the ease of surface and water transportation. The promoters then stopped selling rice in their firm and instead focused more on coconut oil, foreseeing the long-term benefit. As of right now, KPL Oil Mills PVT. LTD. is a private limited company organized in accordance with the Companies Act of 1956 (Amendment Act, 2001).

Current Scenario

Due to rising consumer demand and the numerous uses for coconut oil, the production of coconut oil has shown consistent development throughout time. For use in cooking, baking, personal care, and industrial applications, coconut oil continues to be a popular option. Its attractiveness among customers has been influenced by its health advantages, natural origin, and sustainability features. Both opportunities and difficulties have been present in the coconut oil market worldwide. On the plus side, growing interest in natural products, plant-based alternatives, and healthy eating practices has increased demand for coconut oil. The development of the industry has also been aided by the rising appeal of coconut-based products in the cosmetics and personal care sectors.

However, issues with supply chain management, pricing instability, and sustainability issues have plagued the sector. Changes in the supply of coconuts brought on by things like weather, pests, and illnesses can affect both the price and availability of raw materials.

Additionally, the necessity for ethical sourcing and production techniques within the business has been highlighted by sustainability issues like deforestation, land degradation, and water usage. The industry has been seen making attempts to deal with these issues, with an emphasis on waste management, sustainable sourcing, and certification programs. Numerous producers of coconut oil have adopted sustainable methods, such as promoting organic farming, fair trade campaigns, and waste utilization.

The extraction and refining techniques used in the production of coconut oil have also seen technological developments that have increased efficiency. These developments have assisted producers in adapting to changing consumer demands and extending their market reach, along with packaging innovation and product variety. In terms of market trends, the popularity of plant-based alternatives, the rise of healthconscious customers, and preferences for natural and sustainable products are some of the factors that are driving the need for coconut oil. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has raised consumer interest in foods that enhance the immune system, such as coconut oil, as well as a greater focus on personal hygiene and personal care. Consider that key market dynamics and industry trends might vary among regions and countries based on factors including cultural preferences, current economic conditions, and regulatory frameworks.

Commercial application of Coconut Oil

Coconut oil is multipurpose oil, which has a commercial application in different field's foods and confectionery, soaps, detergent, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, pesticides and automobiles and the other uses are:

- Food and confectionery.
- Body and hair oil.
- Coconut oil as shampoo.
- Perfumes and flavors.
- Medicinal user.
- Automobile usage.
- Coconut health oil.
- Coconut healing oil.

1.8 COMPANY PROFILE

KPL is mainly concerned with manufacturing and marketing coconut oil to various parts of the country. Its business is also spread outside India. The firm is situated in Irinjalakuda which is in Thrissur district, Kerala. Their main business is widely spread in India via Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Orissa. The main objective of the company is to increase the sales profitable existing profile to the percentage and supply of high-quality and hygienic coconut oil to people who are needed, where, and when they needed.

Origin and History

Kerala was known for its rich abundance of coconuts and the State itself is known as 'Home of Kera', the coconuts. From that time Kerala has been the monopoly of coconut oil market all over India. KPL Oil Mills PVT. LTD. has succeeded to establish the brand name 'KPL Shudhi' in the meantime.

KPL. Shudhi coconut oil mill pilots is a private company started by K. PONNAPPAN in the year 1941, dynamic entrepreneur in the pre- independence era started a Rice and Coconut oil mill, constituted into a firm with the founder late Sri Lonappan and his six sons as partners in the year 1941 Irinjalakkuda in Thrissur District of Kerala.

It is seated in a space of 2.14 acres of land which is primarily engaged in the extraction of coconut oil from dried coconut that is coral. Flourished soon by exploiting to its benefit the advantage of its location which was ideally suited for the nature of the industry with raw materials in plenty and easy access for transportation both through surface and water. For seeing the long-term advantage the promoter later, in the course of business discontinued rice and concentrated more on oil within a short span, it emerged as the No.1 in the Kerala market.

At present KPL Oil Mill PVT. LTD. has the constitution of the private limited company under the Companies Act 1956. Besides being the leading brand and as standard for rates quality in the coconut oil market of southern India, the brand KPL could establish its name for a product in place in the central eastern and northern part of the country, like Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Orisa, Mumbai, Delhi, Ghaziabad beside prominent foreign countries. The theme of coconut oil is said to be pure as mother nature. The long years of experience and the quality of products are the merit of the company. KPL mills have a wide range of scope in India and outside India. KPL has a global presence with its remarkable brand name.

The brand KPL SHUDHI launched in the year 1995, has been a trendsetter in the edible oil consumer pack segment and is still in the market share outside of Kerala. The company rock rooted in its long glorious tradition, keeping up with the ever-changing consumer preference through launching an innovative product with the quality strict quality and an eye for detail in purchasing quality copra. selective segregation, careful roasting centrifugal filtering, and so forth make sure that the consumer gets the best coconut oil available today. Copra is dried in sunlight and cooked at an ideal temperature to remove all the excess moisture to ensure long life. Coconut milk powder and sunflower oil are outsourced by the company and these products are sold under the brand name of KPL. This is done only after quality assurance. The coconut is dried full and is used to extract the oil by using the latest technology named DDR. This has helped them to achieve their production capacity. KPL SHUDHI is now being exported to Middle East countries like Bahrain, UAE Saudi Arabia, etc. And they have planned to market the brand in most of the countries across the globe.

PRESENT STATUS OF THE COMPANY

In this land of coconut, also known as 'gods own country'. KPL Oil Mills PVT. LTD. Was founded in 1941 by the envisioned industrialist Late Shri.

K.P Lonappan. For more than 75 years, KPL. Oil Mills(P) Ltd. Has been the epitome of pure and high-quality coconut oil from Kerala.

A highly advanced production process blends traditional methods and advanced technologies, thereby providing 100% pure and hygienic coconut oil. The filtering, filling, and packaging plants have accumulated machinery and could easily grab an opportunity when one comes its way. The company, rock rooted in its long glorious traditions, keeps up with the ever changing consumer preferences through launching

innovative products with quality and adopting the latest technologies available in the market.

By constantly being next to the heart of the consumer, KPL Oil Mills PVT. LTD delivers what consumers wish. Customer centricity is at the core of KPL Oil Mills PVT. LTD, in Irinjalakuda, Thrissur and it is this belief that has led the business to build long-term relationships. Ensuring a positive customer experience, making available goods and/or services that are of top- notch quality is given prime importance. It is one of the players in Coconut Oil, Sesame Oil, Rice Bran Oil, Mango Pickle, Pickle to name a few. India's leading B2B market place, Jd Mart ensures engaging in business activities is a seamless process for small and medium enterprises as well as large businesses. In a wake to enable these businesses to reach their audience, this portal lets them showcase their offerings in terms of the products and/or services through a digital catalogue. This business has a wide range of product offerings and the product/catalogue list includes Virgin Coconut Oil, Sunflower Oil, KPL Shudhi Lime Pickle, Coconut Oil, Gingelly Oil etc.

OBJECTIVES

MAIN OBJECTIVE

The main objective of the company is to increase the sales profitable existing profile to the percentage.

SUB-OBJECTIVE

- To maintain quality product
- To explore new avenues in product development and making
- Create a stronger bond between the management workforce dealers and customers
- To contribute to social development

MISSION

KPL mission is to produce edible oil of highest quality by adhering by international standards and industry best practices, and by inculcating a work culture focused on innovation and positive change.

VISION

KPL vision is to be number one brand that consumers across the world identify and producer of high quality coconut oil in the country to recognize as the best in its category. The main vision of the KPL Oil Mills PVT.LTD. Industries is to provide the customers quality products at reasonable price the customer can afford.

PRODUCTION UNITS

KPL has branch offices in different places, they are

- Saidapet
- Annmalai
- Thiplate in Chennai city

Additional branches:

- Salem
- Madura

KPL also marketing 15 kg tins in

- Bangalore
- North Karnataka
- South Maharashtra

PRODUCTIONS LINE

The company produced a variety of products. The main products are:

- KPL Oil KPL Shudhi coconut
- KPL Shudhi Gingelly oil
- KPL Shudhi coconut Milk powder
- KPL Shudhi Virgin Coconut Oil
- KPL Shudhi sunflower oil

1. KPL SHUDHI COCONUT OIL

Lauric acid, a remarkable chemical molecule with numerous health advantages, is abundant in coconut oil. It is transformed by the body into a compound called monolaurin, which has been demonstrated to be very effective in boosting immunity and warding off disease. KPL Shudhi is simply the highest quality coconut oil on the market today, having been filtered four times utilizing best-in-class technology. Hand-selected dried coconut (copra) is used in the production process at our cutting-edge factory, and the finished product only makes it to the market after passing a number of quality checks.

KPL SHUDHI COCONUT OIL have variety of products in different quantities but of the same quality. Some are as follows:

- a) 15 kg tin and HDPE can
- b) 5kg in liters can
- c) 2kg in bottle
- d) 500ml in pouches or in pet or HDPE
- e) 100ml in pouches or in pet or HDPE
- f) 50 ml in pouches, in mini sachet

2. KPL SHUDHI GINGERLY OIL

In India, gingelly or sesame oil has long been used for cooking and therapeutic purposes. It aids in lowering blood pressure and cholesterol and is a source of potent antioxidants, which have enormous positive effects on health.

KPL SHUDHI GINGERLY OIL has variety of products in different quantities but of the same quality and some are as follows:

- a) 1 L per bottle
- b) 500 ml pouch and pet
- c) 200 ml in a pet bottle

3. KPL SHUDHI SUNFLOWER OIL

Due to its emollient qualities, sunflower oil is frequently used as a cooking oil as well as for cosmetic purposes. Sunflower oil's excellent fatty acid composition, which includes palmitic acid, stearic acid, oleic acid, and linoleic acid, is one of the key factors contributing to its rising popularity. Combinations of these fatty acids are crucial for maintaining the balance of numerous biological activities. KPL SHUDHI SUNFLOWER OIL has variety of products in different quantities but of the same quality. Some are as follows:

- a. 1-liter pouch and pet
- b. 500 ml pet

4. KPL SHUDHI VIRGIN COCONUT OIL

Virgin coconut oil is extracted from the coconut milk obtained from fresh coconut ,a process that helps to preserve all natural goodness in it. In comparison to conventional coconut oil, it has more vitamins, antioxidants, minerals, medium-chain fatty acids, flavor, and smell. It is one of the few oils that does not become ruined when heated to the temperatures required for baking, frying, and cooking, making it perfect for cooking. It is highly sought after and well renowned for its beauty and therapeutic purposes globally. One of the product:

- a. 250 ml bottle

5. KPL SHUDHI COCONUT MILK POWDER

Coconut milk made with KPL Shudhi coconut milk powder tastes just as nice as coconut milk that has just been made from scratch.It is simpler to use, carry, and has a longer shelf life.It is a wonderful option for cooking because it effortlessly incorporates liquids and removes all traces of lumps. One of the product:

- a. 100gms stand-up pouch

MANUFACTURING PROCESS OF COCONUT OIL

Dried copra is paned through to the drier where it is steamed. This steaming is done to remove all the leftover moisture from the copra after drying, as moisture-free copra will give coconut oil. After steaming the copra, it is sent through a cradle convener to cut,

the copra is cut into small pieces. After cutting the copra, the pieces are sent to a 'silo, through an elevator and there the minerals are stored. The next step is cooking copra. The copra is cooked in a cooker and this process helps to improve all the remaining moisture in the fully dried copra. It is enhanced by its special lingering "aroma". Then the copra is sent for 'crushing'. The crushing is done in three phases where 50% of the oil is extracted in the first stage, 12% in the second, and in the final stages of the crushing about 5.5% of oil can be extracted.

It is to be noted that coconut copra consists of 65% of oil, 30% cake, and 5% waste. After extracting the oil, there is a filtering process to give the oil crystal clear. The filtered oil is transferred to the Research and Development wings including world's class equipment to ensure the quality of KPL SHUDHI Oils. After quality checking in the lab, the filtered oil was sent to a clean storage tank and the multithread automotive volumetric liquid filling machine. Then oil is filled in bottles, sachets tins, and jars. world. The sesame cooking oil manufacturer and supplier, oil mills bring you a variety of widely used sesame seed oil. Sesame moisturizing oil, sesame Ayurvedic oil, sesame vegetable oil, and what not. The Gingelly oil made by our company benefits you because it is manufactured by highly experienced and qualified professionals who understand each and every requirement.

GINGELLY OIL

Gingelly oil is sometimes found to be strong smelting by some, yet, a good source of Vitamins E and B complex and minerals such as calcium, magnesium phosphorous, and sesame oil further contains protein as we lecithin. In folk medicine, it has also been used to help Cade blemishes. The sesame herb is grown for its seed and was used by the Chinese 5000 years ago. We are popular as an exporter and supplier of high-quality sesame massage oil across the world. The sesame cooking oil manufacturer and supplier, oil mills brings you a variety of widely used sesame seed oil. Sesame moisturizing oil, sesame ayurvedic oil, sesame vegetable oil, and what not! The Gingelly oil made by our company benefits you because it is manufactured by highly experienced and qualified professionals who understand each and every requirement.

MANUFACTURING PROCESS OF GINGELLY OIL

The extraction of sesame oil from the sesame seed is not a completely automated process. In the fairy tale, "Ali Baba and Forty Thieves- the sesame fruit serves as a symbol of wealth. When the fruit capsule is opened, it releases a real treasure the sesame

seeds. However, a great deal of manual work is necessary before this point is reached. That is why sesame is hardly ever cultivated in Western Industrialized Agriculture areas. The sesame seeds are protected by a capsule, which does not burst open until the seeds are completely ripe. The ripening time tends to vary, for this season the farmers cut plants by hand and place them together in the upright position to carry on ripening for a few days. The seeds are only shaken out onto a cloth after the capsule has opened. The discovery of an indehiscent mutant by Lang Ham in 1943 began the work toward the development of high-yielding, shatter-resistant variety. Although researchers have made significant progress in sesame breeding, harvest losses due to shattering continue to limit domestic US production.

QUALITY AND RESEARCH

It is the nature of KPL items that have made the brand an easily recognized name in coconut oils, KPL's pledge to quality covers each part of the generation from procuring of copra through processing to bundling. KPL secures the best coconuts specifically from agriculturists, which is then sun-dried in clean copra drying yard to hold its common extravagance, flavor and nutritional value. Deliberately found obtaining focuses crosswise over Kerala guarantee relentless supply of high yielding copra. KPL's interesting protected VSIC handling innovation limits dampness content, reducing the shot of the oil getting to be stale, expanding its rack, life and chopping down warm up time. At KPL we put stock in persistent enhancement and incorporate a generous sum in our annual planning to innovative work programs and to develop new advancements to upgrade the nature of our items.

PROCESS TO PURITY

Well dried copra having minimum moisture content is thoroughly cleaned of small extraneous matter and cut in to small chips in a copra cutter. The chips are fed into steam-jacked kettles and cooked mildly using KPL patented VSIC technology. The cooked materials are fed into expellers and the oil i.e. extracted passes through a four-stage filtration process to ensure that the end product is crystal clear.

PACKED PERFECTION

KPL products are available in convenient consumer packs of various capacities. Hi-tech packing machines ensure leak proof, tamper packing that helps retain the aroma and

flavour of the products and increases their shelf life. Installed in a specially designed hygienic environment, these machines ensure “Zero contamination” for the entire product range and this increases the product quality.

VACUUMISED STEAM INJECTION COOKING (VSIC) TECHNOLOGY

VSIC technology is a unique method of processing edible oil that results in lower moisture content, less chance of the oil becoming stale and increased product shelf life reduces moisture content allows the oil to heat up faster while also minimizing the absorption of oil in the food i.e. being prepared. This makes for a healthier table spread, besides contributing to energy savings VSIC technology also ensures uniform cooking of food items, which in turn, enhances Palatability.

QUALITY POLICY KPL

Vows to create a strong and everlasting bond with the consumer by providing superior and highest possible quality products, which will delight the consumers by delivering greater value for the money, spend by them. Through proper communication, employee participation and continuous improvement in its work system, kpl aims to achieve a zero-complaint situation regarding the quality and delivery of the product to the market.

ISO CERTIFICATION

Company receives ISO Certification also. The company registered under ISO 9001-2000 from 22 March 2004. It helps to increase the goodwill of the company.

FACILITIES AVAILABLE IN KPL

KPL SHUDHI oil mills have a well-designed lab facility that helps to measure the moistening state and maintain the quality level of the oil mills' products. It helps in rectifying the defects up to the date if any. Besides lab facilities, other facilities are provided to employees and workers.

BUSINESS OPERATION

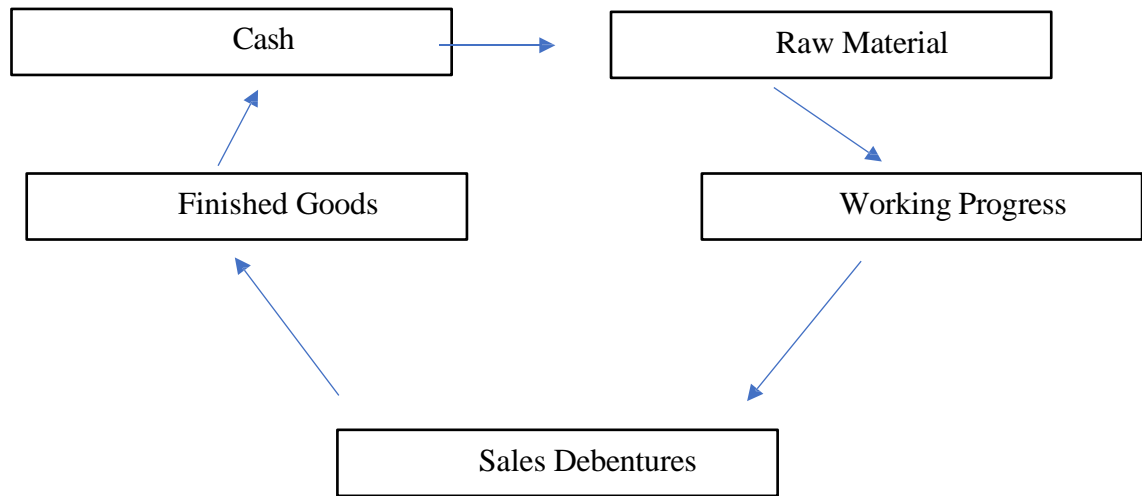


FIGURE: 1.8.1 Business Operation

TRADE UNIONS

In the KPL Oil Mills PVT. LTD. There are three trade union namely INTUC, AITUC and independents union. Trade union are the organization employees include those of salaried and professional workers as well as those of manual wage earners which are known to include among their function that of negotiating with their employees with the object of regular conditions of employment.

➤ **The Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC)**

In May of 1947, INTUC was founded. The goal is to use peaceful methods to resolve a labor conflict.

➤ **The all-Indian Trade Union Congress (AITUC)**

When this organization was founded in 1920, they used the structure of the British University. They were primarily created with employees in mind. This aids in meeting the requirements and desires of the employees.

➤ **Independent Union**

The independent labor union was founded by the workers themselves. The members of the Independent Trade Union of KPL are KPL workers. The union abides by its own policies and guidelines. They have no power to sway other parties.

MARKET SHARE

Market share is the percentage of the market accounted for by a specific entry. Market share is the key indicator of market competitiveness which shows how well a firm is doing corporation. Market share is an important metric as it helps businesses understand their competitiveness and track their performance in relation to others in the same industry. It can also be an indicator of a company's strength and influence within its market.

COMPANY	MARKET SHARE
K.P.L Oil mills (p) Lid	57%
Kerafed	10%
K.L.F Nirmal industries (p) L.td	10%
Parachute	19%
Others	4%

TABLE NO: 1.8.1 Market Share

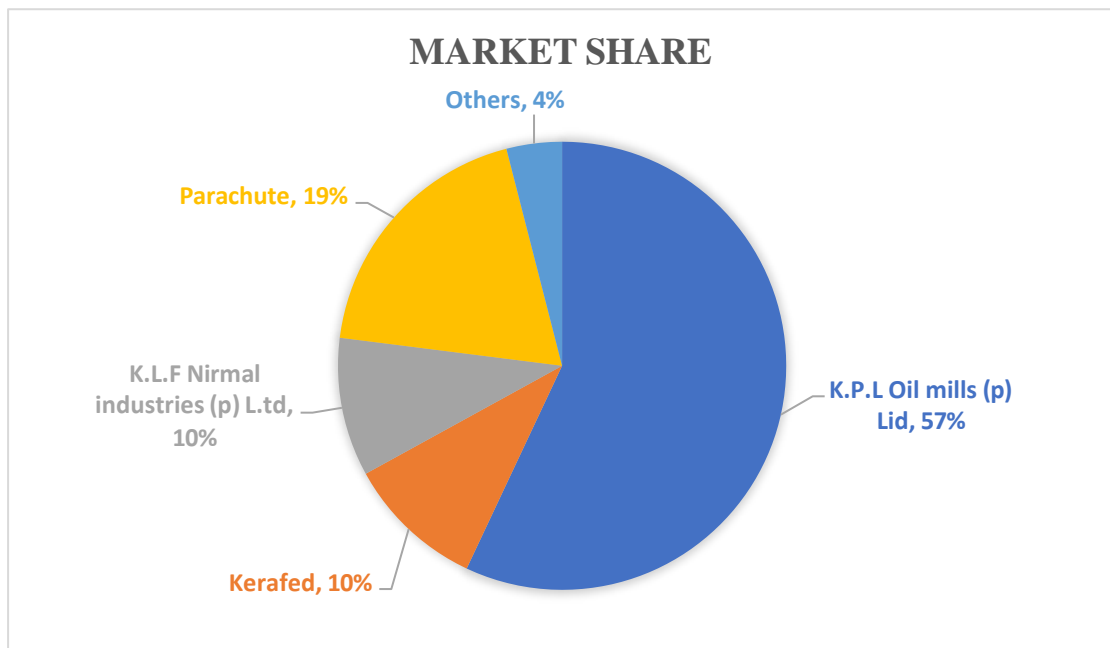


FIGURE: 1.8.2 Market Share

COMPETITORS

The competitors are the strength of the company since competition mentally helps to produce quality products and make good with customers and suppliers. In the oil market, there is intense competition. The majority of people in Kerala and many other southern Indian states cook with coconut oil, which makes business rivalry quite fierce. However, the numerous marketing techniques used by the KPL oil industries assist them to capture a sizable portion of the market. KPL Oil Industries' primary rivals include;

- KLF Nirmal
- Kera fed
- Parachute
- Thejas

CAPITAL OF THE COMPANY

KPL was established by KP Lonappan in 1941. KPL is a private limited company and running according to Companies act 1956. The company is fully owned; there is no borrowed capital. The authorized capital of the company is Rs. 288akhs Paid up capital is Rs. 72lakhs and general reserve of the concern is Rs. 125lakhs.

DEPARTMENTS

In KPL there are mainly five departments: -

- Financial department
- Production department
- Purchase department
- Marketing department
- HR department

Financial Department

Finance is the lifeblood of every organization. So it is one of the main departments of an organization. This department takes decisions regarding funds allocation generation. The success of a finance department is when they allocate fund at the right time and earns a maximum profit. The finance manager is the head of the Finance department. The management of the organization's cash flow, cash inflow and outflow, and compliance with financial rules and policies are all important responsibilities of the finance department.

It is in charge of creating and evaluating financial documents, such as cash flow statements, income statements, and balance sheets, which give a quick overview of the company's financial situation and performance.

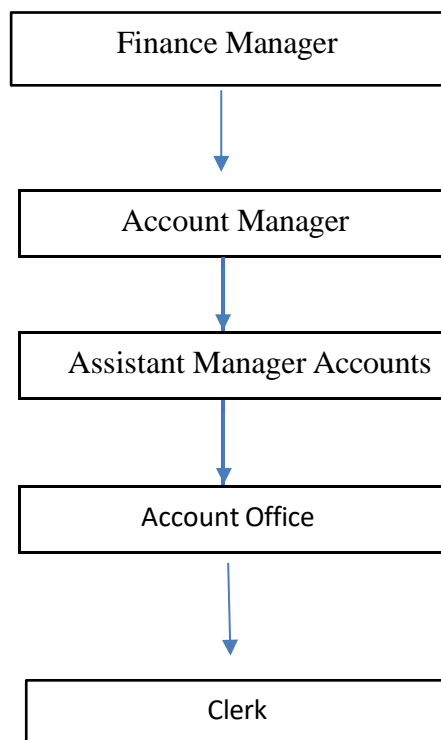


FIGURE: 1.8.3 Financial Department

Production Departments

Every manufacturing process of the organization takes place in the production department. "Their main function is to make the production very efficient and produce the product with the available resources. If the production function is not carried out efficiently it affects the whole functioning of the organization. The planning, scheduling, coordination, and control of the production processes are just a few of the activities carried out within the production department. This calls for activities including acquiring raw materials, inventory control, managing equipment and machinery, arranging production schedules, maintaining quality control, and making sure safety and regulatory requirements are met.

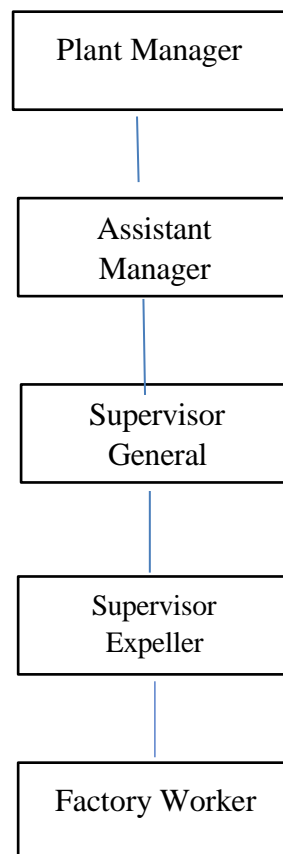


FIGURE: 1.8.4 Production Departments

Purchase Departments

The purchase department purchases the raw materials that are needed for the production. If the purchase of the product is not done properly then it affects the production and in turn, affects the functioning of the organization the purchase manager looks after the purchase of the materials. A crucial role in businesses is played by the purchase department, sometimes referred to as the procurement department or the purchasing department, which is in charge of purchasing the goods, services, and materials needed for the efficient running of the company.

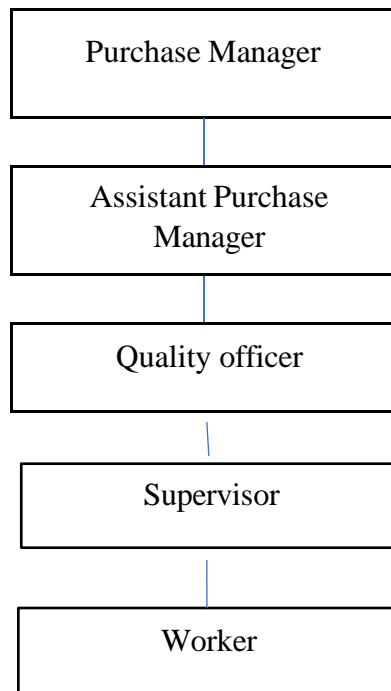


FIGURE: 1.8.5 Purchase Departments

HR Departments

An organization's HR (Human Resources) department plays a key role in managing a variety of matters pertaining to the organization's human resources. The department in question is in charge of supervising and assisting with personnel management during the course of their employment. In order to ensure that the company recruits, develops, inspires, and keeps a skilled and motivated staff, the HR department is essential. Its main goal is to match the organization's human resources with its strategic goals and objectives, boosting employee productivity and well-being while fostering a healthy workplace culture. In KPL Oil Mills PVT. Ltd, Salary is given as per the government gazette. The workers here are classified as permanent, confirmed and apprentice.

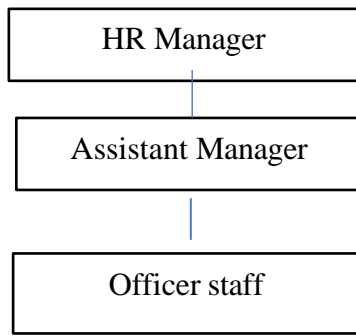


FIGURE: 1.8.6 HR Departments

Marketing Department

An organization's marketing activities are planned, executing, and managed by the marketing department, a functional unit inside the company. A marketing department's main goal is to produce, convey, and provide clients with value in order to increase demand for the company's goods and services. KPL is having well-developed marketing department. But they do not maintain direct relationships with customers. They maintain it through their representative, who market the product of the company.



FIGURE: 1.8.7 Marketing Departments

SWOT Analysis

To identify the organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, a SWOT analysis is conducted. This aids the organization in developing a comprehensive understanding of itself. This played a crucial part in the organization's development. Companies should identify when they begin working. It must figure out what its advantages and strengths are and try to use them skillfully and also should identify any weaknesses or hazards and make an effort to avoid them. Deficiencies and strengths are the internal forces that both add value and take it away. They may consist of resources, abilities, and skills relative to its rivals, a corporation has more resources at its disposal. They are amenable to internal evaluation of external benchmarking Opportunities and risks are things that are external to value and destroy value. SWOT analysis is done in order to ascertain the strength, weakness, opportunities and threats of the organization. But they emerge for either the competitive dynamics of the industry or from demographic, economic, social, legal, political, technical and cultural factors.

Strength

- ISO 9001-2004 certification has been achieved by the organization.
- Has a vast experience in the field of oil industry.
- Employees are highly efficient, loyal, hardworking and well versed in their respective fields.
- The company is having a good reputation among its customers and competitors and which is an asset to the company.
- Has a healthy relationship with the customers.
- Have goodwill in the Indian market.
- VSIC (Vacuumised Steam Injection Cooking) technology adopted by the KPL Oil company helps to get maximum oil from the coconut.

Weakness

- The company's distribution network might be limited to a few areas, which might prevent it from reaching new markets.
- Raw material available at remote area so contingency plan of material to be maintained.

Opportunities

- This industry is having a big market in India.
- They are among the leading coconut oil producers in India and have a good chance of expansion and growth in the coming future.
- The company has wide scope in inside and outside Kerala

Threats

- Increase number of competitors in the market. The major threat that company faces in the future will be the tight competition from the competitors.
- Probable entries of big domestic companies or huge companies with foreign collaboration.
- Globalization has exposed the company to the other market. As a result, it has to adjust with the sudden change in the environment and live up to the expectation of their customers.

FIGURE NO: 1.8.8 Organizational Structure

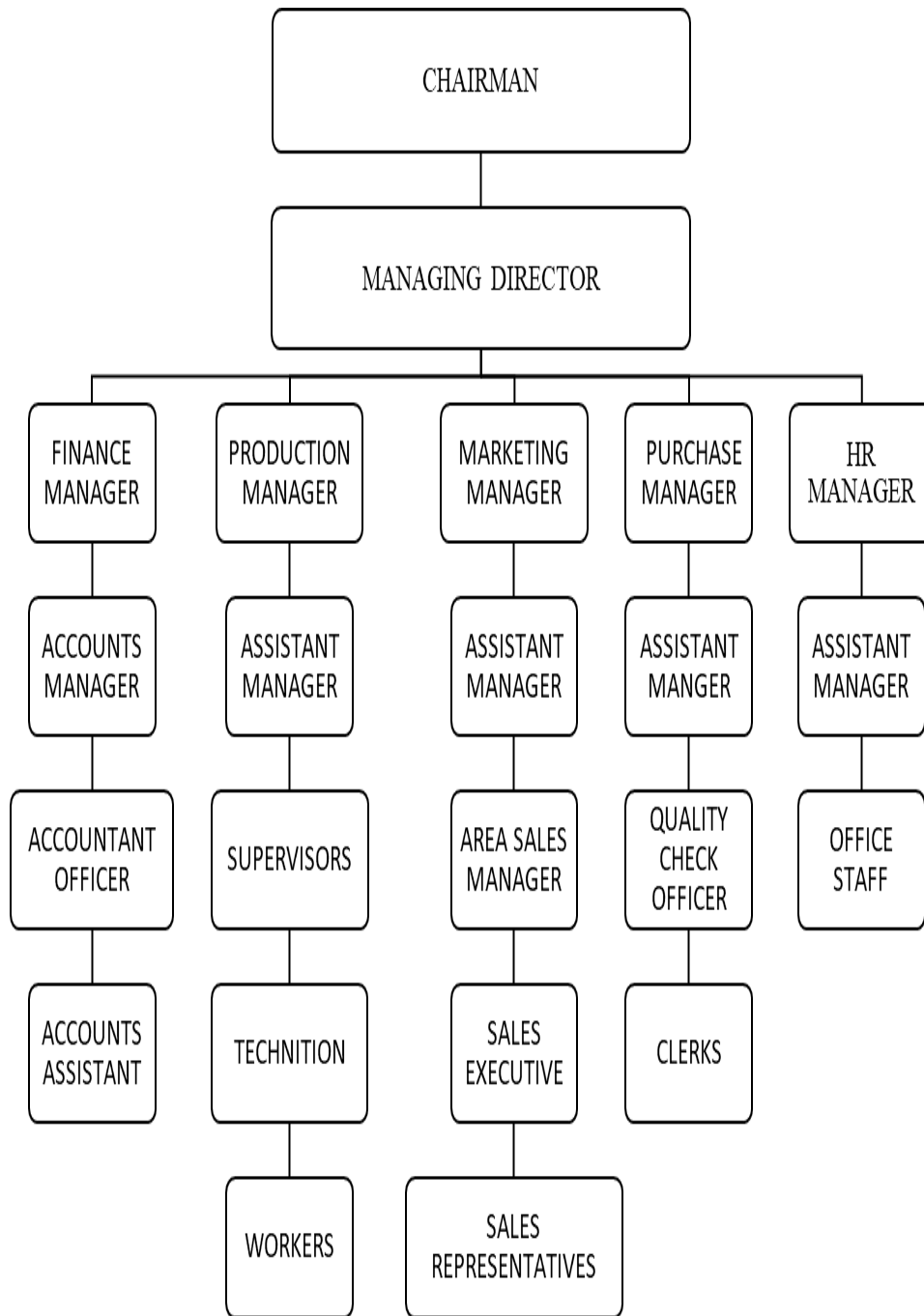


TABLE NO: 1.8.2 Board of directors

Directors name	Designation	Date of appointment
Denny John	Director	16-04-1984
John Francis	Director	16-04-1984
Joshua Anto	Director	16-04-1984
Jose John	Managing Director	07-10-1992
Viju Anto	Director	09-08-1994
Pious Kandamkulathi Joseph	Whole-time Director	10-10-1995
Jojo Kandamkulathi Sebastian	Director	18-05-1999
Paul John	Director	30-04-2003
Tessy Raphael	Director	27-02-2004
Tony John	Director	07-09-2013
Nireesh Kandamkulathi Joseph	Director	24-12-2014
Sunny Francis	Director	22-03-2018

Board of directors

- Denny John, John Francis, and Joshu Anto were appointed as Directors on 16th April 1984.
- Jose John holds the position of Managing Director and was appointed on 7th October 1992.
- Viju Anto became a Director on 9th August 1994.
- Pious Kandamkulathi Joseph serves as the Whole time Director and was appointed on 10th October 1995.
- Jojo Kandamkulathi Sebastian joined the Board as a Director on 18th May 1999.
- Paul John became a Director on 30th April 2003.
- Tessy Raphael joined the Board as a Director on 27th February 2004.
- Tony John became a Director on 7th September 2013.
- Nireesh Kandamkulath Joseph joined the Board as a Director on 24th December 2014.
- Sunny Francise became a Director on 22nd March 2018.

These Directors collectively make decisions and provide guidance to the company, playing a crucial role in shaping its strategic direction and ensuring its success. Each Director brings their expertise and experience to contribute to the company's growth and development. The specific responsibilities and roles of each Director may vary based on their designations and areas of expertise.

CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW & THEORETICAL
FRAMEWORK

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEWS

A literature review in research methodology is a comprehensive summary and analysis of the existing research and literature related to a specific topic or research question. It involves critically evaluating and synthesizing previous studies, theories, and findings to identify patterns, gaps, and areas of disagreement. This process helps to situate the current study within the broader context of existing knowledge, providing a foundation for understanding what has already been explored and what needs further investigation.

A well-conducted literature review demonstrates the researcher's familiarity with the field, highlights the significance of the research problem, and supports the justification for the new study. It also assists in refining the research questions, methodology, and theoretical framework, ensuring that the new research contributes meaningfully to the academic discourse. Ultimately, a literature review is an essential component of the research process, guiding and informing the direction and scope of the study.

- Vipin Arya, Vikash and Kiran (2020) has made an attempt to understand the Consumer behaviour with regard to consumption of edible oil in hisar to understand the factors influencing purchase decision for edible oils, buying and consumption patterns of the product, the preference of demographic clusters, the frequency of changing edible oil type, the effect of promotional activities on purchasing habits and to find the extent of brand loyalty among consumers. Study covers the awareness of the consumer towards brands, the market share of various brands, the consumer attitude towards price and the various marketing channels. Primary data is collected from 200 respondents in Hisar district (Haryana) by using a detailed questionnaire on the basis of convenience sampling method. It was concluded that Cluster analysis proves Health factor plays a predominant role in selecting the brands among selected respondents.

As most of the respondents change their oil for better health, strong brand loyalty is not displayed for oil consumption.

- Dr. Rajni Pandey, Dr. Smita Kumari and Dr. Kavita Kumari (2021) - Consumers preference for edible oil in Patna city, Bihar. The purpose of this study is to explore the most preferred oil brand, edible oil variants and also to investigate the awareness level of the consumer regarding healthy cooking oil. Patna city of Bihar State was selected purposively due to convenience of the researcher. Random sampling procedure was adopted for the study. From Patna City 200 women consumers of edible oils were selected randomly. The study revealed that majority of the respondents were using mustard oil for cooking purpose followed by Soyabean oil (30%) and Sunflower oil (20%).
- Mugilan K, Samsai T, Mahendran K, Prahadeeswaran M and Gangai Selvi R (2023) This article investigates consumer preferences of fortified edible oils, focusing on the underlying reasons for preferences and constraints faced by the consumers while purchasing and consuming fortified edible oils. Fortified edible oils are becoming more popular in the modern era because of their capacity to bridge nutritional gaps with essential vitamins and minerals. The sample respondents were selected from the different regions of Coimbatore city who purchased and consumed fortified edible oils. For the purpose of data collection, convenience sampling method, was used to select sample respondents. The survey was carried out through a well-structured interview schedule, and primary data was collected from the sample respondents from different retail stores, supermarkets, and hypermarkets in different zones of Coimbatore city. For this study, a total of 150 sample respondents who purchased and consumed fortified edible oils were selected. The study revealed that consumers are less aware of the health benefits of fortified edible oils. It could be inferred that Fortune sunflower fortified edible oil was most preferred by the sample respondents. It could be concluded from the result that the primary reason for preferring fortified edible oils was that they were considered to be the most convenient food vehicle to incorporate essential micronutrients into their diet, and the primary constraint faced by consumers while purchasing and consuming fortified edible oils was lack of awareness about food fortification.

- Dr. B. Revathy and A. Anitha (2017) – A study on factors influencing the preference of edible oil among consumers in Tirunelveli district. The data collections are done with the help of survey method. The study is based on both primary data and secondary data. The data collected from consumers of edible oil constitute the primary data. The data are collected for the present study by means of a well framed questionnaire. 200 sample respondents are selected by convenience sampling method. This article is an attempt to ascertain the factors influencing the preference of edible oil. Factors influencing the preference of the sample consumers towards edible oil like sunflower oil, sesame oil, groundnut oil, coconut oil, olive oil, mustard oil, rice bran oil, safflower oil and palm oil are analyzed. Many varieties of edible oil are used in cooking by the consumers. Several factors are involved in the selection process of the cooking oil. It is found that the majority of the consumers are influenced by cholesterol free and nutrition content factors.
- Dr. E. Mubarak Ali and A. Avinash Begum (2019) – Buying behaviour of consumers of edible oil – A study of Tiruchirappalli city. Through this study, researcher has highlighted the brand references for edible oil by consumers. Efforts have been made to understand the various factors which are taking into consideration while purchasing edible oil. Through the study author has also highlighted the variants of edible oil preferred by the consumers. This study is also focused on the awareness of consumers regarding the weight, expiry date, ingredients etc. of edible oil. The primary information collected by using well-structured questionnaire which was administered to 100 households. The selected households were longed to different income groups. The selection of sample, convenience sampling method has been used. The survey was carried out in Tiruchirappalli city. It is found that, majority of the household consumers are giving preference to purchase edible oil from retail shops which are situated nearby their residence. Some of them purchase oil from malls or supermarket.
- Ambujakshi, (2016), has stated that, in the ocean of edible oil has increased following a rise in household incomes and consumer demand. Through the study author throws light on the consumer awareness with reference to edible oil consumers in Bangalore. Author has also attempted to know the trends in consumer preferences towards edible oils and attempted to find out the

influencing factors related to consumer preferences in purchasing edible oils. Through the study author has found that, the edible oil industry has under transition towards more organised and active integration move from the major players. According to the author, rising imports call for the increase in domestic manufacturing of edible oils.

- The study by Vyas, Siddiqui, and Dewagan (2017) offers a comprehensive survey on consumer behavior towards edible oils, focusing on the factors influencing purchase decisions. The literature highlights health as a pivotal factor in brand selection, emphasizing consumers' tendency to switch brands in pursuit of better health outcomes. This behavior indicates a lack of strong brand loyalty, suggesting that health benefits significantly outweigh brand attachment in this market. The analysis of demographic clusters further enriches the study by providing insights into consumption patterns across different family structures. The review underscores the dynamic nature of consumer preferences and the critical role of health considerations, which can guide marketers in strategizing their product offerings and positioning. The findings of this study contribute to a deeper understanding of the edible oil market, highlighting the need for brands to continuously innovate and communicate health benefits to retain and attract health-conscious consumers.
- M. K. Narayan, M. Sarabhai and V. K. Khan, (2018), and have explored the preferences of consumers for the brands of illegal oil variants and factors affecting the decisions of purchase of evil oil. Through the study authors of highlighted brand image, health consciousness and quality of a particular brand etc. Are the most significant factors, which are affecting consumer's decision-making for buying edible oil. Through the study authors have come to know that, consumers are showing interest in sales promotional schemes and consumer offers. In this context authors have suggested that, while when lecturers should run an effective promotional schemes and consumer campaigns not only to attract new consumers but also to retain the present consumers.
- Prashant Mohan and Dr. Namrata Sandhu (2017) - Factors Impacting the Loyalty of Retailers with Special Reference to Edible Oil Industry. The sample was comprised of the 700 randomly selected respondents from North India including states of Delhi, Rajasthan, Chandigarh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, and Uttar Pradesh to study the

Factors Impacting the Loyalty of Retailers in Edible Oil industry with special reference to North India. So, the technique of sampling was random sampling. The methodology used for the research is of descriptive nature due to the nature of the design and based upon the survey and Questionnaire. Outcome of the study shall be very helpful to the Marketing Managers of Edible Oil Industry as they shall be better placed to focus on the factors which impact the loyalty of Retailers. They shall also be better positioned to define and operate loyalty schemes in a better way to do justice to the cost per liter spend by the Trade Marketing function of the institution.

- Ibrahim and Abdul Fatah F's (2020) case study on consumer preferences towards palm oil brands in Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia, explores the evolving dynamics of consumer behavior in a key economic sector. The study, conducted with 107 respondents through convenient sampling in various supermarkets, delves into socioeconomic, marketing, and non-marketing factors affecting consumer choices. The respondents were predominantly Malay females, married, aged between 31 and 40, with secondary education, and working in public and private sectors with monthly incomes between RM2001 and RM3000. The findings reveal that the "Saji" brand is the most frequently purchased, influenced primarily by advertising. Multiple regression analysis highlights that product quality and price are the most significant marketing factors, while non-marketing factors such as product quality and advertising campaigns also play crucial roles. The study underscores the need for strategic marketing and quality enhancement to boost consumer preference for palm oil products, offering recommendations for future improvements in consumer engagement.
- Nofal and Salah (2020) identified that the rising demand for high-quality edible oils has led to the adulteration of premium oils with cheaper oils and chemicals, posing significant health risks to consumers. To address this issue, there is an urgent need for sensitive, accurate, and reliable methods to detect adulteration in edible oils. Implementing such methods is crucial to ensure consumer safety and to raise awareness about the quality and authenticity of edible oils available in the market. Promoting these measures can help safeguard public health and maintain trust in edible oil products.

- Sharma (2018) reported that mustard oil is healthier than refined oils due to its high content of Omega-3 and Omega-6 fatty acids and its ability to lower cholesterol levels. Additionally, mustard oil contains antimicrobial properties that protect against infections and has lower saturated fat content compared to refined oils. However, Sharma cautioned that mustard oil should be consumed in moderation because it contains erucic acid, which can be harmful to health. This literature highlights the health benefits of mustard oil while also emphasizing the importance of mindful consumption due to potential adverse effects of erucic acid.
- Harshit Kumar Lodhi, Dorcus Masih, Chitra Sonkar and Rushikesh Handibag (2022) – This study provides valuable insights into the consumer behavior regarding edible oils in India. It emphasizes the significance of brand awareness, health consciousness, and sensory attributes in shaping consumer preferences. The study identifies a marked regional variation in consumption patterns, influenced by taste and availability. It highlights the dominance of soybean oil, preferred by 55.5% of respondents, with Fortune being the most recognized brand. The comprehensive survey methodology, involving 110 participants from diverse demographics in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, adds robustness to the findings. The focus on packaging, price, and health attributes further enriches the understanding of factors driving purchase decisions. This research underscores the evolving landscape of edible oil consumption in India, reflecting a shift towards refined oils due to increasing health awareness, making it a pertinent contribution to the literature on consumer behavior in the food industry.
- Nardos Mesfin's (2021) study on factors influencing brand choice of Tena oil in Addis Ababa provides a focused exploration of key determinants affecting consumer decisions in the edible oil market. Through a combination of quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, the research identifies price sensitivity and individual attitudes as crucial factors influencing brand selection. The study underscores the importance of pricing strategies in consumer decision-making, suggesting that lower prices could enhance brand preference for Tena oil. Additionally, it highlights the role of individual attitudes in shaping consumer perceptions and preferences. The methodology, employing both structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, enhances the depth of

understanding by capturing nuanced consumer insights. Overall, the study contributes valuable insights for marketers and policymakers seeking to strengthen brand positioning and consumer engagement strategies in the competitive edible oil market of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

- The study by Bhuvaneshwari and Umamaheswari (2013) examines consumer preferences towards sunflower oil, highlighting the significance of understanding consumer expectations and satisfaction for brand sustainability. The article begins with an introduction to edible oils, noting the multitude of brands available in the market. The authors focus on sunflower oil, aiming to identify the most popular brands and the factors influencing consumer purchases. Key factors include quality, health benefits, taste, availability, and fat content. The study emphasizes the importance of these factors in consumer decision-making, suggesting that consumers conduct thorough evaluations of price, quality, and packaging before purchasing. This thorough evaluation indicates that consumers have distinct preferences and expectations from the sunflower oil brands they choose. The research implies that for sunflower oil brands to thrive in a competitive market, they must prioritize these factors and develop strategies that meet consumer demands. Moreover, the study underscores the unique positioning of each branded sunflower oil within the broader edible oil market, suggesting that a strong focus on quality, health benefits, and effective packaging can distinguish one brand from another. Ultimately, the research provides valuable insights for sunflower oil manufacturers, highlighting the need to align product offerings with consumer preferences to attract and retain a loyal customer base.
- Upadhya (Senior Dietician) in 2020 blog the harmful practice in India of repeatedly using frying oil, which increases toxic compounds detrimental to heart health. This reuse results in high levels of trifluoroacetic acid (TFA). She recommends alternatives like coconut oil, mustard oil, and groundnut oil due to their high smoke points, which are safer for Indian cooking. Upadhya also suggests blending oils as a healthier option. Her insights emphasize the need for better cooking practices to mitigate health risks associated with reused cooking oil and promote the use of healthier oil choices in Indian cuisine.

- Mohammad Amiri's (2016) study on the marketing strategies adopted by edible oil wholesalers in Pune city provides a comprehensive analysis of how organizations can leverage marketing strategies to maximize sales and gain a sustainable competitive edge. The study highlights the pivotal role of Market Information Systems (MIS) in refining marketing strategies, emphasizing its benefits in data-driven decision-making. It identifies key factors that influence marketing strategies, such as pricing decisions and market dynamics. Additionally, the study explores the challenges wholesalers face, including competition and market fluctuations, offering valuable insights into the complexities of marketing within the edible oil industry. This literature underscores the significance of strategic planning in overcoming industry-specific challenges.
- Dublin (2020) revealed that the edible oil market in India is projected to grow from around \$21.5 billion in 2019 to \$35.2 billion in 2025, driven by rising income and consumer awareness about healthy lifestyle and wellness.
- Sharma (2020) discusses the popularity of mustard oil in China, Russia, South Asia (particularly West Bengal, Bangladesh, and Pakistan), contrasted with its prohibition in the United States for edible use due to erucic acid content. Early animal studies in the 1950s linked erucic acid to potential heart disease risks, leading to regulatory caution. Despite its culinary appeal in certain regions, concerns over erucic acid's health implications persist, influencing international regulations and consumer perceptions regarding mustard oil's safety for consumption.
- Kaur (2019) highlights mustard oil as optimal for consumption due to its low saturated fat, high oleic acid content, balanced ratio of saturated, monounsaturated, and polyunsaturated fats, presence of antioxidants, and absence of trans-fat, emphasizing its potential health benefits compared to other cooking oils.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A theoretical framework in research refers to the structure that support a theory of a research study. It introduces and describes the theory that explains why the research problem under study exists. This framework provides a foundation upon which the entire research project is based.

It includes the theories and models that are relevant to the research, guiding the researcher in formulating hypotheses, defining variables, and setting up the study's structure. It serves as a lens through which the research is viewed and interpreted, offering a context for examining the research questions and hypotheses.

By anchoring the study within a specific theoretical perspective, it helps to ensure that the research findings can be understood in a broader context, linking them to existing knowledge and theory in the field.

A well-developed theoretical framework not only provides a rationale for the study also defines key concepts, relationships among the variables, and provides a framework for interpreting findings. It integrates and synthesizes a range of theories and concepts that help to explain the phenomena under investigation. It also helps to identify gaps in existing research and highlight areas where new research is needed, guiding the direction of the study.

It assists in developing a coherent structure for the research, ensuring that the study is methodologically sound and that the results are reliable and valid. In developing theoretical framework, researchers review existing literature to identify theories and models that are relevant to their study. They critically evaluate these theories considering their strengths and weaknesses, and decide which theoretical perspectives are most appropriate for their research.

This process involves defining key terms and concepts clearly, establishing the relationships among them, and explaining how they will be measures. The theoretical framework also provides a basis for making predictions about the outcomes of the study, offering a set of expectations based on existing knowledge.

It helps to justify the research design and methodology, demonstrating how the chosen methods align with the theoretical perspectives underpinning the study. Researchers can communicate their approach to the study more effectively, making it easier for others to understand the basis of their research and the interpretation of their findings.

2.2.1 MEANING OF CONSUMER PREFERENCE

Consumer preferences play a central role in shaping markets and driving economic activity. Understanding these preferences is essential for businesses and policymakers alike. By analysing consumer preferences through the lens of utility, economists can gain insights into how individuals make choices and allocate their resources.

Consumer preferences play a central role in shaping markets and driving economic activity. Understanding these preferences is essential for businesses and policymakers alike. By analysing consumer preferences through the lens of utility, economists can gain insights into how individuals make choices and allocate their resources.

Utility theory helps economists' model and understand consumer behaviour by quantifying the satisfaction or happiness derived from consuming goods and services. This theory assumes that consumers aim to maximize their utility subject to their budget constraints. By studying how consumers allocate their limited resources across different goods and services, economists can make predictions about market demand, pricing strategies, and the overall functioning of markets.

Moreover, preferences are not static; they can change over time due to factors like changes in income, tastes, technology, or external influences. Hence, continuous analysis of consumer preferences is crucial for businesses to adapt their offerings and for policymakers to formulate effective economic policies.

Consumer preferences, analysed through the framework of utility theory, provide valuable insights into market dynamics, helping businesses and policymakers make informed decisions to meet the needs and wants of consumers efficiently.

2.2.2 DEFINITIONS OF CONSUMER PREFERENCE

- Consumer preferences is the study of varying consumer choices that govern buying decisions in a market. They are the factors that influence the choices that consumers make when buying products and services. Consumers are driven by a desire to maximize their satisfaction with every purchase.
- Paul Anthony Samuelson introduced the Theory of Revealed Preference in 1938. It states that consumer preferences can be revealed by the choices they make in different scenarios and conditions. For example, if a consumer chooses to buy a certain product over another, it can be concluded that the consumer prefers the first product.
- Consumer preference in microeconomics is the study of rational consumer behaviour. It is important to note that this theory operates under certain assumptions, and it describes why people buy what they buy.
- Economic Definition: From an economic standpoint, consumer preference is defined as "the subjective tastes and preferences of individuals or households that determine their choices in the marketplace, based on the perceived utility or satisfaction derived from consuming goods or services"
- Marketing Definition: In marketing terms, consumer preference is described as "the set of attitudes and inclinations towards a product or service, which influences consumer choice and purchasing behaviour in competitive markets"
- Psychological Definition: Psychologically, consumer preference can be understood as "the individual's predisposition or liking for certain products or brands, shaped by emotional, cognitive, and social factors that impact decision-making processes"
- Behavioural Definition: Behaviourally, consumer preference refers to "the repeated selection of specific products or brands over time, reflecting consumer habits, satisfaction levels, and loyalty towards preferred choices"

Here are some key aspects covered by definitions of consumer preference:

- **Subjectivity:** Consumer preference is inherently subjective, varying from person to person based on individual tastes, perceptions, and unique preferences.
- **Decision-Making Process:** It involves the process through which consumers evaluate and choose among available options, considering factors like price, quality, brand reputation, and personal preferences.
- **Utility Maximization:** In economic terms, consumer preference is often linked to utility maximization, where consumers aim to derive the highest satisfaction or benefit from their purchases given their budget constraints.
- **Psychological Influences:** Psychological factors such as emotions, attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions play a significant role in shaping consumer preferences. These factors can influence how consumers perceive and evaluate products or services.
- **Market Dynamics:** Consumer preferences are influenced by market trends, competitive offerings, advertising, and promotional strategies employed by businesses to attract and retain customers.
- **Cultural and Social Factors:** Cultural norms, social influences, peer recommendations, and societal trends also impact consumer preferences, shaping their choices and consumption patterns.

2.2.3 TYPES OF CONSUMER PREFERENCES

- **Qualitative:** It focuses on the features and characteristics of a product or service, such as design, brand reputation, durability, and usability, defining the core qualities of the product.
- **Quantitative:** Such preferences are based on the tangible and quantifiable attributes of a product. For example, the size, shape, and quantity of a product are considered important.
- **Conditional:** It refers to preferences that change based on certain conditions. If the conditions a consumer has defined are not met, they would mostly opt for an alternative.

For example, a consumer buying cleaning supplies may set a condition that they would buy a particular company's products only if it offered a discount or sold a bundle (a set of related items sold together).

- **Unconditional:** This refers to preferences that do not depend on any parameter or condition. It means a consumer will be willing to spend money on such products, irrespective of their price, size, shape, colour, timely availability, features, functions, etc
- **Taste-based Preferences:** These preferences are driven by individual tastes and subjective liking for specific attributes of products or services. For example, preferences for certain flavours, textures, or styles in food, clothing, or entertainment.
- **Quality Preferences:** Consumers often prioritize products or services perceived to offer superior quality in terms of durability, reliability, performance, or craftsmanship. Quality preferences can influence purchasing decisions in sectors such as electronics, automotive, and luxury goods.
- **Price Preferences:** Price sensitivity varies among consumers, influencing preferences towards products that offer the best value-for-money proposition. Some consumers may prioritize affordability and seek lower-priced alternatives, while others may equate higher prices with better quality or status.
- **Brand Preferences:** Brand loyalty and recognition can shape consumer preferences, as some individuals develop strong affiliations with specific brands based on trust, reputation, perceived status, or past positive experiences. Brand preferences often play a significant role in consumer decisions in sectors like fashion, technology, and personal care.
- **Environmental and Ethical Preferences:** Increasingly, consumers are making choices based on environmental sustainability, ethical considerations, and corporate social responsibility practices. Preferences for eco-friendly products, fair trade goods, and socially responsible brands reflect consumers' values and commitment to ethical consumption.
- **Convenience Preferences:** Consumers may prioritize convenience and ease of use when selecting products or services. Preferences for products that offer time-saving features, hassle-free shopping experiences, or convenient delivery options are prevalent in sectors such as retail, food delivery, and digital services.
- **Cultural and Social Preferences:** Cultural norms, traditions, and social influences shape consumer preferences in diverse ways. Preferences for specific cuisines, clothing styles,

entertainment choices, or holiday traditions are often rooted in cultural heritage and social identities.

- **Experience Preferences:** Preferences may be influenced by past experiences and familiarity with certain products or services. Consumers often develop preferences based on positive or negative experiences, influencing their future purchasing decisions and brand loyalty.
- **Health and Wellness Preferences:** Growing awareness of health and wellness influences consumer preferences towards products and services perceived to promote well-being. Preferences for organic foods, fitness products, wellness services, and sustainable lifestyles reflect consumer priorities in health-conscious markets.

2.2.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF CONSUMER PREFERENCE

- **Subjectivity:** Consumer preferences are subjective and vary from person to person based on individual tastes, needs, and experiences. Preferences are shaped by personal factors such as upbringing, culture, and lifestyle choices.
- **Dynamic nature:** Consumer preferences are not static; they evolve over time due to changes in trends, technology, personal circumstances, and life stages. What was preferred yesterday may not be preferred tomorrow.
- **Hierarchy of preferences:** Consumers prioritize their preferences, often ranking them based on importance or relevance. Certain preferences may be essential, while others are secondary or less critical in influencing purchasing decisions.
- **Context dependence:** preferences are influenced by the context in which decisions are made. Factors such as location, time, social setting, and available options can impact consumer preferences.
- **Trade-offs and compromises:** Consumers often face trade-offs and compromises when making decisions. They weigh the benefits and drawbacks of different options, considering factors such as price, quality, convenience, and brand reputation.
- **Influenced by marketing:** Marketing efforts, including advertising, branding, and promotions, play a significant role in shaping consumer preferences. Effective awareness, generate interest, and influence perceptions about products or brands.
- **Emotional and psychological influences:** Emotions. Attitudes, and psychological

factors such as social proof and cognitive biases influence consumer preferences. Emotional appeals, brand loyalty, and perceived status can influence consumer choices.

- Varied across product categories: Preferences vary across different product categories and industries. What consumers prioritize in one category, such as technology, may differ from what they prioritize in another, such as food or clothing.
- Cultural influences: Cultural norms, values, and traditions influence consumer preferences. Cultural factors shape perceptions of beauty, taste, and social norms, impacting preferences for certain products or services.
- Social influences: Social networks, peer groups, and societal trends influence consumer preferences. People often seek validation and conformity within their social circles, leading to shared preferences and behaviours.
- Brand loyalty: Consumer preferences can be influenced by brand loyalty. Positive experiences with a brand can create strong emotional connections and repeat purchases, influencing future preferences.
- Product experience: personal experiences with products or services shape consumer preferences. Positive experiences can lead to brand loyalty, while negative experiences can drive consumers away and influence preferences for alternatives.
- Perceived value: Consumer preferences are influenced by perceived value, which includes factors such as quality, price, and utility. Consumers assess whether a product or service meets their needs and offers value for money.
- Aspirational preferences: Consumers may have aspirational preferences for products or brands associated with status, luxury, or lifestyle aspirations. Aspirational branding can influence consumer choices and desires.
- Environmental concerns: Growing environmental awareness influences consumer preferences for eco-friendly, sustainable, and ethically sourced products. Consumers may prefer brands that align with their values and contribute to environmental sustainability.
- Health and wellness: Consumer preferences for health and wellness products have grown due to increasing awareness of healthy lifestyles and wellbeing. Preferences may include organic foods, natural ingredients, and fitness-related products and services.

- **Convenience and accessibility:** Consumers prefer products and services that are convenient and accessible. Factors such as location, ease of purchase, delivery options, and user-friendly interfaces influence preferences.
- **Customization and personalization:** Consumers value customization and personalization options that cater to their unique preferences and needs. Brands that offer personalized experiences, such as customizable products or tailored recommendations, can appeal to consumer preferences.
- **Reviews and recommendations:** Consumer preferences are influenced by reviews, recommendations, and social proof. Positive reviews and endorsements from trusted sources can build credibility and influence consumer choices.
- **Tech-savvy preferences:** With advancements in technology, consumer preferences are influenced by innovation, digital experiences, and connectivity. Preferences may include tech gadgets, smart devices, and digital services that enhance convenience and connectivity.

2.2.5 THE FACTORS AFFECTING CONSUMER PREFERENCE

- **Cultural background:** Cultural norms, values, and traditions significantly influence what products and services consumers prefer. For example, dietary habits, fashion trends, and even colour preferences can vary widely across cultures.
- **Social influences:** People are often influenced by their social circles, including family, friends, peers, and online communities. Social approval and conformity play a role in shaping consumer preferences, as individuals may adopt the choices of those they admire or want to emulate.
- **Economic factors:** Economic conditions such as income levels, employment status, inflation, and interest rates impact consumer preferences. For instance, during economic downturns, consumers may prioritize essential goods over luxury items.
- **Marketing efforts:** Advertising, branding, promotions, and product placement influence consumer perceptions and preferences. Effective marketing strategies can create awareness, shape attitudes, and drive purchasing decisions.

- **Product quality and features:** Consumers often prefer products and services that offer high quality, reliability, and functionality. Unique features, innovation, and customization options can also influence consumer preferences toward certain products over others.
- **Personal values and beliefs:** Individual values, ethics, and moral principles influence consumer preferences. For instance, environmentally conscious consumers may prefer eco-friendly products, while those prioritizing social responsibility may support fair trade initiatives.
- **Demographic characteristics:** Factors such as age, gender, income, education, occupation, and family life stage impact consumer preferences. Different demographic segments have distinct needs, lifestyles, and consumption patterns, leading to varying preferences for products and services.
- **Psychological factors:** Consumer preferences are influenced by psychological processes, including perception, motivation, attitudes, emotions, and cognitive biases. Factors such as brand loyalty, perceived value, and emotional associations affect decision-making and shape preferences.
- **Perceived risk:** Consumers assess the risks associated with purchasing a product or service, including financial risk, performance risk, social risk, and psychological risk. Risk perception influences consumer preferences, as individuals may favour brands or products perceived as safer or more reliable.
- **Product familiarity:** Familiarity with a product or brand affects consumer preferences. Consumers often prefer products they are familiar with or have previous positive experiences with, as familiarity reduces uncertainty and perceived risks.
- **Availability and accessibility:** The availability and accessibility of products and services influence consumer preferences. Consumers are more likely to choose products that are easily accessible, convenient to purchase, and readily available in their preferred distribution channels.
- **Peer influence and social proof:** Social influence and peer recommendations impact consumer preferences. Individuals may be more inclined to choose products or brands endorsed by their peers or supported by positive reviews and testimonials, seeking social validation and reassurance.

- **Brand image and reputation:** Brand image, reputation, and equity shape consumer perceptions and preferences. Strong brands with positive associations, credibility, and trustworthiness often attract loyal customers and influence their preferences over time.
- **Emotional appeal:** Emotional factors such as nostalgia, happiness, fear, or excitement can influence consumer preferences. Emotional appeals in marketing campaigns evoke feelings and emotions that resonate with consumers, creating stronger connections and preferences for certain brands or products.
- **Cognitive dissonance:** Consumers seek consistency between their beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours, avoiding cognitive dissonance. To reduce discomfort or inconsistency, individuals may adjust their preferences or rationalize their choices, aligning them with their self-image or social norms.
- **Technological advancements:** Technological innovations and advancements impact consumer preferences by introducing new products, services, and experiences. Consumers may embrace new technologies that offer convenience, efficiency, and enhanced functionality, leading to shifts in preferences and adoption rates.
- **Environmental influences:** Environmental factors such as geographical location, climate, and natural surroundings can influence consumer preferences. For example, consumers in tropical regions may prefer products suitable for hot and humid climates, while those in colder climates may prioritize warmth and insulation.
- **Government regulations:** Government regulations and policies, including health and safety standards, labelling requirements and taxation, influence consumer preferences. Regulatory interventions can shape consumer choices by incentivizing certain behaviours or restricting access to certain products.
- **Cultural trends and fads:** Cultural trends, fads, and zeitgeist influence consumer preferences and lifestyle choices. Consumers may embrace products or brands associated with current cultural movements, fashion trends, or popular phenomena with prevailing cultural norms and values.
- **Personal experiences and feedback:** Individual experiences, feedback, and past interactions with products or services influence consumer preferences. Positive experiences build trust and loyalty, while negative experiences can lead to dissatisfaction and a shift in preferences toward alternative options.

2.2.6 PSYCHOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS OF CONSUMER PREFERENCE

At its core, consumer preference is driven by individual psychology and the unique makeup of each consumer's personality, beliefs, and cognitive processes. Psychologically, preferences are shaped by several key factors:

- **Perceived Value and Utility:** Consumers evaluate products and services based on the utility they provide, which refers to the satisfaction or benefit derived from consumption. The concept of utility is central to many economic theories, such as the Marginal Utility Theory, which posits that consumers seek to maximize their satisfaction from consuming goods and services. Preferences are therefore influenced by how consumers perceive the value offered by different options and their perceived ability to satisfy their needs or desires.
- **Emotional and Affective Responses:** Beyond rational calculations of utility, consumer preferences are often influenced by emotional responses and affective states. Emotional branding, for example, leverages emotions such as happiness, nostalgia, or a sense of belonging to create strong consumer attachments to specific brands or products. Emotional responses can override purely rational considerations in decision-making processes.
- **Cognitive Biases:** Human decision-making is also subject to various cognitive biases, which can distort preferences and lead to suboptimal choices. For instance, anchoring bias occurs when consumers rely too heavily on the first piece of information they encounter when making a decision, while confirmation bias leads individuals to seek out information that confirms their existing beliefs or preferences.
- **Habit Formation and Familiarity:** Consumer preferences can be influenced by habits formed through repeated consumption of particular products or brands. Habitual purchases often stem from familiarity, convenience, or past positive experiences. Breaking established habits or changing consumer preferences may require significant effort or stimuli that disrupt habitual behaviour.

2.2.7 ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS OF CONSUMER PREFERENCE

Economically, consumer preference is shaped by factors related to income, prices, and market dynamics:

- **Income and Budget Constraints:** The level of disposable income available to consumers significantly impacts their purchasing decisions and preferences. Higher-income individuals may have greater flexibility to prioritize quality or prestige over price, while lower-income consumers may be more price-sensitive and prioritize affordability.
- **Price Sensitivity:** Price plays a crucial role in shaping consumer preferences, as consumers evaluate the trade-offs between price and perceived value or utility. Elasticity of demand measures how sensitive consumers are to changes in price; products with more elastic demand are more sensitive to price changes, affecting consumer preferences and purchase decisions accordingly.
- **Substitute and Complementary Goods:** Preferences for specific goods can also be influenced by the availability and pricing of substitute and complementary goods. Substitute goods are alternatives that can replace each other (e.g., different brands of cola), while complementary goods are consumed together (e.g., coffee and sugar). Changes in the prices or availability of these related goods can impact consumer preferences and choices.

2.2.8 SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DIMENSIONS OF CONSUMER PREFERENCE

Consumer preferences are not formed in isolation but are profoundly influenced by social and cultural factors:

- **Social Influences:** Consumer behaviour is often shaped by social norms, peer influences, and reference groups. Social approval and conformity can lead individuals to adopt preferences or behaviours that align with those of their social circles or desired social identity. For example, fashion trends and product endorsements by celebrities or influencers can significantly impact consumer preferences.
- **Cultural Values and Traditions:** Cultural factors play a crucial role in shaping consumer preferences, as they reflect broader societal values, beliefs, and traditions. Preferences for certain foods, clothing styles, or entertainment choices can be deeply rooted in cultural heritage and norms. Marketers must navigate cultural sensitivities and preferences when targeting diverse consumer segments across different cultural backgrounds.
- **Ethical and Environmental Considerations:** Increasingly, consumer preferences are influenced by ethical considerations, such as sustainability, fair trade practices, and

corporate social responsibility. Consumers may favour products and brands that align with their ethical values and support causes they care about, influencing purchasing decisions and brand loyalty.

2.2.9 MARKETING AND CONSUMER PREFERENCE

Marketing strategies play a pivotal role in shaping and influencing consumer preferences:

- **Brand Positioning and Differentiation:** Effective brand positioning helps differentiate products or services in the minds of consumers, highlighting unique attributes or benefits that resonate with target audiences. Brand equity, built through consistent branding efforts and positive consumer experiences, can strengthen consumer preferences and loyalty over time.
- **Advertising and Promotion:** Advertising campaigns leverage psychological principles and emotional appeals to influence consumer perceptions and preferences. Effective advertising communicates product benefits, addresses consumer needs or desires, and reinforces brand positioning in competitive markets.
- **Product Innovation and Consumer Feedback:** Understanding consumer preferences is essential for product development and innovation. Gathering consumer feedback through surveys, focus groups, and market research helps identify emerging trends, consumer preferences, and unmet needs that can guide product improvements or new product launches.

2.2.10 ADVANTAGES OF CONSUMER PREFERENCE

- **Increased Sales:** Products or services that align with consumer preferences are more likely to experience higher demand and increased sales volume. Consumers are more willing to purchase items that cater to their specific needs and preferences.
- **Brand Loyalty:** When consumers consistently choose a particular brand or product due to their preference, it fosters brand loyalty. Loyal customers are more likely to repeat purchases, recommend the brand to others, and remain committed to the brand over time.

- **Competitive Advantage:** Understanding and catering to consumer preferences can provide businesses with a competitive advantage in the marketplace. By offering products or services that meet or exceed consumer expectations, companies can differentiate themselves from competitors and attract more customers.
- **Higher Profit Margins:** Products or services that are preferred by consumers often command higher prices and profit margins. Consumers are willing to pay a premium for items that they perceive as superior in quality, value, or alignment with their preferences.
- **Reduced Marketing Costs:** Targeting products or services to specific consumer preferences can streamline marketing efforts and reduce costs. Businesses can focus their marketing efforts on reaching the most receptive audience, resulting in more efficient use of resources.
- **Improved Customer Satisfaction:** Meeting consumer preferences leads to higher levels of customer satisfaction. When consumers find products or services that align with their needs and desires, they are more likely to be satisfied with their purchases and overall experience with the brand.
- **Innovative Opportunities:** Consumer preferences provide valuable insights that can inform product development and innovation. By understanding what consumers want and need, businesses can create new products or improve existing ones to better meet consumer demands.
- **Enhanced Brand Reputation:** Consistently delivering products or services that are preferred by consumers contribute to a positive brand reputation. Brands that prioritize consumer preferences are perceived as customercentric, trustworthy, and responsive to consumer needs.
- **Word-of-Mouth Marketing:** Satisfied customers who prefer a particular product or brand are more likely to share their positive experiences with others through word-of-mouth recommendations. This organic form of marketing can help increase brand awareness and attract new customers.
- **Adaptability to Market Changes:** Businesses that are attuned to consumer preferences are better equipped to adapt to changing market dynamics and trends. By staying responsive to shifting consumer needs and preferences, companies can maintain relevance and competitiveness in the market.

2.2.11 DISADVANTAGES OF CONSUMER PREFERENCE

- **Market Saturation:** Over-reliance on consumer preference can lead to market saturation, where numerous competitors offer similar products or services tailored to the same preferences. This can result in intense competition, price wars, and diminished profitability for businesses.
- **Limited Innovation:** Focusing solely on meeting existing consumer preferences may stifle innovation within the industry. Businesses may become reluctant to invest in research and development for new products or services that deviate from established preferences, hindering long-term growth and competitiveness.
- **Niche Market Neglect:** Consumer preference may not always align with the needs or preferences of niche market segments. Businesses that prioritize mass-market preferences may overlook niche markets with unique needs, missing out on potential revenue opportunities and customer loyalty.
- **Vulnerability to Shifting Trends:** Consumer preferences can be influenced by changing trends, fads, or cultural shifts. Businesses that heavily rely on current consumer preferences risk being caught off guard by shifts in market demand, leading to sudden declines in sales and profitability.
- **Difficulty in Differentiation:** In industries where products or services are highly commoditized and consumer preferences are similar across competitors, it can be challenging for businesses to differentiate themselves solely based on consumer preference. This can lead to price competition and erode brand loyalty.
- **Dependency on External Factors:** Consumer preferences are influenced by various external factors such as economic conditions, social trends, and technological advancements. Businesses that solely rely on consumer preference may face vulnerability to fluctuations in these external factors, impacting their sales and profitability.
- **Short-Term Focus:** Prioritizing immediate consumer preferences over long-term strategic goals may result in a short-term focus for businesses. This can lead to decisions that prioritize short-term gains at the expense of long-term sustainability and growth.

- **Negative Externalities:** Consumer preferences may not always align with broader societal or environmental concerns. Businesses that cater exclusively to consumer preferences without considering the broader impact on society or the environment may contribute to negative externalities such as environmental degradation or social inequality.
- **Loss of Brand Identity:** Overemphasis on meeting consumer preferences may lead to a loss of brand identity or differentiation for businesses. Brands that constantly adapt to shifting consumer preferences may struggle to maintain a clear and consistent brand identity, resulting in confusion among consumers.
- **Risk of Overextension:** Businesses that continuously chase consumer preferences may risk overextending their product or service offerings beyond their core competencies. This can dilute brand equity and result in decreased quality or customer satisfaction.

2.2.12 CONSUMER PREFERENCE FORMULATION MODELS

2.2.12.1 MULTI-ATTRIBUTE ATTITUDE MODEL

The Multi-Attribute Attitude Model (MAAM) is an effective framework for understanding consumer preferences by analyzing how they evaluate different attributes of a product. This model is particularly useful in the context of cooking oil, where various attributes can significantly influence purchasing decisions. By applying the MAAM to cooking oil, such as KPL SHUDHI, we can dissect consumer attitudes and preferences to gain valuable insights into their decision-making processes.

By applying the MAAM, we can break down consumer preferences into specific, measurable components:

Taste: If taste receives high belief ratings and is deemed highly important, this indicates that enhancing the flavor profile of KPL SHUDHI cooking oil could significantly boost consumer preference. This insight can drive product development and marketing strategies focusing on taste.

Price: If price is a critical factor with high importance but low belief ratings for KPL SHUDHI, it suggests that consumers find it too expensive. Adjusting pricing strategies, offering discounts, or emphasizing value-for-money aspects in marketing could better align with consumer expectations.

Health Benefits: If health benefits are rated as highly important and KPL SHUDHI scores well on this attribute, it underscores the brand's strength in this area. Marketing campaigns should highlight the health benefits, such as the presence of beneficial fats and the absence of harmful additives, to attract health-conscious consumers.

Brand Reputation: If brand reputation is significant and KPL SHUDHI scores high, maintaining and enhancing brand image through consistent quality and effective communication is crucial. If ratings are low, efforts should be focused on building trust through quality assurances and positive consumer engagement.

Packaging: If packaging is considered important but KPL SHUDHI receives low ratings, redesigning the packaging for better functionality and appeal could attract more consumers. Features like easy-pour spouts, tamper-proof seals, and eco-friendly materials can be emphasized.

The MAAM also facilitates comparative analysis between KPL SHUDHI and other brands. By comparing the overall attitude scores derived from consumer beliefs and importance weights, we can identify strengths and weaknesses relative to competitors.

This comparative approach can inform strategic decisions in product development, marketing, and competitive positioning.

The Multi-Attribute Attitude Model (MAAM) offers a comprehensive framework for understanding consumer preferences by examining how they evaluate various attributes of cooking oil. When applied to KPL SHUDHI, this model facilitates a detailed analysis of consumer attitudes, highlighting specific areas for improvement and strategic opportunities.

By breaking down consumer attitudes into measurable components, MAAM allows KPL SHUDHI to identify which attributes are most important to consumers and how the brand performs on each of these attributes. For example, if consumers prioritize quality and affordability but find the brand lacking in packaging, KPL SHUDHI can focus on enhancing its packaging to meet consumer expectations better. This structured approach ensures that any strategic changes are data-driven and targeted.

Moreover, MAAM's comparative analysis between KPL SHUDHI and its competitors provides valuable insights into the brand's relative strengths and weaknesses. Understanding where KPL SHUDHI stands in comparison to other brands can inform

decisions in product development, marketing, and competitive positioning.

Overall, applying the MAAM to KPL SHUDHI's consumer data supports informed decision-making aimed at enhancing consumer satisfaction and preference, which is crucial for strengthening the brand's market position and achieving sustained growth.

2.2.13 CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR THEORIES

2.2.13.1 THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOUR (TPB)

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) is a robust framework for understanding consumer intentions and behaviours regarding cooking oil, such as KPL SHUDHI. According to TPB, three core components influence consumer behaviour: attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control.

Attitude: This involves the consumer's positive or negative evaluation of using a specific cooking oil. For instance, if consumers believe that KPL SHUDHI offers superior health benefits, good taste, and value for money, their attitude towards purchasing it will be positive.

Subjective Norms: These refer to the perceived social pressure to perform or not perform a behaviour. If influential peers, family members, or culinary experts endorse KPL SHUDHI, consumers are more likely to follow suit due to the desire to conform to these expectations.

Perceived Behavioural Control: This pertains to the ease or difficulty of performing the behaviour, influenced by past experiences and anticipated obstacles. If consumers find KPL SHUDHI readily available, affordable, and easy to use, their perceived control over purchasing it increases, thereby enhancing their intention to buy.

2.2.13.2 MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a psychological theory that can be applied to understand consumer behaviour towards cooking oil, such as KPL SHUDHI. The hierarchy is structured in five levels: physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs.

Physiological Needs: At the base of the hierarchy, these are basic survival needs such as food and water. Cooking oil, a fundamental ingredient in meal preparation, directly fulfils this level by enabling the creation of nutritious and palatable food.

Safety Needs: Once physiological needs are met, consumers seek safety and security. KPL SHUDHI can address this by emphasizing health benefits, such as being free from harmful additives and rich in beneficial nutrients, thereby ensuring physical well-being.

Social Needs: These pertain to belonging and love. Sharing meals prepared with KPL SHUDHI can enhance social bonds during family dinners or gatherings, fulfilling the need for social connection and acceptance.

Esteem Needs: This level involves the desire for respect and recognition. Consumers may derive a sense of pride and esteem from using high-quality, premium cooking oils like KPL SHUDHI, which could be perceived as a symbol of a health-conscious and discerning lifestyle.

Self-Actualization Needs: At the top of the hierarchy, self-actualization refers to realizing one's potential and seeking personal growth. Choosing KPL SHUDHI for its health benefits and quality aligns with consumers' goals of living a healthier, more conscious lifestyle, thus fulfilling their highest level of needs.

By addressing these hierarchical needs, KPL SHUDHI can effectively position its products to meet the diverse motivations and aspirations of consumers.

2.14 PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR

Purchase behavior encompasses the complex decision-making processes and actions that consumers undertake when selecting and buying products or services. It is influenced by a variety of psychological, social, personal, and cultural factors. Psychologically, consumers' motivations, perceptions, learning experiences, and attitudes significantly impact their purchasing decisions. For instance, a consumer's motivation, driven by needs ranging from basic physiological requirements to higher-level self-fulfillment desires, can determine the urgency and nature of their purchases. Perception, or how consumers interpret information and experiences, also shapes their buying behavior. Learning from past experiences and established beliefs and attitudes towards brands and products can either reinforce loyalty or prompt a switch to different

options. Social factors, including family influences, reference groups, and social status, further affect consumer behavior. Family members can sway choices through shared values and discussions, while reference groups like friends or admired public figures provide external cues that shape preferences and buying decisions. Social status and class can dictate the affordability and desirability of certain products, influencing purchasing habits accordingly.

2.14.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR

1. **Psychological Factors:** Psychological factors like motivation, perception, learning, and beliefs significantly influence purchasing decisions. Consumers are driven by their needs, interpret information based on personal biases, learn from past experiences, and hold attitudes that shape their buying behaviour. These internal processes guide how they choose products.

2. **Social Factors:** Social factors, including family, reference groups, and social status, play a crucial role in purchase behaviour. Family members influence each other's buying decisions, reference groups provide external cues, and social status dictates preferences and access to certain products, collectively shaping consumer choices.

3. **Personal Factors:** Personal factors such as age, occupation, lifestyle, and personality affect consumer behaviour. Different life stages and job roles dictate specific needs, while lifestyle choices and personality traits drive preferences. These individual characteristics determine what products consumers find appealing and are likely to purchase.

4. **Cultural Factors:** Cultural factors encompass broader societal values, subcultural influences, and social class. These elements create a framework for consumer behavior, dictating acceptable norms and preferences.

2.14. 2 TYPES OF PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR

1. **Complex Buying Behaviour:** Complex buying behaviour occurs when consumers are highly involved in a purchase and perceive significant differences among brands. This is typical for expensive, infrequent, or high-risk products, requiring extensive research and evaluation before making a decision, such as buying a car or a house.

2. **Dissonance-Reducing Buying Behaviour:** Dissonance-reducing buying behaviour happens when consumers are highly involved but see little difference among brands. After purchase, they may experience dissonance and seek reassurance. This behaviour is common with moderately expensive or infrequently bought items like carpeting or furniture.

3. **Habitual Buying Behaviour:** Habitual buying behaviour is characterized by low consumer involvement and minimal perceived brand differences. Purchases are made out of habit without much thought or evaluation, often for everyday items like salt or milk. Consumers rely on familiarity and routine rather than brand loyalty.

4. **Variety-Seeking Buying Behaviour:** Variety-seeking buying behaviour occurs when consumers have low involvement but perceive significant differences between brands. They frequently switch brands for the sake of variety and new experiences, not because of dissatisfaction. This is common with products like snacks or beverages.

2.14.3 THE FACTORS AFFECTING PURCHASE BEHAVIOUR

1. **Psychological Factors:** Psychological factors include motivation, perception, learning, and beliefs. Consumers are driven by needs, interpret information through personal filters, learn from experiences, and hold attitudes that influence their choices. These internal processes guide how consumers evaluate and decide on products.

2. **Social Factors:** Social factors such as family, reference groups, and social status influence consumer behavior. Family members' preferences and opinions shape decisions, reference groups provide external cues and norms, and an individual's social status determines their access to and preference for certain products.

3. **Personal Factors:** Personal factors encompass age, occupation, lifestyle, and personality. Different age groups and life stages have distinct needs, occupations affect the type of products required, lifestyles determine interests and preferences, and personality traits influence the choice of products that align with self-identity.

4. **Cultural Factors:** Cultural factors involve societal values, subcultures, and social class. Culture shapes fundamental consumer preferences and norms, subcultures offer specific patterns and behaviors within a larger culture, and social class impacts purchasing power and access to various products and services.

5. **Economic Factors:** Economic factors such as income, economic conditions, and personal financial situations affect purchase behavior. Higher income and favorable economic conditions increase spending power, while economic downturns or personal financial constraints limit consumer spending and influence prioritization of needs over wants.

6. **Technological Factors:** Technological factors include advancements and innovations that create new products and change shopping behaviors. Technology influences how consumers access information, shop online, and interact with brands, shaping their expectations for convenience, efficiency, and the availability of cutting-edge products.

7. **Environmental Factors:** Environmental factors involve growing awareness and concern for sustainability and eco-friendliness. Consumers increasingly prefer products that are environmentally responsible, influencing their buying decisions. Brands that demonstrate a commitment to sustainability can attract eco-conscious consumers and gain a competitive advantage.

8. **Political and Legal Factors:** Political and legal factors include regulations, policies, and legal requirements that affect product availability, marketing strategies, and consumer protection. Compliance with laws and regulations ensures product safety and transparency, influencing consumer trust and confidence in making purchasing decisions.

2.15 MEANING OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Customer satisfaction is a crucial metric that measures how well a company's products or services meet or exceed customer expectations. It is an indicator of the overall contentment a customer feels when interacting with a brand, encompassing various aspects such as product quality, customer service, and the overall buying experience. High levels of customer satisfaction are essential for building customer loyalty, fostering repeat business, and generating positive word-of-mouth referrals.

At its core, customer satisfaction hinges on the perceived value a customer receives. This perception is shaped by factors such as product performance, ease of purchase, reliability, and the degree to which the product or service fulfills the customer's needs and desires. For instance, a customer purchasing KPL SHUDHI cooking oil would

assess satisfaction based on the oil's taste, health benefits, packaging, price, and the overall purchasing process. If the product consistently meets or surpasses expectations in these areas, customer satisfaction is likely to be high.

Moreover, customer satisfaction is not only a reflection of product quality but also of the emotional and psychological connections customers develop with a brand. Companies that provide exceptional customer service, prompt issue resolution, and personalized experiences tend to achieve higher satisfaction rates. This emotional bond can lead to increased customer loyalty, reducing the likelihood of switching to competitors. Ultimately, customer satisfaction serves as a key performance indicator for businesses, guiding them in enhancing their products, services, and customer interactions. By prioritizing customer satisfaction, companies can foster a positive brand image, drive long-term profitability, and ensure sustained market success.

2.15.1 DEFINITION OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Customer satisfaction is a measure of how well a company's products or services meet or exceed the expectations of its customers. It reflects the overall contentment and positive feelings a customer experiences after purchasing and using a product or service.

This satisfaction is influenced by various factors, including product quality, value for money, user experience, customer service, and the company's reputation. High levels of customer satisfaction can lead to repeat purchases, brand loyalty, positive word-of-mouth, and reduced customer churn. Conversely, dissatisfaction can result in negative reviews, loss of business, and a tarnished brand image.

To accurately gauge customer satisfaction, companies often use tools such as surveys, feedback forms, Net Promoter Scores (NPS), and direct customer interactions. These methods help identify areas for improvement and inform strategies to enhance the customer experience.

2.15.2 TYPES OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

- 1. Transactional Satisfaction** This type refers to the customer's satisfaction with a specific transaction or interaction with a company. It involves assessing the experience at the point of purchase or during a service encounter, focusing on elements such as the ease of purchase, the quality of service, and the speed of delivery.
- 2. Overall Satisfaction** Overall satisfaction considers the cumulative experiences a customer has with a brand over time. It encompasses all interactions and engagements with the company, including product use, customer service, and post-purchase support.
- 3. Service Satisfaction** Service satisfaction pertains to the customer's contentment with the service provided, separate from the product itself. This includes factors like responsiveness, professionalism, friendliness, and problem resolution efficiency.
- 4. Product Satisfaction** This type focuses on the customer's satisfaction with the actual product. Key factors include product quality, functionality, reliability, durability, and whether the product meets the customer's needs and expectations.
- 5. Expectancy Disconfirmation Satisfaction** Based on the Expectancy Disconfirmation Theory, this type of satisfaction occurs when the actual performance of a product or service meets or exceeds customer expectations. If expectations are surpassed, positive disconfirmation leads to higher satisfaction.
- 6. Emotional Satisfaction** Emotional satisfaction involves the feelings and emotional responses customers have towards a brand or product. This could be influenced by branding, marketing messages, and the overall brand image, creating a sense of loyalty and emotional attachment.
- 7. Loyalty Satisfaction** This type of satisfaction is related to the degree of loyalty customers feel towards a brand, often influenced by consistent positive experiences and trust in the brand. It can lead to repeat purchases and long-term commitment.
- 8. Cognitive Satisfaction** Cognitive satisfaction is based on the logical assessment of a product or service's performance. Customers evaluate whether the product works as intended and if it offers good value for money.
- 9. Affective Satisfaction** Affective satisfaction is derived from the feelings and emotions associated with a product or service. Positive feelings such as joy, excitement, and pleasure when using a product contribute to affective satisfaction.
- 10. Feature-Based Satisfaction** This type of satisfaction relates to specific features or attributes of a product or service.

2.15.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Customer satisfaction is a multifaceted concept that encompasses various characteristics, each contributing to how a customer perceives their experience with a product or service. Here are the key characteristics of customer satisfaction:

1. **Subjective Nature** Customer satisfaction is inherently subjective, varying significantly from one customer to another based on personal preferences, expectations, and experiences. What satisfies one customer may not necessarily satisfy another.
2. **Dynamic and Evolving** Customer satisfaction is not static; it evolves over time. Changes in market conditions, consumer expectations, and competitor offerings can all influence customer satisfaction levels. Continuous monitoring and adaptation are essential.
3. **Perception-Based** Customer satisfaction is largely based on perceptions rather than objective reality. It is influenced by how customers perceive the quality, value, and benefits of a product or service relative to their expectations.
4. **Relative Comparison** Customers often evaluate their satisfaction in relation to their experiences with other brands and products. Satisfaction is not just about meeting expectations but also about outperforming competitors.
5. **Emotional and Rational Components** Customer satisfaction involves both emotional and rational elements. Emotional satisfaction is derived from feelings and experiences, while rational satisfaction is based on logical evaluations of product performance and value.
6. **Expectation Fulfillment** A key determinant of customer satisfaction is the degree to which a product or service meets or exceeds customer expectations. Expectation management is crucial; under-promising and over-delivering can enhance satisfaction.
7. **Multi-Dimensional** Customer satisfaction encompasses various dimensions, including product quality, service quality, pricing, convenience, and overall experience. Each dimension contributes differently to the overall satisfaction.
8. **Feedback-Oriented** Customer satisfaction is often measured through feedback mechanisms such as surveys, reviews, and direct customer interactions. This feedback is essential for identifying strengths and areas for improvement.

9. **Impact on Loyalty** High levels of customer satisfaction are strongly correlated with customer loyalty. Satisfied customers are more likely to return, make repeat purchases, and recommend the brand to others.

10. **Service Recovery Influence** The ability of a company to effectively handle and resolve issues impacts customer satisfaction. Prompt and effective service recovery can turn dissatisfied customers into satisfied ones.

11. **Cultural Sensitivity** Customer satisfaction can vary across different cultural contexts. Understanding cultural nuances and preferences is important for multinational companies to tailor their products and services accordingly.

12. **Influence on Word-of-Mouth** Satisfied customers are more likely to engage in positive word-of-mouth, sharing their favorable experiences with friends, family, and social networks, which can attract new customers.

13. **Correlation with Business Outcomes** Customer satisfaction is closely linked to key business outcomes such as profitability, market share, and customer retention. Higher satisfaction typically leads to better financial performance and competitive advantage.

2.15.4 THE FACTORS AFFECTING CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Customer satisfaction is influenced by a variety of factors that collectively shape how customers perceive and evaluate their experiences with a product, service, or brand. These factors can be categorized into several key dimensions:

1. **Product Quality** One of the most critical factors affecting customer satisfaction is the quality of the product itself. This includes its reliability, durability, performance, features, and how well it meets customer needs and expectations. Products that consistently deliver high quality are more likely to satisfy customers.

2. **Service Quality** Service quality refers to the level of customer service provided throughout the entire customer journey. Factors influencing service quality include responsiveness, competence of service personnel, empathy, timeliness in resolving issues, and the overall customer service experience.

3. **Price and Value for Money** Customers evaluate whether the price of a product or service aligns with its perceived value. Factors such as competitive pricing, discounts, promotions, and perceived value for money play significant roles in determining customer satisfaction. Customers expect fair pricing relative to the quality and benefits received.

4. **Customer Support and After-Sales Service** Effective customer support and after-sales service are crucial for customer satisfaction. This includes accessibility to support channels, ease of reaching customer service representatives, problem resolution efficiency, warranty policies, and the overall support experience.
5. **Brand Reputation and Trust** The reputation and trustworthiness of a brand influence customer satisfaction. Positive brand perception, brand trust, reliability, ethical practices, and corporate social responsibility efforts contribute to customer confidence and satisfaction with the brand.
6. **Customer Experience (CX)** Customer experience encompasses all interactions and touchpoints a customer has with a brand. A seamless, personalized, and consistent customer experience across channels (online, offline, mobile, etc.) enhances satisfaction. Factors include ease of use, convenience, accessibility, and emotional engagement.
7. **Convenience and Accessibility** Customers value convenience and accessibility in their interactions with products and services. Factors such as ease of purchase, availability of products, multiple payment options, delivery options, and location influence satisfaction levels.
8. **Product Assortment and Variety** The availability of a diverse range of products or services to meet varying customer needs and preferences contributes to satisfaction. Customers appreciate having choices that align with their specific requirements and tastes.
9. **Customer Feedback and Listening** Companies that actively listen to customer feedback and use it to improve their products and services tend to achieve higher satisfaction levels. Engaging customers in surveys, feedback forms, and direct conversations demonstrates a commitment to meeting customer needs and expectations.
10. **Employee Engagement and Training** The attitudes, knowledge, and behavior of frontline employees directly impact customer satisfaction. Well-trained, motivated employees who demonstrate empathy, professionalism, and a customer-centric approach contribute positively to customer experiences and satisfaction.
11. **Cultural and Demographic Factors** Cultural norms, values, and demographic characteristics influence customer expectations and perceptions of satisfaction. Companies must consider cultural sensitivity and adapt their strategies to resonate with diverse customer segments.

12. Technology and Innovation Innovative products, services, and technologies that enhance functionality, usability, and customer convenience can significantly impact satisfaction levels. Embracing digital transformation and leveraging technology to improve customer interactions can differentiate a brand in a competitive market.

2.16 MEANING OF BRAND

A brand is a unique identity that distinguishes a company, product, or service from its competitors. It encompasses elements such as a name, logo, design, and messaging, creating a recognizable and consistent image in the minds of consumers. A brand represents the values, personality, and promise of what customers can expect. It builds trust and loyalty through consistent quality and emotional connections, influencing consumer perceptions and behaviors.

2.16.1 DEFINITION OF BRAND

A brand is a comprehensive identity that differentiates a company, product, or service from others in the marketplace. It includes tangible elements like a name, logo, design, and packaging, as well as intangible aspects such as the company's values, mission, and overall customer experience. A brand embodies the promise of what consumers can expect, shaping their perceptions and influencing their buying decisions. It represents the company's reputation, reliability, and the emotional connections it fosters with its audience. Effective branding involves consistent messaging and quality, building recognition, trust, and loyalty over time. It can create a strong market presence, enhance customer satisfaction, and provide a competitive edge.

AMA (American Marketing Association) defines a brand as a name, term, sign, symbol, design or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competition.

According to Philip Kotler, a brand is a name, term, sign, symbol or a combination of these, identifies the maker or seller of product.

David Aaker: "A brand is a distinguishing name and/or symbol (such as a logo, trademark, or package design) intended to identify the goods or services of either one seller or a group of sellers, and to differentiate those goods or services from those of competitors."

CHAPTER III

DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION OF DATA

2.16.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF BRANDS

Brands possess several key characteristics that define their identity and influence their perception among consumers. Here are the primary characteristics of brands:

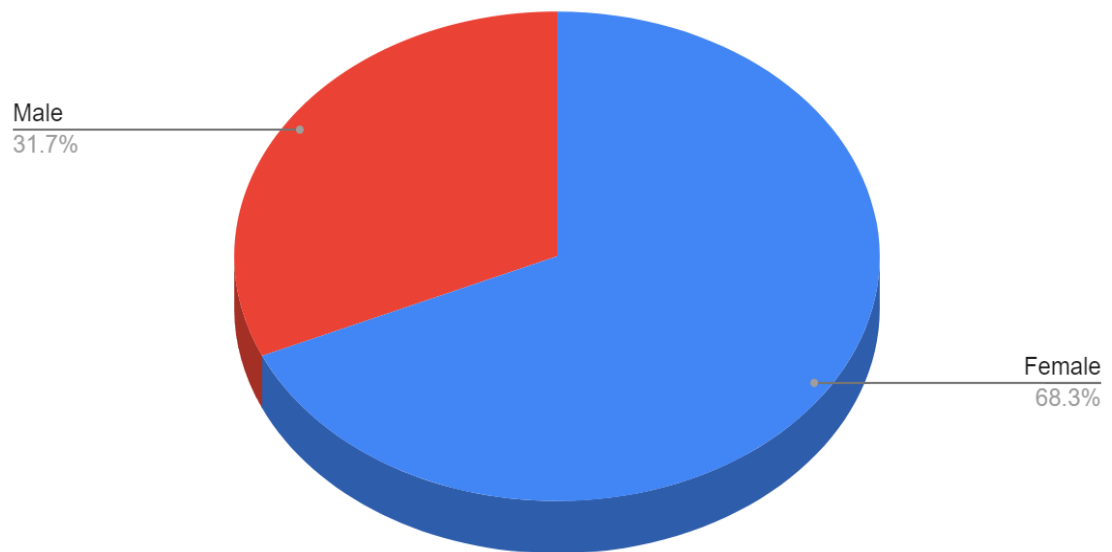
- **Unique Identity:** A brand has a distinctive name, logo, and design that set it apart from competitors.
- **Consistency:** Successful brands maintain consistent messaging, visuals, and quality across all platforms and interactions, creating a reliable experience for consumers.
- **Emotional Connection:** Brands often evoke specific emotions and build connections with their audience, fostering loyalty and trust.
- **Promise of Value:** A brand represents a promise of value, quality, and benefits that customers can expect from the product or service.
- **Reputation:** A brand's reputation is built over time through customer experiences, reviews, and public perception.
- **Target Audience:** Brands are designed to appeal to specific groups of people based on demographics, interests, and needs.
- **Brand Voice:** The tone and style of communication a brand uses, reflecting its personality and values.
- **Adaptability:** Strong brands can adapt to market changes, trends, and consumer preferences while staying true to their core identity.
- **Visual Identity:** This includes the logo, color scheme, typography, and overall design aesthetic that makes the brand recognizable.
- **Brand Story:** The narrative behind the brand, including its history, mission, and values, which helps create a deeper connection with consumers.
- **Customer Experience:** The overall experience a customer has with the brand, from initial contact to post-purchase support, significantly impacts brand perception.
- **Differentiation:** A brand highlights what makes it unique and superior to competitors, often through innovation, quality, or exceptional service.
- **Legal Protection:** Brands are often legally protected through trademarks, ensuring that the unique elements of the brand are exclusively used by the company.

3. PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

Table 3.1 – The Gender of consumers

Gender	Number of respondents	Percentage
Male	41	31.7
Female	79	68.3
Total	120	100

Figure 3.1 - The Gender of consumers



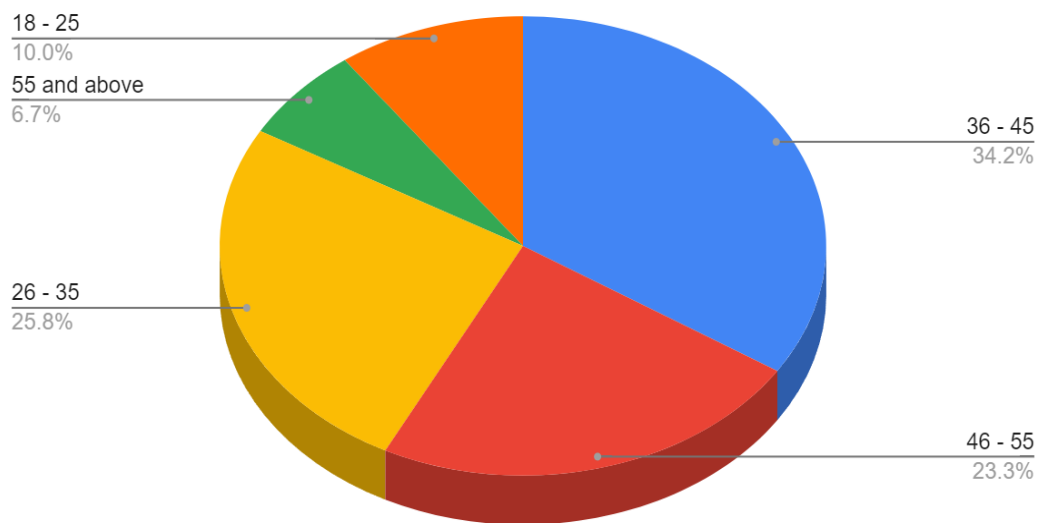
Interpretation

Figure 3.1 indicates that 68.3% of respondents are female and 31.7% are male, suggesting women are the primary users of KPL Shudhi. This gender disparity implies that marketing and product features resonate more with women, guiding future strategies to better cater to female customers, enhancing satisfaction and loyalty.

Table 3.2 – Showing the Age of the consumers

Age group	Number of Respondents	Percentage
18-25	33	10.0
26-35	23	25.8
36-45	30	34.2
46-55	26	23.3
55 and above	8	6.7
	120	100

Figure 3.2 - Showing the Age of the consumers



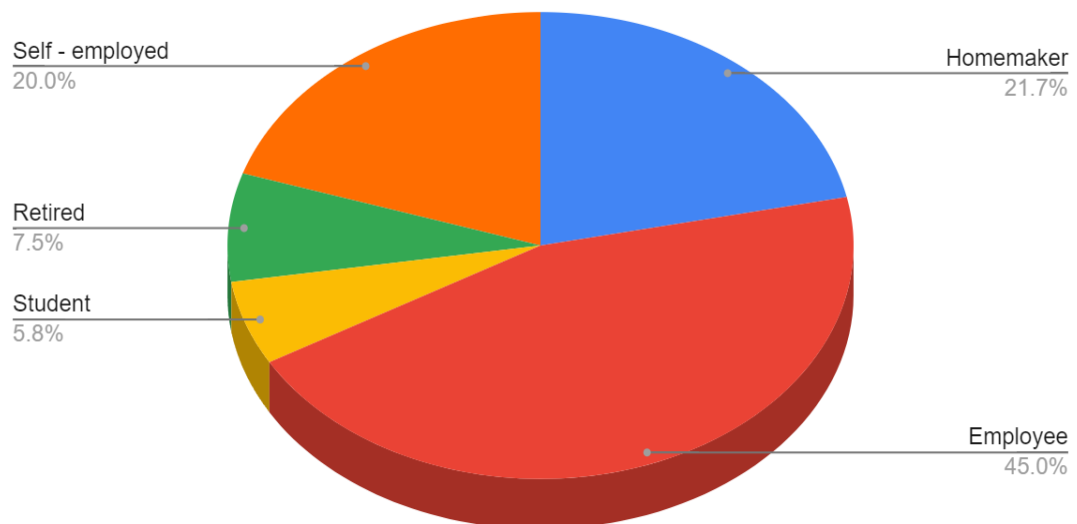
Interpretation

Figure 3.2 shows that 60% of respondents are aged 26-45, indicating a strong presence of mid-career professionals. The 46-55 age group makes up 23.3%, contributing experienced insights, while 10% are 18-25, representing emerging voices. Only 6.7% are above 55, suggesting lower engagement among older individuals

Table 3.3 – Showing the Occupation of the consumers

Occupation	Number of respondents	percentage
Student	22	5.8
Employee	46	45.0
Self-employed	22	20.0
Homemaker	21	21.7
Retired	9	7.5
Total	120	100

Figure 3.3 – Showing the Occupation of the consumers



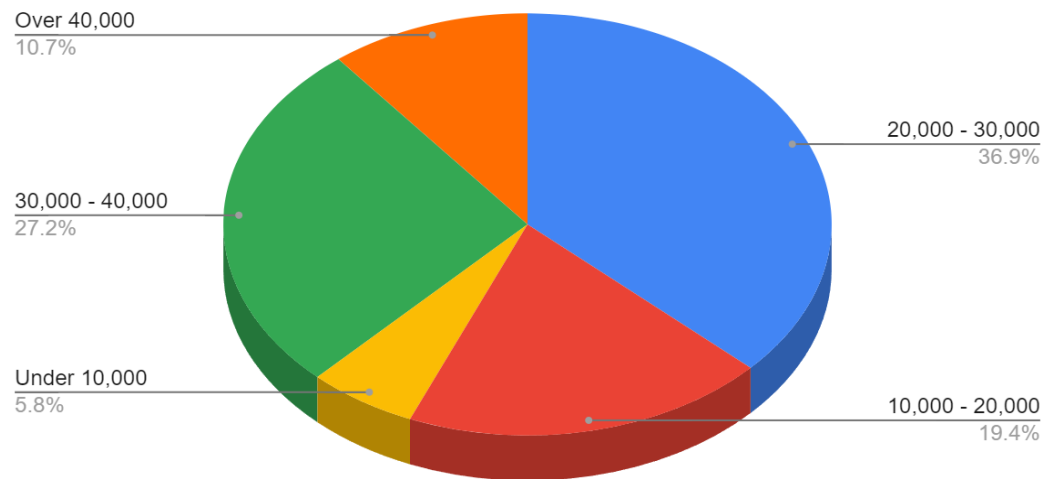
Interpretation

Figure 3.3 shows that 45.0% of respondents are employees, indicating a strong working-class presence. Homemakers (21.7%) and self-employed individuals (20.0%) also have significant representation. Retired individuals (7.5%) and students (5.8%) contribute diverse perspectives. KPL Shudhi appeals broadly, especially to working professionals seeking convenient, healthy cooking options.

Table 3.4 –Monthly Income of the consumers

Income	Number of respondents	Percentage
Under 10,000	8	5.8
10,000-20,000	18	19.4
20,000-30,000	32	36.9
30,000-40,000	26	27.2
Above 40,000	12	10.7
Total	120	100

Figure 3.4 – Monthly Income of the consumers



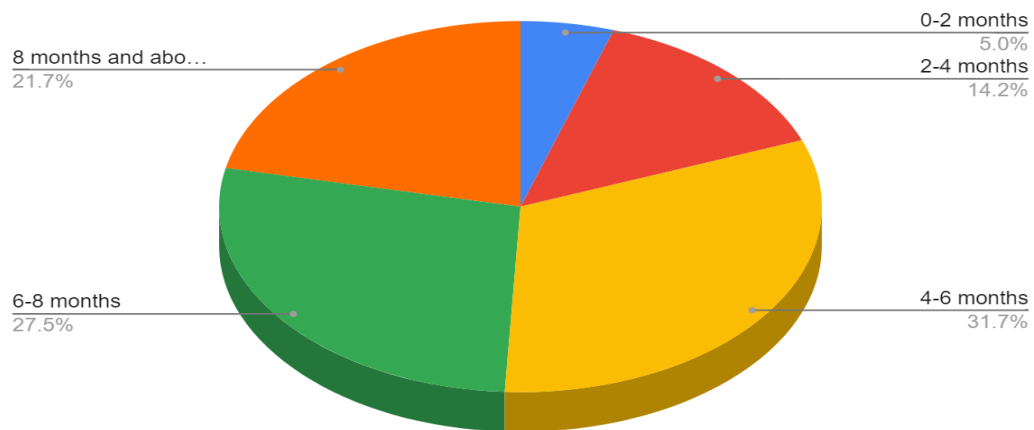
Interpretation

Figure 3.4 reveals that 64.1% of respondents earn between 20,000 and 40,000, indicating a strong middle-income presence. Lower-income respondents (19.4%) and higher-income earners (10.7%) are notable but smaller segments. Only 5.8% earn below 10,000. This distribution shows a predominantly middle-income base with diverse economic representation.

Table 3.5 - Frequency of using KPL Products

Frequency of buying	Number of respondents	Percentage
0-2 months	6	5
2-4 months	17	14.2
4-6 months	38	31.7
6-8 months	33	27.5
8 months and above	26	21.7
Total	120	100

Figure 3.5 – Frequency of using KPL Products



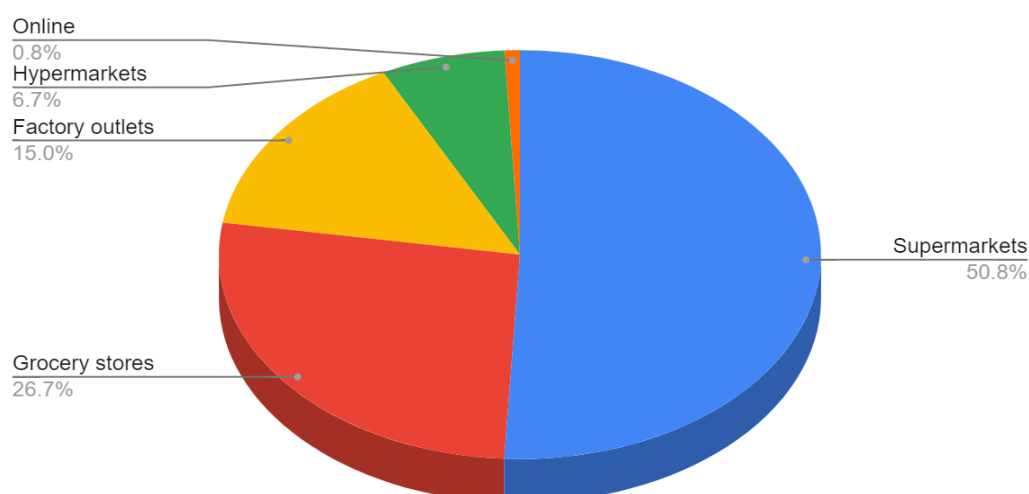
Interpretation

Figure 3.5 shows that 80.9% of respondents have used KPL products for 4-8 months or more, indicating strong mid-term to long-term engagement. Only 5% are new users (0-2 months). This suggests high customer satisfaction and loyalty, with steady growth and reliable product appeal guiding future retention and acquisition strategies.

Table 3.6 - From where do you buy the KPL products

From where buying KPL products	Number of respondents	Percentage
Grocery stores	32	26.7
Factory outlets	18	15
Supermarkets	61	50.8
Hypermarkets	8	6.7
Online	1	0.8
Total	120	100

Figure 3.6 - From where do you buy the KPL products



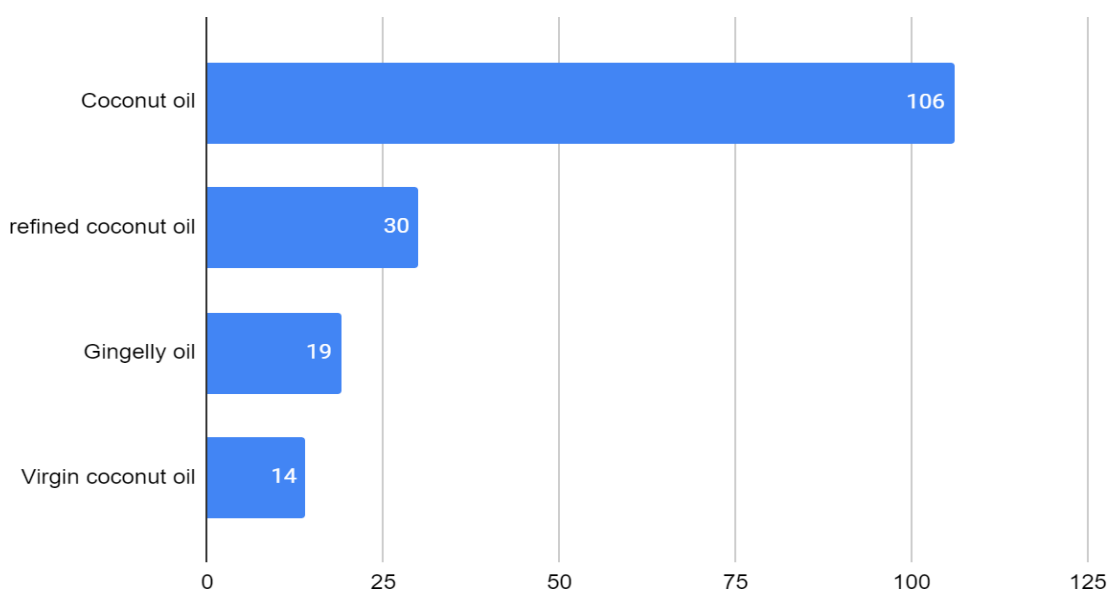
Interpretation

Figure 3.6 reveals that 50.8% of respondents purchase KPL products from supermarkets, the preferred location. Grocery stores (26.7%) and factory outlets (15%) are also significant. Hypermarkets (6.7%) and online (0.8%) have lower percentages, indicating potential growth opportunities through targeted marketing and an improved online presence.

Table 3.7 - Mostly used KPL product

Products	Number of respondents	Percentage
Coconut oil	106	88.3
Refined coconut oil	30	25
Gingelly oil	19	15.8
Virgin coconut oil	14	11.7
Total	1691	100

Figure 3.7 – Mostly used KPL product



Interpretation

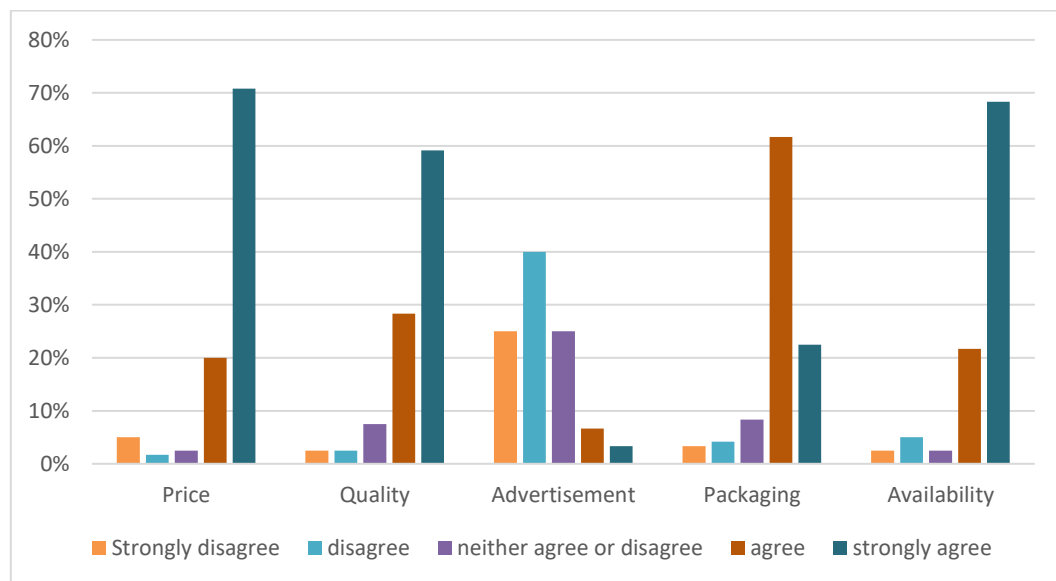
Figure 3.7 shows 88.3% of respondents purchase coconut oil, indicating its dominance among KPL products. Refined coconut oil (25%), gingelly oil (15.8%), and virgin coconut oil (11.7%) have smaller but notable interest.

This suggests a strong preference for standard coconut oil, guiding product focus and marketing while addressing niche markets for other oils.

Table 3.8 - Factors influencing buying decision of cooking oil at KPL Shudhi

Factors	1	2	3	4	5
Price	5	1.67	2.5	20	70.83
Quality	2.5	2.5	7.5	28.33	59.17
Advertisement	25	40	25	6.67	3.33
Packaging	3.33	4.17	8.33	61.67	22.5
Availability	2.5	5	2.5	21.67	68.33

Figure 3.8 - Factors influencing buying decision of cooking oil at KPL Shudhi.



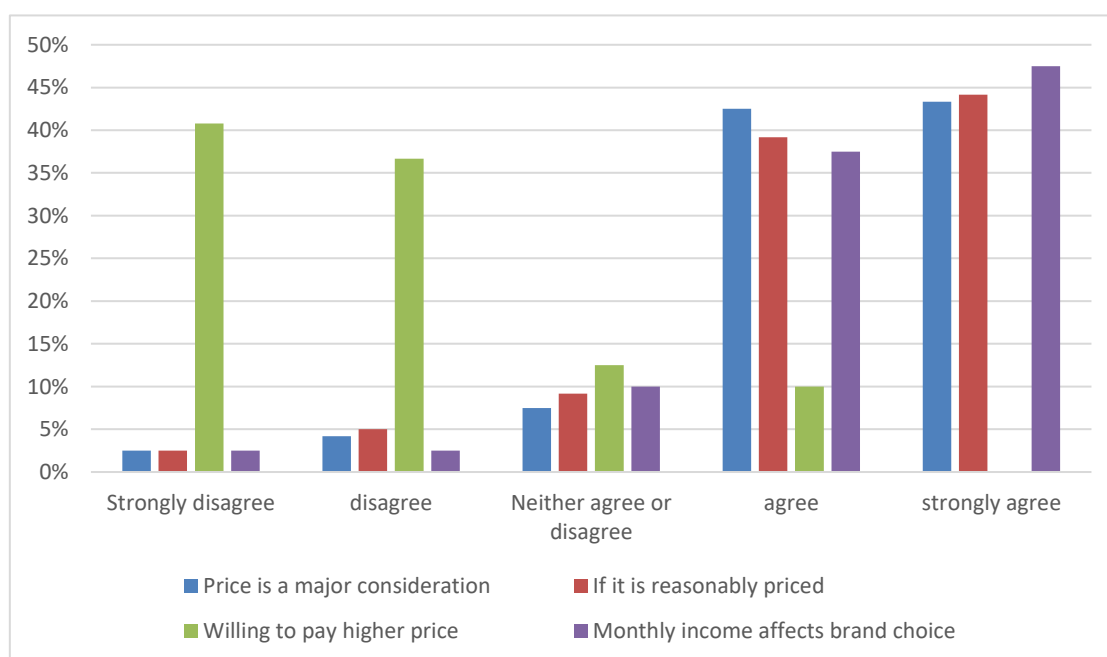
INTERPRETATION

Figure 3.8 shows strong positive sentiment for KPL SHUDHI's cooking oil: 70.83% strongly agree on price, 71% on quality, 74% on packaging, and 82% on availability. However, 48% disagree with the advertisement, indicating a need for improved messaging. Overall, consumers appreciate affordability, quality, and availability, enhancing satisfaction and loyalty.

Table 3.9 - Extent to which price affects brand preference of KPL Shudhi

Price	1	2	3	4	5
The price of cooking oils at KPL is a major consideration in my preference.	2.5	4.17	7.5	42.5	43.33
I am likely to prefer the brand KPL Shudhi if it is reasonably priced.	2.5	5	9.17	39.17	44.17
I am willing to pay a higher price for my preferred brand.	40.83	36.67	12.5	10	0
My monthly income affects my cooking oil brand choice while choosing.	2.5	2.5	10	37.5	47.5

Figure 3.9 - Extent to which price affects brand preference of KPL Shudhi?



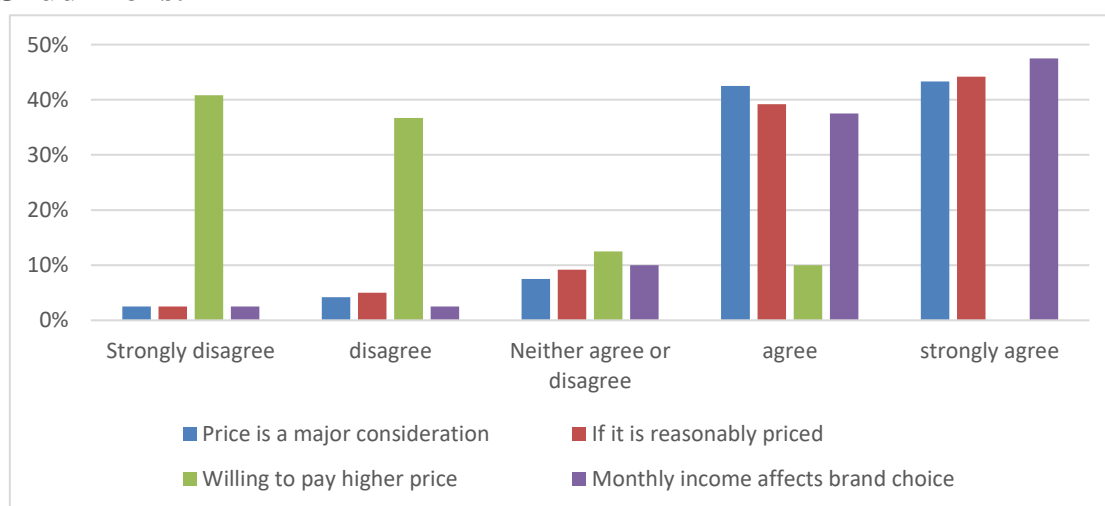
Interpretation

Figure 3.9 reveals that 52% of consumers strongly agree that price is crucial in their preference for KPL Shudhi cooking oils, with 53% favoring its reasonable pricing. Conversely, 49% won't pay higher prices, indicating a price ceiling. Additionally, 57% agree that monthly income significantly influences their choice, highlighting economic considerations.

Table 3.10 - Extent to which labels affect preference for choosing KPL Shudhi oils.

Labels	1	2	3	4	5
Labels of cooking oil helps me to make informed brand choice of KPL Shudhi that I am to use	5	3.33	30.83	44.17	16.67
Labels differentiate cooking oils from brand to brand.	3.33	4.17	22.5	45.83	24.17
Labels give information on the product's performance, use, storages, production date and expire date of KPL Shudhi brand	1.67	5.83	30.83	51.67	10
I am likely to use the brand of KPL oil if it has consistent quality.	2.5	5	29.17	51.67	11.67

Figure 3.10 – Extent to which labels affect preference for choosing KPL Shudhi oils.



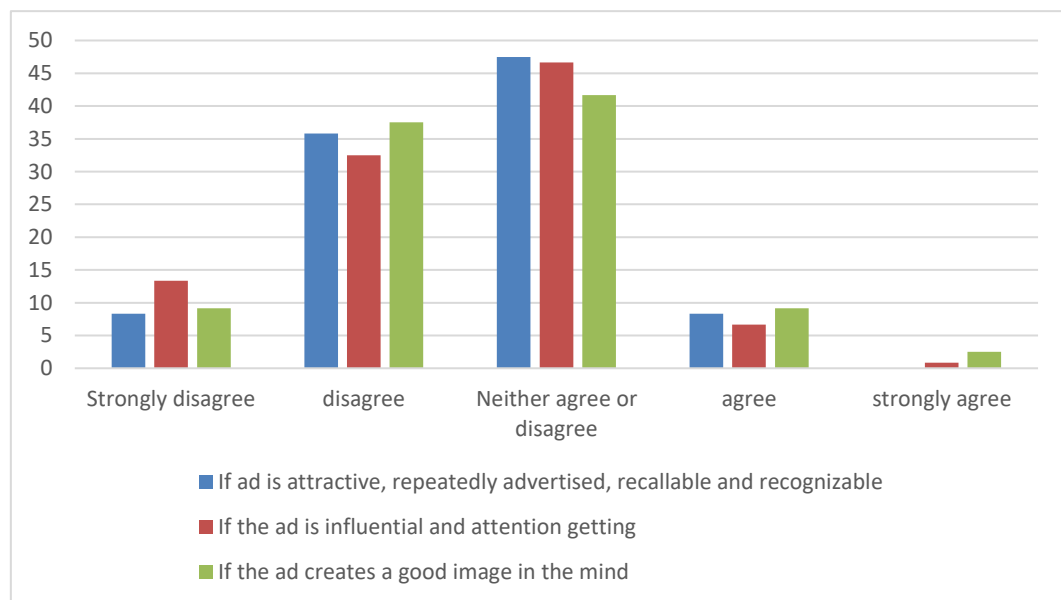
INTERPRETATION

Figure 3.10 underscores the pivotal role of labels in consumer decisions for KPL Shudhi cooking oils. A majority (53%) find labels crucial for informed choices, with 55% noting their role in brand differentiation. Moreover, 62% value labels for product information and prefer KPL Shudhi for its consistent quality, highlighting the importance of transparency and reliability in brand perception

Table 3.11 - Extent to which advertisement affect the brand preference of KPL

Advertisement	1	2	3	4	5
I will choose KPL oil if the advertisement is attractive, repeatedly advertised, recallable and recognizable.	8.33	35.83	47.5	8.33	0
I will choose KPL oil if the advertisement is influential to me and attention getting.	13.33	32.5	46.67	6.67	0.83
I will prefer KPL oil if the advertisement creates a good image in my mind.	9.17	37.5	41.67	9.17	2.5

Figure 3.11 - Extent to which advertisement affect the brand preference of KPL



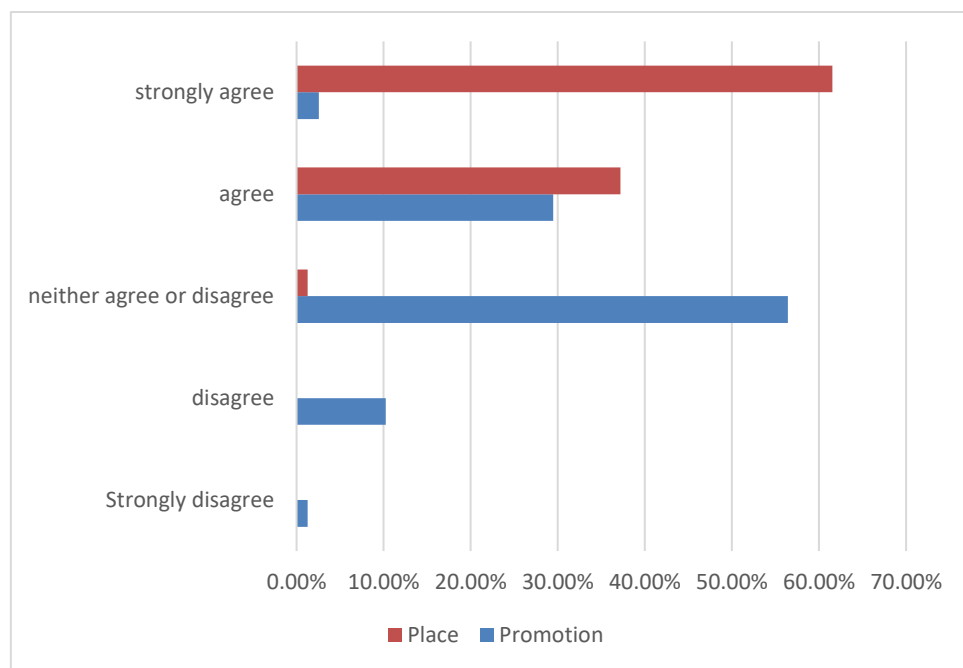
INTERPRETATION

Figure 3.11 shows a significant portion of respondents (57% to 50%) are neutral about the influence of advertisements on their preference for KPL Shudhi oil, suggesting a need for more effective messaging and engagement strategies.

Table 3.12 - Other factors will influencing preference of cooking oil

Factors	1	2	3	4	5
Promotion	1.28	10.26	56.41	29.49	2.56
Place	0	0	1.28	37.18	61.54

Figure 3.12 - What all other factors will influence your preference of cooking oil at KPL Shudhi?



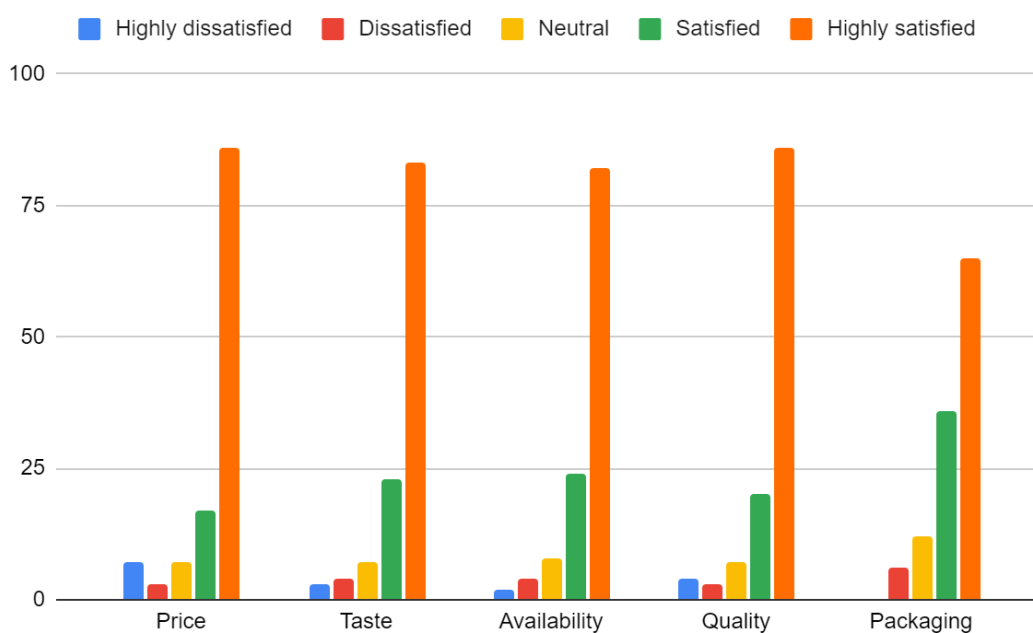
INTERPRETATION

In Figure 3.12, 44% of respondents indicate a neutral stance (neither agreeing nor disagreeing) towards promotions, suggesting a lack of strong opinions or mixed perceptions. Conversely, 48% strongly agree with the place, indicating high satisfaction or approval regarding the distribution channels or accessibility of KPL SHUDHI products.

Table 3.13 -- Satisfaction of certain factors of KPL cooking oil

Factors	1	2	3	4	5
Price	5.83	2.5	5.83	14.17	71.67
Taste	2.5	3.33	5.83	19.17	69.17
Availability	1.67	3.33	6.67	20	68.33
Quality	3.33	2.5	5.83	16.67	71.67
Packaging	0.83	5	10	30	54.17

Figure 3.13 - Satisfaction of certain factors of KPL cooking oil

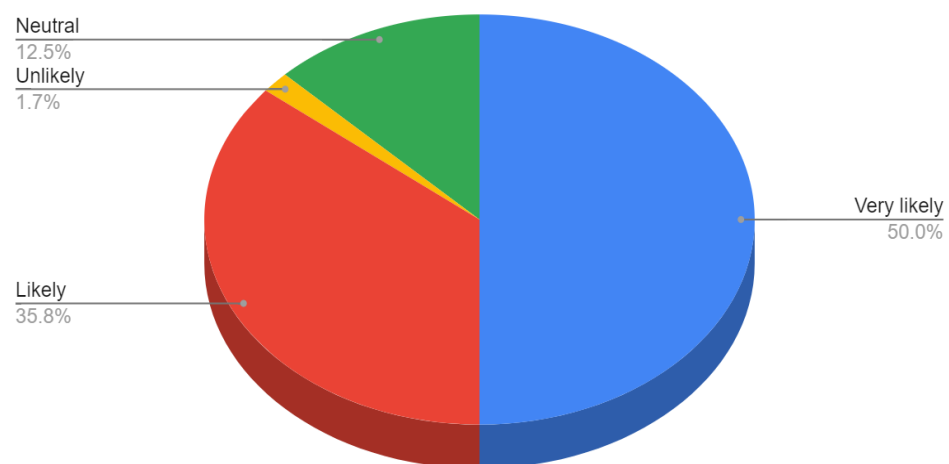


INTERPRETATION

Figure 3.13 shows strong satisfaction levels among respondents for KPL cooking oils, with high ratings for price (86%), taste (83%), availability (82%), and quality (86%). However, packaging satisfaction is slightly lower at 65%, suggesting an opportunity for improvement to align with consumer expectations and enhance overall product experience.

Table 3.14 – Extent of repurchase among consumers

	Number of respondents	Percentage
Very unlikely	0	0
Unlikely	2	1.7
Neutral	15	12.5
Likely	43	35.8
Very likely	60	50



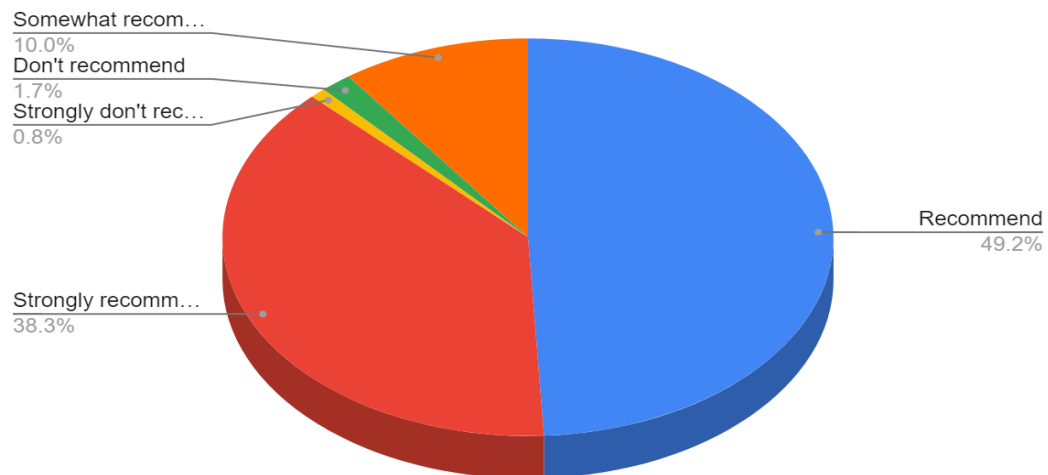
Interpretation

Figure 3.14 reflects robust customer loyalty with 85.8% of respondents likely to repurchase KPL products. This underscores high satisfaction levels. The 12.5% neutral or unlikely category presents a minor challenge, suggesting potential for enhanced engagement strategies to further solidify loyalty and maximize repeat purchases.

Table 3.15 - Recommending KPL Shudhi cooking oils to others

	Number of respondents	Percentage
Strongly don't recommend	1	0.8
Don't recommend	2	1.7
Somewhat recommend	12	10
Recommend	59	49.2
Strongly recommend	46	38.3

Figure 3.15 - Recommending KPL Shudhi cooking oils to others



Interpretation

Figure 3.15 illustrates strong customer advocacy for KPL Shudhi cooking oil, with 87.5% of respondents likely to recommend it. This reflects high satisfaction levels and positive user experiences. The small percentage not recommending it suggests effective product performance and satisfaction, underscoring its favorable market reputation and growth potential through word-of-mouth referrals.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Findings

- The survey highlights a significant gender preference for KPL Shudhi, with 68.3% of users being female. This suggests effective resonance of marketing strategies and product features with women. Tailoring future strategies to further cater to female preferences can enhance satisfaction, loyalty, and overall market success of KPL Shudhi.
- The age distribution reveals a workforce dominated by mid-career professionals: 34.2% aged 36-45 and 25.8% aged 26-35. Experienced respondents (46-55) form 23.3%, while emerging voices (18-25) make up 10.0%. Only 6.7% are over 55, indicating lesser engagement among older individuals.
- The employment status in reveals a diverse mix: 45.0% are employees, 21.7% are homemakers, 20.0% are self-employed, 7.5% are retired, and 5.8% are students. This distribution shows a strong working and homemaking demographic, with notable entrepreneurial and student representation. Understanding these segments aids in developing targeted marketing strategies and enhancing product features to meet their unique needs.
- The income distribution shows a predominantly middle-income respondent base, with 36.9% earning 20,000-30,000 and 27.2% earning 30,000-40,000. Lower-income respondents (10,000-20,000) make up 19.4%, while higher-income earners (over 40,000) constitute 10.7%. Only 5.8% earn below 10,000. This highlights a significant portion of middle-income earners with smaller groups at the higher and lower ends of the spectrum.
- The data reveals that a majority of respondents, 31.7%, have been using KPL products for 4-6 months, indicating a significant mid-term engagement. This reflects high customer satisfaction and product reliability. With steady growth and a loyal customer base, strategies can focus on enhancing retention and attracting new customers effectively. The survey indicates that supermarkets are the preferred purchase location for KPL products, with 50.8% of respondents choosing this option. Grocery stores and factory outlets also play significant roles, reflecting consumer preference for convenience and variety in traditional retail settings. There is potential for growth in hypermarkets and online sales

with focused marketing efforts.

- The survey reveals that coconut oil is overwhelmingly preferred by 88.3% of respondents, indicating its dominant position among KPL products. Variants like refined coconut oil, gingelly oil, and virgin coconut oil also show notable interest, suggesting diverse consumer preferences. This data underscores the need for targeted marketing strategies to capitalize on the popularity of coconut oil while nurturing niche markets for other oil types.
- Survey results reveal strong positive sentiment towards KPL SHUDHI's cooking oil products. A majority strongly agree on price (70.83%) and quality (71%), reflecting favorable views. High agreement levels in packaging (74%) and product availability (82%) indicate positive consumer experiences. However, 48% disagree with the advertisement, highlighting an area for improvement. Overall, affordability, quality, packaging, and availability drive customer satisfaction and loyalty.
- Survey results show strong satisfaction with KPL cooking oils: 86% with price, 83% with taste, 82% with availability, and 86% with quality. These figures indicate consumers find the product affordable, flavorful, accessible, and of high quality. However, packaging satisfaction is lower at 65%, highlighting an opportunity for improvement to better meet consumer expectations and enhance the overall product experience.
- The survey indicates that supermarkets are the preferred purchase location for KPL products, with 50.8% of respondents choosing this option. Grocery stores and factory outlets also play significant roles, reflecting consumer preference for convenience and variety in traditional retail settings. There is potential for growth in hypermarkets and online sales with focused marketing efforts.
- The findings indicate robust customer loyalty to KPL products, with 80.9% of respondents using them for 4-8 months or longer. New user acquisition is low at 5%, reflecting high satisfaction and sustained product appeal. These results suggest effective retention strategies and potential for steady growth in customer base.

4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- Tailor marketing strategies and product features specifically for women to enhance satisfaction, loyalty, and overall market success for KPL Shudhi.
- Focus on maintaining affordability and quality to retain middle-income customers while developing premium product lines for higher-income earners and budget-friendly options for lower-income consumers.
- Enhance customer retention strategies and attract new customers by leveraging mid-term engagement, expanding presence in supermarkets, grocery stores, and factory outlets, and boosting marketing efforts for hypermarkets and online sales.
- Enhance advertisement strategies to better align with consumer expectations, while maintaining focus on affordability, quality, packaging, and availability to sustain high levels of customer satisfaction and loyalty.
- Capitalize on the popularity of coconut oil with targeted marketing, while developing niche strategies to promote refined coconut oil, gingelly oil, and virgin coconut oil to address diverse consumer preferences.
- Enhance packaging to align with consumer expectations and improve overall product experience, while maintaining focus on affordability, taste, availability, and quality to sustain high customer satisfaction levels.

4.3 Summary

The survey on KPL Shudhi cooking oils reveals significant consumer preferences and demographic trends, showcasing the brand's market strengths and areas for improvement. A notable 68.3% of users are female, indicating effective marketing resonance with women. The age distribution highlights a strong presence of mid-career professionals, with 36.2% aged 36-45 and 25.8% aged 26-35, complemented by 23.3% of experienced respondents aged 46-55. Employment data shows a diverse mix, including 45% employees, 21.7% homemakers, and 20% self-employed individuals, while income distribution is predominantly middle-income, with 36.9% earning 20,000-30,000 and 27.2% earning 30,000-40,000. High product engagement is evident, with 31.7% of respondents using KPL products for 4-6 months. Supermarkets are the preferred purchase location for 50.8% of users, and coconut oil is overwhelmingly favored by 88.3%.

Strong positive sentiment exists towards KPL Shudhi's products, with high satisfaction levels for price (86%), taste (83%), availability (82%), and quality (86%). However, packaging satisfaction is lower at 65%, and 48% of respondents disagree with the advertisement, indicating areas for improvement. These insights suggest that KPL Shudhi has a robust market position with a loyal customer base, particularly among women and mid-career professionals. To further enhance consumer satisfaction and loyalty, KPL Shudhi can focus on targeted marketing strategies for these demographics, improve advertising efforts, and enhance packaging. By addressing these areas, the brand can strengthen its market presence and continue to grow its customer base.

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<http://www.kplindia.com>

<https://www.indiamart.com/kpl-oil-mills/aboutus.html>

<https://www.facebook.com/KPLShudhiofficial/>

APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Gender:

- Male
- Female
- Other (please specify)

2. Age group:

- 18-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- 56 and above

3. Occupation:

- Student
- Employee
- Self-employed
- Homemaker
- Retired

4. Income:

- Under 10,000
- 10,000 - 20,000
- 20,000 - 30,000
- 30,000 - 40,000
- Over 40,000

5. How long you have been using KPL cooking oil
- 0-2 months
 - 2-4 months
 - 4-6 months
 - 6-8 months
 - 8 months and above
6. From where do you buy the KPL products
- Grocery stores
 - Factory outlets
 - Supermarkets
 - Hypermarkets
 - Online
7. Which cooking oil of KPL do you buy mostly
- Coconut oil
 - Refined sunflower oil
 - Gingelly oil
 - Virgin coconut oil
8. To what extent do you agree these factors influence your buying decision of cooking oil at KPL Shudhi?
- 1 – Strongly disagree
 - 2 – Disagree
 - 3 – Neither agree nor disagree
 - 4 – Agree
 - 5 – Strongly agree

	Factors	1	2	3	4	5
1	Price					
2	Label					
3	Advertisement					
4	Packaging					

9. To what extent price affects your brand preference of KPL Shudhi?

1 – Strongly disagree

2 – Disagree

3 – Neither agree nor disagree

4 – Agree

5 – Strongly agree

	Price	1	2	3	4	5
1	The price of cooking oils at KPL is a major consideration in my preference.					

2	I am likely to prefer the brand KPL Shudhi if it is reasonably priced.					
3	I am willing to pay a higher price for my preferred brand.					
4	My monthly income affects my cooking oil brand choice while choosing.					

10. To what extent do you agree labels for choosing KPL Shudhi oils?

1 – Strongly disagree

2 – Disagree

3 – Neither agree nor disagree

4 – Agree

5 – Strongly agree

	Labels	1	2	3	4	5
1	Labels of cooking oil helps me to make informed brand choice of KPL Shudhi that I am to use					
2	Labels differentiate cooking oils from brand to brand.					
3	Labels give information on the product's performance, use, storages, production date and expire date of KPL Shudhi brand					
4	I am likely to use the brand of KPL oil if it has consistent quality.					

11. To what extent advertisement affect the brand preference of KPL?

1 – Strongly disagree

2 – Disagree

3 – Neither agree nor disagree

4 – Agree

5 – Strongly agree

	Advertisement	1	2	3	4	5
1	I will choose KPL oil if the advertisement is attractive, repeatedly advertised, recallable and recognizable.					
2	I will choose KPL oil if the advertisement is influential to me and attention getting.					
3	I will prefer KPL oil if the advertisement creates a good image in my mind.					

12. What all other factors will influence your preference of cooking oil at KPL Shudhi?

Factors	1	2	3	4	5
Price					
Quality					

13. How satisfied are you with the KPL cooking oil depending upon these factors?

- Highly dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Neutral
- Satisfied
- Highly satisfied

	Factors	1	2	3	4	5
1	Price					
2	Taste					
3	Availability					
4	Quality					
5	Packaging					

14. How likely are you to repurchase KPL products?

- Very unlikely
- Unlikely
- Neutral
- Likely
- Very likely

15. Would you recommend KPL Shudhi cooking oils to others?

- Strongly don't recommend
- Don't recommend
- Somewhat recommend
- Recommend
- Strongly recommend