

Research Paper

Consumer Perception and Trust in Zambian Dairy Brands: A Comprehensive Assessment

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Abstract— This qualitative research focuses on Fisenge Dairy Business Cooperative Union's efforts to process and market dairy products in Zambia. The study investigates consumer behavior, preferences, and perceptions specific to Fisenge Dairy's products to develop targeted marketing strategies. The research utilized a semi-structured questionnaire, to gather data and assess the perceptions, experiences, and motivations of potential and existing dairy product buyers. Data was collected from 321 respondents in four towns in the Copperbelt province of Zambia. The majority of respondents were women, thereby reflecting their significant role in purchasing decisions. The study's findings revealed that quality is a paramount factor influencing consumer behavior, with 68% of respondents expressing a willingness to buy new dairy products if they meet quality standards. Price also plays a significant role, as 32% of respondents would consider it when making purchasing decisions. This reflects the importance of income and affordability in consumer choices. The results underscore the need for Fisenge Dairy to prioritize product quality and ensure compliance with legal requirements for dairy processing. The company should also engage in strategic marketing efforts, utilizing both traditional and digital channels to reach potential consumers effectively. Additionally, market segmentation and careful expansion should be considered, given the risks associated with entering new markets. Overall, this research provided valuable insights to help Fisenge Dairy develop effective marketing strategies and compete successfully in the dairy market.

Keywords— Fisenge Dairy, Consumer behavior, Dairy products, Quality, Price, Market research

1. Introduction

The focus of this research was on Fisenge Dairy Business Cooperative Union which has plans of processing dairy products. Fisenge Dairy Business Cooperative Union (FDBCUCU), also known as Fisenge Dairy, originated from the initiative of a group of women in Luanshya district within Zambia's Copperbelt province. The inspiration for this cooperative arose when one woman, who had witnessed the success of small-scale dairy farmers forming cooperatives and improving their livelihoods abroad, generously donated 10 dairy animals to the first 10 women as part of a "pass on the gift" project. Encouraged by the positive impact these women were making in alleviating poverty within their families and local communities, Heifer International, a charitable organization based in Arkansas, with offices in Lusaka, contributed an additional 20 animals for these women to pass on to other cooperative members.

In 2017, Fisenge Dairy successfully secured a grant from the United States African Development Foundation (USADF),

which enabled them to purchase the necessary equipment for their processing plant. This strategic move aimed to increase revenue and add value to the raw milk they have been gathering from small-scale farmers. The planned processed products include fresh pasteurized milk, yogurt, and Lacto. However, before launching products to the public, businesses must ascertain whether consumers will buy them. Identifying consumers' preferences and dislikes can assist businesses in enhancing their marketing strategies [1]. The overarching mission of Fisenge Dairy Business Cooperative Union (FDBCUCU) is to produce affordable, high-quality dairy products and contribute to the transformation of the Copperbelt Province into a thriving milk hub; to be called the 'Milkbelt'. This vision encompasses diversification in milk-related activities, infrastructure expansion, and community empowerment.

A lot of research has been done on this topic from way back, however, Fisenge Dairy needs an in-depth understanding that pertains solely to them because consumers differ depending on locality and many other factors. This is in line with what [2] found, that not every theory of consumer behavior can be

characterized as sound or effective. Consumers of Fisenge Dairy might not be the same as those for the already existing producers of dairy products, therefore this research would help Fisenge Dairy to develop specific marketing strategies for a targeted audience and not just for any other consumers. With good market research Fisenge Dairy would be set to produce and release the product to the market at an affordable price since Fisenge Dairy does not involve direct 'middle men' because it has its own farmer-members who supply the raw material in form of milk.

This paper is organized in such a manner that section 1 is the Introduction, discussing the background work of Fisenge Dairy. Section 2 is the Related Work section in which we sought an in depth understanding of the work at hand by standing on the shoulders of giant researchers. This is followed by section 3 which is the Experimental Method section where we explain how research was conducted and the methods used in collection of data. Section 4 is Results and Discussion part where we present our results and interpret them. After that we did conclude in section 5 of the Conclusion and Future Scope part and provided recommendation on what could be done after this research.

2. Related Work

2.1 Concept of Consumer Behaviour

In order to have an in-depth understanding of the consumers' perception and trust in newly introduced dairy brands, various related materials were reviewed. This is because consumer buyer behavior is a very broad topic and mostly misunderstood. For that reason, some researchers advocated for the consumer behavior subject to be a separate discipline away from the marketing management discipline. Commenting on George Katona's 1951 paper, [3] revealed that it was George Katona's paper that ignited the beginning of consumer behaviour as a separate discipline. In his paper George Katona talked about the difference between how economists think consumers behave and how psychologists observe consumer behavior [3]. However, [4] argues that consumer behaviour is not its own separate subject. Reference [4] concluded that Consumer behavior stands out from other fields because it focuses on how people in their role as consumers go about procuring, using, and getting rid of things they buy in the marketplace, such as durable goods, services, and experiences but were quick to admit that their conclusion could be at odds with other studies.

Nevertheless, one way in which consumer buyer behaviour can be understood is through the 7 Ps of marketing [5]. This was confirmed with the findings of [6] and [7]. Additionally, [5] concluded that quality is another factor influencing consumer buyer behaviour and is actually more important than price in relative terms. Reference [5], in their insightful analysis and extensive research, has convincingly demonstrated that quality transcends mere price considerations and advises firms to adopt this strategic business principle. Their comprehensive study delves into the intricate dynamics of product and service evaluation, revealing that the true worth of a product or service extends

far beyond its price tag. Similarly, [8] urges marketers to seriously consider quality and effective products for companies to increase revenue. This was in a study in which [8] attempted to examine the dynamics of women's purchasing behavior in the realm of apparel products. In another research in which the authors were focusing on online market place for 'The effect of convenience, service excellence, pricing, trust in information quality, and brand perception on consumer purchasing decisions in Shopee's online marketplace' the authors expressed similar sentiments that price did not have much effect on purchasing decisions [9].

Most factors that influence consumer buyer behavior discussed in the preceding sections are more on the positive side. However, there is another factor that influences consumer buyer behavior mostly overlooked by companies. This is negative information [10]. Companies should be ready to handle this factor with utmost care as it can bring down a company in a 'blink' of an eye if not handled correctly [10]. Research found that marketing communication is also a factor that influences consumer buying behaviour. Reference [11] in their study discovered that in-store sampling stands out as the preferred promotional method for introducing a new product to the market. Furthermore, it exerts a significant influence on consumer purchasing decisions. However, [12] was of the view that all these factors mentioned above should be considered in a holistic approach because consumer behavior is often an intricate, ever-changing, multidimensional process, and all marketing decisions hinge on assumptions regarding consumer behavior.

For a company looking to penetrate a market, the aspect of price also comes into play as illustrated by [13] although some studies found it to have no much impact in relative terms [9]. The pricing strategy to be adopted by Fisenge Dairy might be inherently intertwined with the concept of the income effect. While the cooperative might endeavor to offer its dairy products at affordable prices to cater to its target market, a comprehensive examination of the income effect on consumers becomes imperative. Despite the genuine willingness of consumers to make purchases and the competitive affordability of Fisenge Dairy's products, the cooperative must diligently assess the potential constraints imposed by the income levels of its target demographic. In essence, the income effect acknowledges that consumer purchasing power is profoundly influenced by their disposable income. Reference [14] discovered a bias in real consumption measures, which is contingent on the covariance of price fluctuations and expenditure changes resulting from either income effects or preference shocks.

Even if the pricing strategy aligns with affordability goals, the cooperative must recognize that external economic factors can significantly impact the financial capacity of its consumers. A keen understanding of the income dynamics within the target market becomes paramount as it directly correlates with the consumers' ability to convert willingness into actual purchases. Therefore, Fisenge Dairy must embark on a meticulous study of the economic landscape and income

distribution within its consumer base. This involves evaluating the socioeconomic factors that may affect the purchasing power of the target market, recognizing potential fluctuations in income levels, and gauging the resilience of consumers to economic uncertainties. Such insights might enable the cooperative to strike a delicate balance between offering competitive prices and ensuring that its products remain accessible even during periods of economic strain. Ultimately, the cooperative's commitment to affordability should be complemented by a strategic understanding of the income effect [14], allowing Fisenge Dairy to navigate the delicate interplay between pricing and consumer purchasing power. By aligning its pricing strategy with the economic realities of its consumers, the cooperative can enhance its market responsiveness, foster customer loyalty, and fortify its position within the competitive landscape of the dairy industry in Zambia. In today's world, accurately predicting consumer behavior is crucial for the success of any business. The task of predicting and formulating strategies based on consumer behavior poses a significant challenge for business management [15].

When customers can rely on a consistent level of quality in dairy products, they are more likely to trust that particular brand. Trust is a fundamental aspect of building customer loyalty. If customers trust that products would meet their expectations every time, they are more likely to remain loyal to a brand. Consistency in quality and promises that producers make, help build a positive reputation for a dairy business. Positive word-of-mouth and online reviews can additionally, impact a brand's reputation significantly. A strong reputation can lead to increased customer acquisition and retention as a result. Furthermore, consistency in providing quality dairy products ensures that customers are consistently satisfied with what they receive. Satisfied customers are more likely to return for repeat purchases and recommend products to others. In addition to research by [16], regression analysis was performed, and the results indicated that empathy too stands out as a significant predictor of customer satisfaction among the five service quality dimensions investigated by [16].

Regardless of the size of the producer of dairy products, quality is fundamental as observed by [17] who asserted that Producers of dairy products ought to adhere to Good Manufacturing Practices and integrate sustainable development objectives. Likewise, [18] found that the majority of consumers lack the practice of scrutinizing the label on Ultra High Temperature (UHT) treated milk for them to understand the nutritional information and instructions about the product. Whatever the case, it is still cardinal for dairy product manufacturers to maintain their commitment to Good Manufacturing Practices and not to exploit consumers.

2.2 Raw Milk Supply Chain Management

As Fisenge Dairy integrates into the competitive landscape of dairy processors in Zambia, its reliance on raw milk solely from farmer-members may shift. With the anticipated surge in demand for their processed products, Fisenge Dairy might find itself not only depending on the contributions from its

farmer-members but also actively engaging with and potentially competing for the raw milk supply sourced from other small-scale dairy farmers. In this dynamic scenario, the Cooperative Union is poised to navigate a broader market for raw milk, engaging with a diverse range of suppliers beyond its internal network if they are to avoid problems that arise due to lack of a sustainable supply chain network [19]. This strategic shift introduces Fisenge Dairy to the intricacies of the wider dairy market, where competition for raw milk resources is influenced by factors such as pricing, quality, and relationship management with external suppliers. The cooperative's ability to effectively negotiate and secure a sustainable supply chain beyond its membership base will be crucial for maintaining a consistent and reliable source of raw milk, especially during periods of increased demand where raw milk from its farmers might not be enough. However, for this to work for Fisenge Dairy's advantage, government intervention is essential through policy adjustments and investments in the value chain to enhance milk production and encourage engagement in contemporary or more structured marketing channels for milk [20]. With good government policies for the dairy sector, small scale farmers could be encouraged to increase production level.

In any case, Fisenge Dairy's entry into this expanded market requires a sophisticated understanding of the dynamics shaping the dairy industry in Zambia. Developing strategic partnerships with small-scale dairy farmers, implementing fair and competitive pricing structures, and ensuring adherence to quality standards are pivotal considerations. This evolution in the sourcing strategy not only broadens the cooperative's reach within the dairy sector but also necessitates a proactive approach to market dynamics, supply chain management, and relationship building with external stakeholders as well as managing all sorts of resources that they have at their disposal [21]. As Fisenge Dairy positions itself for growth and increased market presence, its ability to effectively manage and diversify its raw milk supply chain might play a pivotal role in sustaining its operations and meeting the rising demand for its processed dairy products in Zambia.

In addition to quality and price as discussed above, [22] emphasizes the critical role of product availability as a significant determinant influencing customer buyer behavior. Product availability both in raw form and finished product might just be an ingredient for Fisenge Dairy's success. The timely and consistent presence of products in the market holds profound implications for a company's sustained success. Failure to maintain a reliable and steady supply of products can lead to a loss of consumer trust and, subsequently, a decline in business. The concept of availability transcends the mere physical presence of products on store shelves; it encompasses the broader aspects of distribution, logistics, and market reach. Companies that exhibit inconsistency in offloading their products onto the market risk alienating consumers who seek reliability and convenience in their purchasing experiences. As consumer expectations evolve, the importance of seamless access to desired products becomes increasingly pronounced. For

Fisenge Dairy, recognizing the significance of availability in shaping consumer behavior is important as they expand their product offerings and market presence. A robust distribution network, efficient logistics, and strategic placement of products in various retail outlets are essential components to ensure that Fisenge Dairy could meet consumer demands promptly and consistently. In a landscape where competition is fierce, the cooperative must establish itself as a dependable supplier, fostering confidence among consumers in the accessibility and reliability of their dairy products.

According to [22] the issue of quality, price, and availability emerges as a formidable trio shaping consumer buying decisions. While Fisenge Dairy would acknowledge the importance of quality and affordability, integrating a comprehensive approach to ensure consistent product availability will fortify its market position. By aligning with consumer expectations for reliable access to their products, Fisenge Dairy can enhance brand loyalty, capitalize on market opportunities, and navigate the competitive dairy industry landscape in Zambia effectively.

2.3 Consumer Behaviour Model

Consumer buyer behavior models have gone through a lot changes. One of the contemporary models is the Engel, Kollat, and Blackwell buyer decision model, very famous to marketers and used to analyze factors that affect consumer purchase decisions. With its five stages [23] (sometimes four as shown in the figure below), a marketer could be able to understand what consumers go through or experience before and after the actual purchase. The figure below illustrates what the consumer is exposed to.

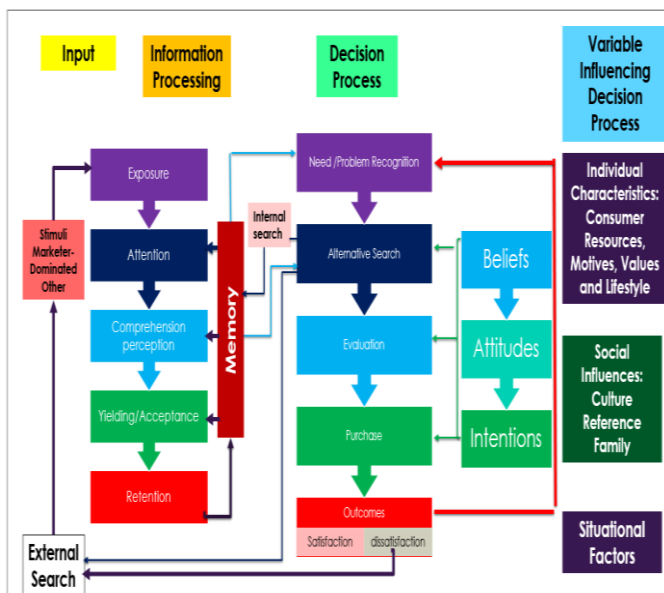


Figure 1. The Engel, Kollat, and Blackwell model of Consumer Behavior

What stands out in many cases when discussing the consumer buyer behavior is the decision-making process as shown below, which is just part of the above model.



Figure 2. The Decision-Making Process

This stage of the model depicts the process that a consumer goes through when making a decision to buy. However, the five-step buying process [24] is not always followed each time a purchase is to be made. On occasion, individuals may bypass one or two steps, particularly if they are familiar with and loyal to a specific brand. For instance, when purchasing one’s usual brand of yogurt, one might directly transition from recognizing the need to making the purchase decision, omitting the steps of information search and evaluation due to their established routine and pre-existing knowledge about the product.

3. Experimental Method/ Design

This study was qualitative research where we needed an in depth understanding of the perceptions, experiences, and motivations of potential and existing buyers of dairy products. In terms of sampling techniques or criteria the authors used the purposive sampling criteria which depended solely on the judgement of the authors about who participated and provided the needed information for this research, by use of a semi-structured questionnaire with some open-ended questions.

Respondents from four different towns of the Copperbelt province of Zambia namely, Luanshya, Ndola, Kitwe and Chililabombwe made up our sampling frame and served as potential target markets for Fisenge Dairy. Sampling from

each of these towns was conducted at chain stores or shopping mall premises and Bottom of the Pyramid (BOP) markets in order to have a balanced response base composed of high/ middle class income earners as well as middle / lower class income earners. Eight (8) members of staff from senior management, middle management levels and operational staff from Fisenge Dairy were also interviewed.

In Luanshya, research was conducted at Roan Shopping Mall and the specific chain store at this mall is Shoprite Checkers. The authors had access to 33 respondents at this mall. At the BOP market research was conducted at Kalala market and the authors had access to 26 respondents which brought to 59 respondents in total. In Ndola research was conducted at Pick and Pay chain store where the authors had access to 21 respondents while the BOP market was Masala Main Market where the authors had 60 respondents giving them 81 respondents in total. In Kitwe research was conducted at ECL shopping mall and the authors had access to 55 respondents while the BOP market was Chisokone market where we had access to 58 respondents giving us 113 respondents in total. In Chililabombwe research was conducted at Choppies chain stores where we had access to 18 respondents and 42 respondents from Kasumbalesa BOP market giving us 60 respondents. This brought our sample size to 321 respondents.

In order to manage this kind of data from the field the authors had a semi-structured questionnaire that they were reading out to potential respondents and some responses being filled in as they came. The Research Assistant had an audio device (cell phone) also to record all the responses of the respondents.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics was used to summarize and describe the characteristics of a sample by utilizing quantitative techniques such percentages and tables. It helped the authors to analyze and summarize data into meaningful information that helped to quickly grasp and draw conclusions.

Table 1. Analysis of Questionnaire Using Descriptive Statistics

| Variables | Observation | Percentage |
|---------------|-------------|------------|
| Gender | | |
| Male | 119 | 37.1 |
| Female | 202 | 62.9 |
| TOTAL | 321 | 100 |
| Ages | | |
| 17 | 14 | 4.14 |
| 18 | 7 | 2.07 |
| 21 | 36 | 10.7 |
| 23 | 26 | 7.7 |
| 26 | 34 | 10.1 |
| 27 | 59 | 17.5 |
| 28 | 7 | 2.2 |
| 31 | 5 | 1.5 |

| | | |
|---------------------------|------------|------------|
| 34 | 11 | 3.3 |
| 35 | 3 | 0.9 |
| 39 | 13 | 3.9 |
| 42 | 17 | 5.0 |
| 43 | 20 | 8.6 |
| 44 | 35 | 10.4 |
| 45 | 10 | 5.3 |
| 46 | 9 | 2.7 |
| 52 | 3 | 0.9 |
| 57 | 7 | 2.1 |
| 60 | 1 | 0.3 |
| 63 | 1 | 0.3 |
| 66 | 2 | 0.6 |
| 67 | 1 | 0.3 |
| TOTALS | 321 | 100 |
| Livelihood status | | |
| Formal Employment | 60 | 18.7 |
| Business Owner | 12 | 3.7 |
| Dependent | 82 | 25.5 |
| Other Activities | 167 | 52.0 |
| TOTALS | 321 | 100 |
| Level of education | | |
| Grade 12 O levels | 169 | 52.6 |
| Vocational certificate | 72 | 22.4 |
| Diploma | 41 | 12.8 |
| Degree | 16 | 5.0 |
| Master's degree | 7 | 2.2 |
| Unclassified | 16 | 12.8 |
| TOTALS | 321 | 100 |

The above information indicated that 62.9% of the observations from the research were female respondents, while 37.1% were male respondents. This could mean that most consumers who were met and surveyed were women, which is in line with the notion that women are the ones who do a lot of buying activities. 17.5% of respondents were about 27 years old followed by 10% of those from other age brackets. This is an indication that most respondents were mature enough to give the data that the author was potentially looking for. It was discovered that most respondents that were surveyed were engaged in different activities that gave them a livelihood. The majority of the respondents were doing unclassified activities, and this stood at 52.0% and those that were working stood at 18.7%.

The data from the questionnaire showed that 50.6% of the respondents were grade 12 (O' level) certificate holders. According to the Zambian educational standards a grade 12

certificate holder is schooled enough to understand the business dynamics as some of it is actually covered in the grade 12 educational curriculum. This was followed by vocational certificate holders.

4.2 Willingness to Buy a New Product on The Market

Consumers have no problem buying a newly introduced product on the market if the price is fair, the quality is good enough and manufacturers provide to them information confirming that the product has been tested by the Zambia Bureau of Standards (ZABS) and the Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA). This was stated by 68% of the respondents who strongly said they are willing to buy a new product as long as it meets quality standards. They stated that brands such as Dairy Gold fresh milk from Dairy Gold Limited were consistent and trustworthy. 30% of the respondents mentioned that they can only buy a new product that is readily available in nearby local shops, [19] shares the same sentiments. They further said they did not need to travel kilometers away from their homes to find a product. Only about 2.2% were skeptical about buying a new product and so were reluctant to express their opinion when they were further asked whether they would buy a new certified dairy product when a new company came with a new brand of milk or yogurt on the market.

Table 2. Desirable product characteristics

| Brand | Frequency | Response Rate |
|---------------|-----------|---------------|
| Quality | 218 | 68% |
| Availability | 96 | 30% |
| Certification | 7 | 2.2% |

4.3 The Shelf Life of The Dairy Product

The packaging, processing and preservation of dairy products is another issue raised in the semi structured questionnaire. This research found that the majority of the respondents, (57%) preferred UHT treated milk to the 'ordinary' or traditional pasteurized fresh milk as the former stays longer on the shelf and they can still chill it to the recommended temperature even after opening the package. The rest of the respondents, (43%) indicated that they preferred the ordinary pasteurized fresh milk. When prompted further as to why they preferred the one with a shorter shelf life, only 15% were able to cite a reason for that. Although the UHT treated milk is the most preferred type of milk, [18] discovered that consumers lack knowledge on the contents of the UHT milk as most of it contained stabilisers.

4.4 Preference for package size

One of the questions that was asked was to identify the most convenient packaging size of the dairy product, be it fresh milk, yogurt or Lacto. A list of sample packaging sizes in mili liters (mls) and liters (Ltr) was provided to the respondents on the questionnaire to choose from as follows: 250 mls, 500 mls, 1 Ltr, and 2 Ltr.

Table 3. Packaging size preferences in percentages

| Dairy Product | Packaging Size | Responses |
|---------------|----------------|-----------|
| Fresh milk | 250 mls | 12% |

| | | |
|--------|---------|------|
| | 500 mls | 43% |
| | 1 ltr | 3% |
| | 2 ltr | 32% |
| | | |
| Yogurt | 250 mls | 44% |
| | 500 mls | 49% |
| | 1 ltr | None |
| | 2 ltr | 7% |
| | | |
| Lacto | 250 mls | 66% |
| | 500 mls | 5% |
| | 1 ltr | 2% |
| | 2 ltr | 27% |

The information above showed that when the product is fresh milk, the consumers would likely prefer it in 500 mls packaging container as given by the 43% response rate followed by a 2 Ltr container size with 32% response rate. The 1 liter and 250 mls container sizes had 3% and 2% response rate respectively. Respondents would most likely want to see yogurt come in 500 mls container and 250 mls as the results show a 49% response rate for 500 mls and 44% for 250 mls. Surprisingly enough we had no research participant showing willingness for a 1-liter container. Another surprising item was the overwhelming response for a 250 mls container for Lacto with a 66% response rate against the next choice packaging size with 27%. Meanwhile 500 mls and 1-liter containers had 5% and 2% response rate respectively.

4.5 The Way Forward for A New Product

Respondents were asked what exactly they would love to see after a new quality dairy product is introduced on the market. About 88% of the respondents indicated that they were looking for the brand that is consistent in quality. They asserted that they wouldn't like companies that introduce new quality products then after customers get used to the brand, they gradually change and comprise on quality. These finding are in line with what [16] found in their article in which research was conducted to evaluate the influence of service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction. They concluded that there is still much progress to be made in both research and practical applications when it comes to examining the effect of customer satisfaction through the 5 service quality dimensions. Only 11% mentioned that they would want to see cheaper and affordable products always and 1% were not interested in responding to a question.

5. Conclusion and Future Scope

The purpose of this qualitative research was to assess consumer buyer behavior for Fisenge Dairy products. Consumers of Fisenge Dairy might not be the same as those for the already existing dairy products, therefore this research might help Fisenge Dairy to develop specific marketing strategies for a targeted audience and not just for any other consumers. According to the findings quality of the dairy

product is a major factor that influences consumer behavior. This is evidenced by the proportion of the respondents who supported this notion by 48% and it is in line with [16] assertion that quality creates brand awareness. Product quality can actually make the product stand out from the crowd, it is the best strategy that companies can use to penetrate and meet the competitors at par [17]. This is not to say that the psychological, social, cultural and personal factors are no longer valid. They are, however, a cornerstone of the broader factors influencing consumer buyer behavior.

The results showed that price too, influences consumer buyer behavior as shown by 32% of the respondents. The respondents indicated that no matter the quality of the product if the product is unreasonably priced then consumers would not be influenced to purchase that product. The issue of price being the factor that influences consumer buyer behavior is closely related to the income of the consumer because whether the price is low or not if the income of the consumer is not enough, he or she would not still buy the product despite having the willingness to buy, although this is contrary to the findings of [9] in their study on 'The effect of convenience, service excellence, pricing, trust in information quality, and brand perception on consumer purchasing decisions in Shopee's online marketplace' where they argued that price has no significant effect on purchasing decisions [9]. With the above results from this research, it is highly recommended that Fisenge Dairy Business Cooperative Union should first meet all legal requirements that are mandatory to do dairy processing so that they are not found wanting. They need to have their premises inspected by the local government's department of health and department of fire. They must also constitute a competent team or department of food processors and quality control personnel so that the Fisenge product quality is not compromised. This would be a differentiating factor to make Fisenge Dairy meet competitors at par because currently consumers have a preference of dairy products from other dairy processing companies.

Understanding consumer buyer behavior is not an easy thing. Marketers might not fully obtain information pertaining to the behavior of consumers simply by carrying out research because most of this information is hidden right in the mind of the consumer and nobody can enter the mind of consumer and extract that information, so marketers depend on whatever they have been given by respondents. Therefore, from the information gathered in this research, it is concluded that quality of a dairy product is very fundamental in influencing consumer buying behavior.

This research is not exhaustive. Future scope in this research involves delving into the potential applications of emerging technologies in dairy processing to enhance efficiency and product quality. Research focusing on the integration of technology in dairy processing could offer valuable insights. Exploring advancements in processing methods, quality control technologies, and packaging innovations could contribute to increased efficiency, product quality, and overall competitiveness of dairy businesses. With the

increasing prevalence of e-commerce, researchers could explore the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies for dairy products. This includes understanding consumer behavior in online purchasing, the impact of online reviews, and strategies to enhance the online presence of dairy products.

Another area that might need further research is women's involvement in dairy farming. Given the prominent role of women at Fisenge Dairy, future research could delve into the gender dynamics within dairy cooperatives because exploring the impact of women's leadership, participation, and empowerment within these cooperatives could provide insights into broader gender-related issues in agricultural and business settings. Conducting comparative studies with successful dairy industries in other countries could as well provide valuable benchmarks and best practices. Future researchers could explore the factors that have contributed to the success of dairy industries in other regions and assess their applicability to the Zambian context.

Data Availability

None.

Conflict of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest from both authors.

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Authors' Contributions

The role of the first author was to design the experimental method section of this manuscript, locate related literature and did the write up. Author two acted as a Research Assistant during data collection phase. She also did the proof reading before manuscript submission.

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