




# Assessing the Role of Market Share Development on Competitive Advantage in Dairy Companies

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## ABSTRACT

**Objective:** This study aims to assess the role of market share development on competitive advantage in dairy companies.

**Method:** The present research employs a mixed-methods approach (quantitative and qualitative). In the qualitative phase, purposeful sampling was conducted until theoretical saturation was achieved, and the statistical population, in accordance with the systematic pattern of Grounded Theory, included 12 experts in the fields of marketing and marketing managers in dairy companies. The Grounded Theory approach was utilized for qualitative data analysis and the presentation of a paradigm model using MAXQDA software, version 20. In the quantitative section, the population consisted of 730 employees of dairy companies, from which a sample size of 252 was selected using Cochran's formula. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, and structural equation modeling (with a Partial Least Squares approach) through Smart PLS 3.0 software.

**Findings:** Based on the results of the qualitative analysis, 22 categories and 78 indicators were identified in six main groups: causal conditions (internal marketing, product life cycle management, market attractiveness, marketing mix, competitive strategy, planning and goal setting), contextual factors (customer characteristics, competitive environment, and market turbulence), core phenomenon (market share development strategy), strategies and actions (market share management, sales promotion, advertising, competition, brand equity, and market segmentation), intervening factors (risk management and sustainable competitive advantage), and outcomes (brand position consolidation, profitability, bargaining power, and market share increase).

**Conclusion:** The results obtained in the quantitative section indicated that the proposed model of the research has adequate validity.

**Keywords:** Market Share, Advertising, Profitability, Brand Equity

## 1 Introduction

The dairy industry is one of the main subsectors of food and processing industries in Iran because the consumption of dairy products is essential and undeniable for people's health, and reducing the consumption of dairy products can lead to health concerns regarding the spread of diseases such as osteoporosis, dental decay, diabetes, etc. Consequently, these products hold a special place in the food industry, characterized by reliable profitability and profit margins. Due to the importance of dairy products in nutrition and public health, their production and consumption have always been of interest to policymakers and planners in the country. Investment in advertising milk and its products was one of the policies considered in the fifth development plan to increase milk consumption (de Mesquita Souza Saraiva et al., 2022). Market share, a portion of the total market that an institution allocates to itself and designs, adjusts, and implements its marketing plans to meet its needs, can dynamically change depending on the market it operates in (global, regional, local, etc.) and usually market share, voice share, and research and development share are considered as the leading indicators for measuring potential changes in future sales and market share (de Mesquita Souza Saraiva et al., 2022; Gearhardt & Hebebrand, 2021). In other words, market share, usually defined as the ratio of a firm's sales to the industry's total sales, is considered one of the structural variables of markets, and factors affecting firms' market share have been the subject of significant studies in the field of organization and industrial economics over the past decades. On the other hand, market share instability, which measures the fluctuations of firms' market shares over time, is one of the indicators for measuring the level of competition, monopoly, and market dynamics, and is considered a structural market variable influenced by behavioral variables such as innovation (Ar et al., 2020). To gain more market share, a company may apply one of several strategies. First, it might introduce new technology to attract customers who may have purchased from a competitor. Second, cultivating customer loyalty is a tactic that can lead to an existing customer base and word-of-mouth expansion. Third, hiring talented employees prevents high turnover costs, allowing the company to prioritize its core competencies instead. Finally, by acquiring new knowledge, a company can both reduce the number of competitors and gain a customer base (Sahafzadeh & Haghghi, 2023).

The importance of this issue is not merely in maintaining a company's current market share. Furthermore, as the industry grows, a company's market share must also increase to remain competitive and profitable. Increasing market share requires gaining a larger share than previously held, indicating that the company's growth is above average and it has outperformed its competitors. Market share and brand penetration are crucial for understanding as part of the larger puzzle of growth and brand diversification. The more we know about our current market position - strengths and weaknesses, competitors, and potential opportunities - the more clearly we can prioritize brand growth strategies and reduce the inherent risk of new investments. Given the direct relationship between profit and risk, companies are obliged to manage their market share with the same precision they manage every other aspect of their business. While most companies can benefit from efforts to increase their market share, some may find that at a certain point (or possibly beyond), the expected costs and risks outweigh the anticipated benefits (Honarvar & Rezaee, 2019). Additionally, companies with a high market share often receive better prices from suppliers because their larger order volumes increase their purchasing power. Increasing market share and production go hand in hand, providing the opportunity for a company to reduce the cost of producing a single unit due to economies of scale. When current and loyal customers purchase a company's products, a higher market share can help improve sales. Market share can also expand a company's overall customer base as new potential customers follow existing ones. Gaining market share can enhance a company's reputation and visibility. Besides increasing sales and bargaining power, it can attract more new and talented employees. Indeed, the main problem for dairy companies in the country can be seen in the lack of a structured plan and strategy for increasing market share, and most of these companies do not use a specific model to enhance competitive ability and improve market share. Given the above, the importance of market share in a company's success and performance is undeniable. Therefore, to achieve suitable results, companies in any industry must pay attention to increasing the market share of their products and services. Thus, identifying factors affecting market share and strengthening them can lead to the progress and growth of companies.

Nevertheless, the absence of a comprehensive strategy concerning the marketing of the dairy industry, especially the lack of attention to market share, is considered one of the main challenges of the dairy industry in the country. The

intense competition among dairy companies underscores that companies active in this field must acquire new strategies to increase competitiveness and, consequently, market share. While current evidence clearly shows that the main efforts of domestic dairy companies are focused on commercial advertising. Although advertising is one of the key principles in branding, it is not the entire story. Examination of the actions of leading global companies shows that even well-known companies such as McDonald's and KFC use all available tools to maintain competitive power and increase market share. Increasing market share can be very important for the financial health and continuous success of a business. A company has many opportunities not only to maintain its market share but also to gain new market share. Every company must understand the value that a strong market share offers and commit to the continuous effort that can create it. Therefore, domestic dairy companies, to succeed in the business arena, must first be aware of the concept of market share and secondly correctly recognize the precursors to increasing market share. Hence, the present research is dedicated to developing and presenting a model for increasing market share in the dairy industry. The main research question is: What are the dimensions of increasing market share in the country's dairy industry?

## 2 Methods and Materials

The main objective of this research is to present a native model for increasing market share in the Iranian dairy industries, thus the present research is developmental-applied in terms of its purpose. Since this research reaches a general model from data obtained from interviews and questionnaires, the approach of this research is inductive. Qualitative data analysis was conducted with the exploratory Grounded Theory method and interviews, and quantitative data analysis was based on the nature and method, a descriptive-survey research in which the data collection tool is a researcher-made questionnaire. Moreover, the present study was conducted with a mixed (qualitative-quantitative) approach.

The qualitative section's statistical population includes experts and marketing managers in dairy companies with experience in the field of business management and marketing. To determine the samples of this research and select this group of experts, a non-probabilistic and purposive sampling method was used. The criterion for determining the sample size in this research was reaching

theoretical saturation, which was achieved after 12 interviews.

The quantitative section's statistical population includes managers, employees, and supervisors working in selected dairy companies, totaling 730 individuals, and sampling was random. The sample size was 252 individuals using the Cochran formula. Questionnaires were sent online and through the Press Line website to the intended samples. In this study, 300 questionnaires were distributed among the statistical sample, of which 252 questionnaires were returned complete and used as the basis for statistical work.

The main data collection tool in the qualitative part is in-depth interviews. To determine the validity and reliability of the interviews, retest methods and agreement between two coders were used. In the quantitative section, to test the research hypotheses, a researcher-made questionnaire consisting of 44 items was used to collect information. The questionnaire items were precisely based on the indicators identified in the qualitative phase of the research. To evaluate the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated, and for validity assessment, two methods of face-content validity (CVR-CVI) and construct validity (convergent and divergent validity) were used. In this study, the Grounded Theory method was used for the analysis of qualitative data. Data analysis in the qualitative section was performed using the Maxqda software. For data analysis and testing the research hypotheses, inferential statistics and the Partial Least Squares (PLS) technique were used.

## 3 Findings and Results

The demographic characteristics in the quantitative section are as follows: Gender: 161 of the respondents are male, making up 63.9% of the respondents, and 91 are female, constituting 36.1% of the respondents. Age: 37 respondents are between 20 to 30 years old, constituting 14.7% of the sample size, being the least frequent. 93 respondents are within the age range of 31 to 40 years, making up 36.9% of the sample size. 62 respondents are between 41 to 50 years old, constituting 23.8% of the sample size. 60 respondents are older than 51 years, also constituting 23.8% of the sample size. Education: 146 respondents have a bachelor's degree, accounting for 57% of the participants, being the most frequent. 89 respondents have a master's degree, making up 35% of the sample size. Only 6% of the respondents have a doctoral degree. Work experience: 29 respondents have less than 5 years of experience. 118

respondents have 6 to 10 years of experience, being the most frequent. 21% of the respondents have 11 to 15 years of work experience, and 14% have 16 to 20 years of experience, with 14 respondents having more than 21 years of work experience.

To calculate test-retest reliability, several interviews were selected as samples, and the codes identified in two different time intervals for each of the interviews were compared. In this study, three interviews were selected as samples and were recoded after a one-month interval. Given that the test-retest reliability is 88% and this value is more than 60%, the coding reliability is considered acceptable.

To calculate reliability with the method of inter-rater agreement, one of the management students was asked to participate in this test as a research collaborator. The percentage of inter-rater agreement, used as an indicator of reliability, indicates that the reliability of two coders is 71%, which is more than 60%, therefore the coding reliability is considered acceptable.

Open coding is the initial point of analysis for data obtained from interviews. With the extraction of 230 initial codes and the modification of codes by the supervisor and other experts, the codes were validated and a number of them were selected for testing in the quantitative section. Although in strategies like Grounded Theory or Phenomenology, the repetition of a code is not a reason for its importance, the norm in qualitative research leads the researcher towards providing a concise report of code frequencies and prioritizing them for future readers. According to the frequency matrix of codes, where the area of each square is Shannon's formula indicating the importance coefficient of each code, among 230 initial

codes, the code for increasing market share with a frequency of 122 and a very high importance coefficient was identified as the top priority, and the code for market share development strategy with a frequency of 82 was identified as the second priority based on frequency.

Axial coding is the second stage of analysis in Grounded Theory theorization. Based on the "systematic approach" by Strauss and Corbin (1998), the categories derived from raw interview data are gathered in a model called the axial coding model. This model includes 6 axes as follows:

**Causal Conditions:** Categories related to conditions that affect the core category;

**Core Category:** The main category to which other categories can be related and appears repeatedly in the data;

**Actions:** Specific actions and interactions that result from the core phenomenon;

**Contexts:** Specific conditions that affect the actions;

**Intervening Conditions:** General contextual conditions that influence strategies;

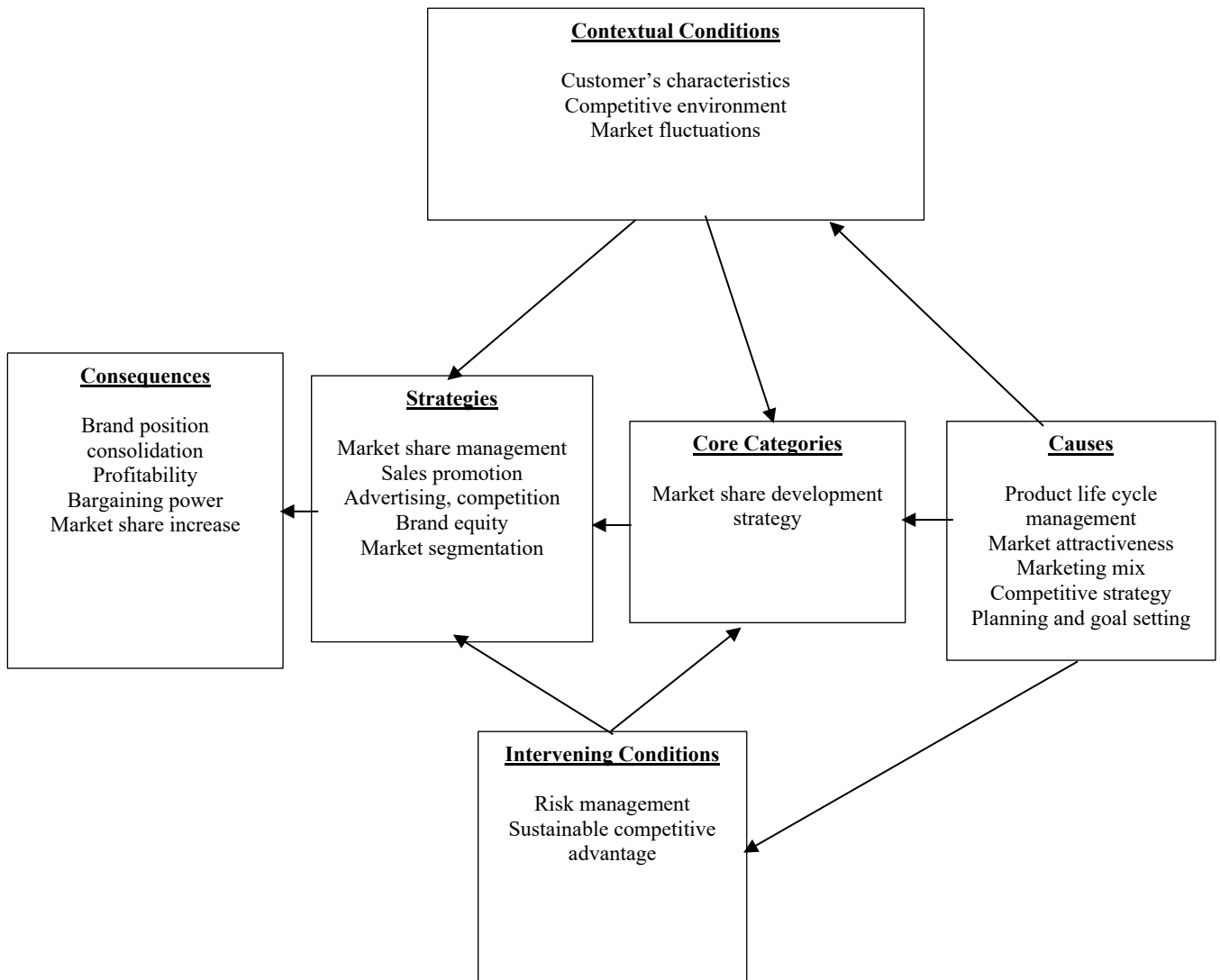
**Consequences:** Outcomes resulting from the implementation of actions.

For selective coding, in the first step, by examining the current situation, the data obtained are classified into 6 main categories. With the advice of professors and experts, all indicators obtained from the qualitative analysis of 12 interviews, including 6 main categories, 11 subcategories, and 44 indicators, were used to develop and present a native model for increasing market share in the Iranian dairy industries.

The [Figure 1](#) represents the paradigm model of the native strategy for increasing market share in the Iranian dairy industries.

Figure 1

Paradigm Model



The p-value of the Bartlett test is less than 5%, indicating a significant relationship between the variables, and factor analysis is suitable for identifying the structural model.

For examining the validity of the questionnaires, two indices, CVI and CVR, were measured. The results of the content validity index showed that the CVI for all questions was above 0.8, indicating the content validity of each question. Also, since the CVR value for each question was greater than 0.56, the content validity of this questionnaire is confirmed. The results obtained regarding the validity and reliability of the questionnaire are presented in the Table 1: The KMO test result indicated that the KMO value for all scales is more than 0.6, therefore, the sample size has good sufficiency for performing factor analysis. The Cronbach's

alpha reliability value for all variables present in the research model is above 0.7. Therefore, the variable has the necessary Cronbach's alpha reliability. The composite reliability value for all variables present in the research model is above 0.7, hence the variable has the necessary composite reliability. Also, the average variance extracted (AVE) reliability for all variables present in the research model is more than 0.5. Moreover, based on the obtained results, it was determined that the conditions for convergent validity are also met; thus, convergent validity is also confirmed. The results of the Fornell-Larcker test also confirmed the validity of the instrument. The determination coefficient ( $R^2$ ) and the GOF index (equal to 0.583) also confirmed the suitable fit of the research model.

**Table 1**

*Reliability and Validity Values of the Questionnaire*

| Variable                            | Cronbach's Alpha | Composite Reliability | Rho-A Coefficient | Shared Reliability | AVE   |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------|
| Competitive Environment             | 0.876            | 0.924                 | 0.861             | 0.801              | 0.801 |
| Market Share Development Strategies | 0.833            | 0.889                 | 0.918             | 0.668              | 0.668 |
| Competitive Strategy                | 0.945            | 0.958                 | 0.876             | 0.820              | 0.820 |
| Advertising                         | 0.921            | 0.950                 | 0.928             | 0.865              | 0.865 |
| Brand Equity                        | 0.845            | 0.906                 | 0.843             | 0.763              | 0.763 |
| Market Share Increase               | 0.854            | 0.912                 | 0.864             | 0.776              | 0.776 |
| Internal Marketing                  | 0.923            | 0.942                 | 0.889             | 0.766              | 0.766 |
| Market Share Management             | 0.884            | 0.924                 | 0.940             | 0.742              | 0.742 |
| Marketing Mix Elements              | 0.963            | 0.975                 | 0.840             | 0.845              | 0.845 |
| Sustainable Competitive Advantage   | 0.877            | 0.924                 | 0.917             | 0.803              | 0.803 |
| Profitability                       | 0.875            | 0.923                 | 0.874             | 0.801              | 0.800 |

**Table 2**

*Hypothesis Testing*

| #  | Hypotheses  | Path Coefficients | t-value | Results |
|----|---|-------------------|---------|---------|
| 1  | The competitive environment affects market share development strategies.  | 0.248             | 2.342   | P<0.05  |
| 2  | Marketing mix elements affect market share development strategies.  | 0.223             | 3.059   | P<0.05  |
| 3  | Competitive strategy affects market share development strategies.   | 0.323             | 6.054   | P<0.05  |
| 4  | Internal marketing affects market share development strategies.   | 0.756             | 4.335   | P<0.05  |
| 5  | Sustainable competitive advantage does not affect the relationship between the competitive environment and market share development strategies. | -0.063            | 0.857   | P<0.05  |
| 6  | Sustainable competitive advantage affects the relationship between marketing mix elements and market share development strategies.              | 0.571             | 3.686   | P<0.05  |
| 7  | Sustainable competitive advantage does not affect the relationship between competitive strategy and market share development strategies.        | -0.184            | 1.895   | P<0.05  |
| 8  | Sustainable competitive advantage does not affect the relationship between internal marketing and market share development strategies.          | 0.126             | 1.003   | P<0.05  |
| 9  | Market share development strategies affect advertising.   | 0.845             | 5.845   | P<0.05  |
| 10 | Market share development strategies affect market share management.   | 0.855             | 4.855   | P<0.05  |
| 11 | Market share development strategies affect brand equity.  | 0.818             | 5.818   | P<0.05  |
| 12 | Advertising affects market share increase.  | 0.488             | 3.262   | P<0.05  |
| 13 | Market share management affects market share increase.  | 0.695             | 7.532   | P<0.05  |
| 14 | Brand equity affects market share increase.   | 0.187             | 8.8947  | P<0.05  |
| 15 | Advertising affects profitability.  | 0.210             | 4.71    | P<0.05  |
| 16 | Market share management affects profitability.  | 0.252             | 2.021   | P<0.05  |
| 17 | Brand equity affects profitability.   | 0.117             | 3.077   | P<0.05  |
| 18 | Market share increase affects profitability.  | 0.351             | 4.512   | P<0.05  |

The results obtained from the structural model of the research are expressed in [Figure 2](#) and [Figure 3](#) (based on the

significance coefficient and the standard estimation mode, respectively).

Figure 2

Structure Model in Standard Coefficient Mode

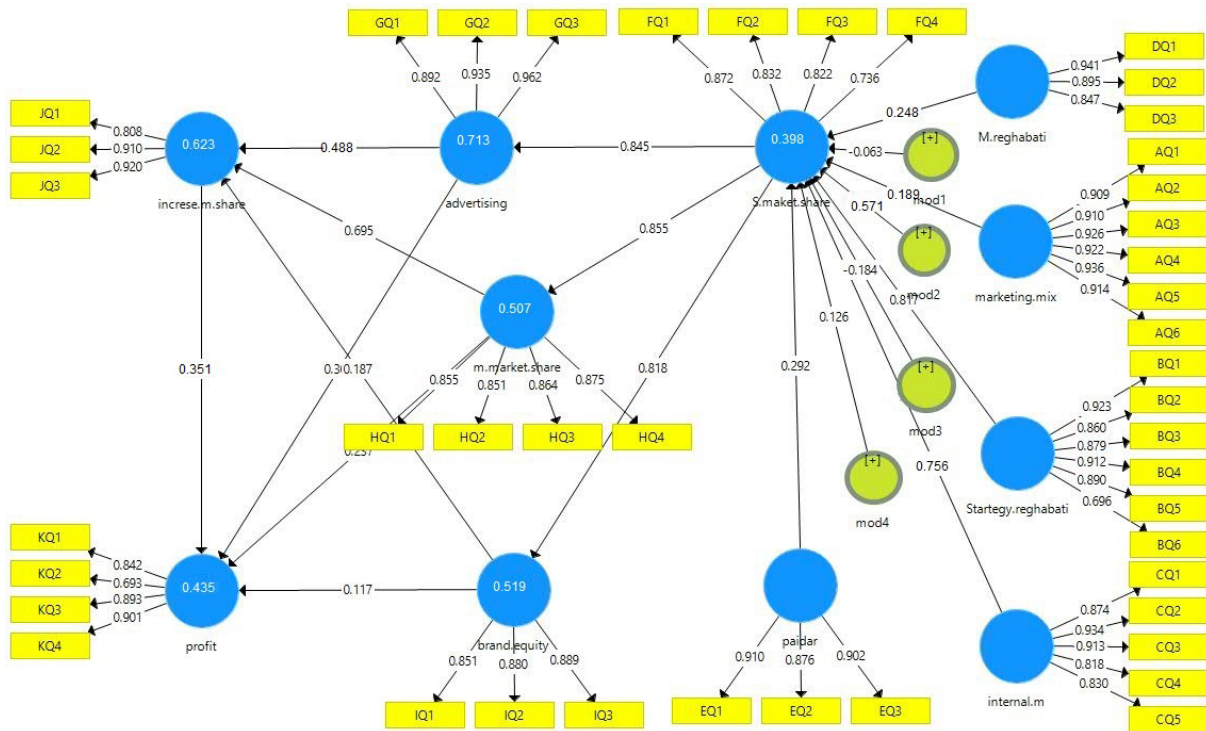
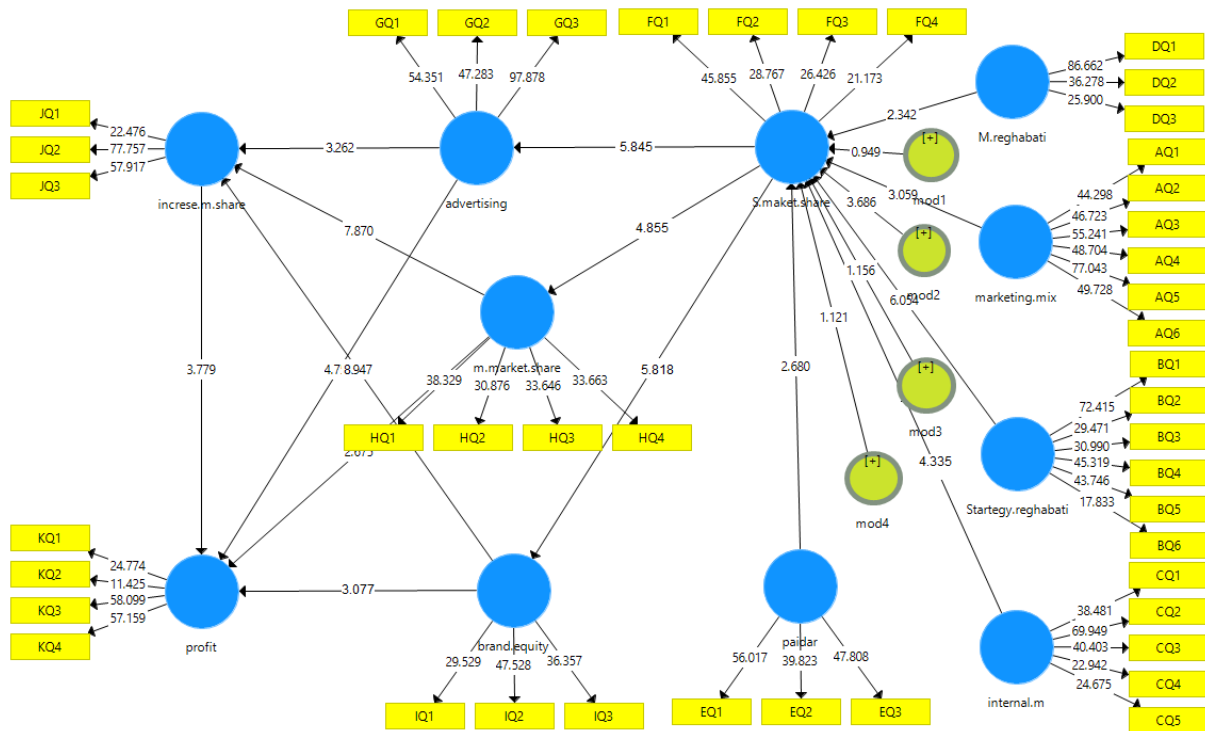


Figure 3

Structure Model in T-value Mode



#### 4 Discussion and Conclusion

Based on the secondary coding results of the research, the indicators of internal marketing, product life cycle management, market attractiveness, marketing mix, competitive strategy, and planning and goal setting were selected as causal condition categories in the development of increasing market share in the Iranian dairy industries. The results related to causal conditions imply that internal marketing is used to improve performance and increase the quality of products and services, enhance staff behavior and performance, develop organizational culture, and ultimately improve customer satisfaction. Every product has a specific life cycle that includes various stages such as design, development, production, marketing, and sales. A competitive strategy employs a series of actions to gain a competitive advantage over competitors. Differentiation in product features and targeting specific customer segments derived from interviews are examples of differentiation strategies that companies can use to gain a competitive advantage. Companies can differentiate themselves from competitors and earn more profit from the industry by offering unique features, targeting specific segments of customers, or creating attractive campaigns. Planning is a process in which a path is determined for achieving organizational goals. In this process, the overall goal is first identified, then the actions and activities needed to achieve the goal are identified and determined. Planning includes setting goals and preparing a roadmap to achieve those goals, while goal setting involves identifying and prioritizing specific market segments or customer groups for focus. These findings are consistent with the results reported by other researchers (Ar et al., 2020; Bahari & Taheri rouzbahani, 2023; Daněk et al., 2022; Honarvar & Rezaee, 2019; Jafari et al., 2017; Sahafzadeh & Haghighi, 2023).

Based on the secondary coding results of the research, the indicators of product analysis, market analysis, competition analysis, and environmental analysis were selected as core categories in the development of increasing market share in the Iranian dairy industries. The results related to the core category indicate that product analysis involves reviewing and evaluating company products to identify their strengths and weaknesses and determine the product categories that have the potential for development and improvement. Market review and analysis of customer behavior aim to identify new opportunities and weaknesses in the market; reviewing the company's competitors in the target market to

identify their strengths and weaknesses and determine appropriate strategies for competition; reviewing external factors such as political, social, economic, and technological to identify new opportunities and threats that may affect the market. The variable of market share strategy is aligned with the research (Ar et al., 2020; Bahari & Taheri rouzbahani, 2023; Honarvar & Rezaee, 2019; Jafari et al., 2017; Sahafzadeh & Haghighi, 2023), who in their study examined market orientation and market share development.

Based on the secondary coding results of the research, the indicators of market share management, sales promotion, advertising, competition, brand equity, and market segmentation were selected as strategic categories in the development of increasing market share in the Iranian dairy industries. The results related to strategic categories include identifying customer needs and desires and designing products in a way that meets those needs and desires. Market share management involves strategies for increasing and maintaining market share in the long term and is also an important factor in competing with companies' rivals in the market. A company's sales promotion has a direct impact on increasing its market share because increasing sales will increase the company's market share compared to competitors. In the dairy industry, brand equity can play a significant role in increasing market share because consumers often have strong preferences for specific brands of milk, cheese, yogurt, or other dairy products. One of the ways that brand equity can affect market share in the dairy industry is its impact on customer loyalty. Market segmentation is the process of dividing a broad market into smaller groups of consumers who have similar needs, characteristics, and behaviors. Managers can best respond to customer needs by identifying new markets and also determining market needs; targeting customer needs and different segments better, a company can adjust its products and marketing strategies to better meet these needs. These findings are consistent with the results reported by other researchers (Ar et al., 2020; Bahari & Taheri rouzbahani, 2023; Honarvar & Rezaee, 2019; Jafari et al., 2017; Sahafzadeh & Haghighi, 2023).

Based on the secondary coding results of the research, the indicators of risk management and sustainable competitive advantage were selected as intervening condition categories in the development of increasing market share in the Iranian dairy industries. The results related to intervening conditions are: Risk management refers to a set of activities conducted to identify, analyze, evaluate, control, and reduce the risks present in an organization or economic activities. The goal



of this management is to reduce the likelihood of risks and also minimize their negative impacts on the organization. To achieve this goal, various tools such as risk analysis, risk modeling, risk estimation, and risk management are used. Sustainable competitive advantage enables a company to maintain its efficiency and sustainability against its competitors, which is one of the strategies for increasing market share by creating and maintaining a sustainable competitive advantage. Using sustainable and green technologies in the production and packaging processes; utilizing a sustainable milk supply chain can help companies gain a competitive advantage; a sustainable milk supply chain refers to a set of activities related to sustainable production and distribution of milk from farm to consumer table. The goal of this network is to ensure the quality and safety of produced milk, improve the economic conditions of milk producers, and create a direct and fair connection between producers and consumers. These findings are consistent with the results reported by other researchers (Ar et al., 2020; Bahari & Taheri rouzbahani, 2023; Honarvar & Rezaee, 2019; Jafari et al., 2017; Sahafzadeh & Haghighi, 2023).

Based on the secondary coding results of the study, indicators of brand position consolidation, profitability, bargaining power, and market share increase were selected as outcomes in the development of increasing market share in the Iranian dairy industries. Consolidating the brand position means creating a stable and strong image of the brand in consumers' minds, which encourages them to use the brand with more confidence and, consequently, increases market share. For this purpose, brands should focus on improving product quality, research and development, advertising and marketing, creating a positive shopping experience for customers, and establishing direct communication with customers. With an increase in market share, a company's revenues increase, and costs relative to sales volume decrease, which helps increase profitability. Strategies for increasing profitability in the dairy industry include improving production processes, optimizing costs, increasing the efficiency of advertising and marketing, research and development, and product expansion. Price competition is a significant factor in companies' profitability and market share. In a highly competitive market, companies often resort to price reductions to gain more market share, which may negatively impact their profitability. Bargaining power is one of the factors that affect companies' behavior and performance in the market and can directly and indirectly impact the market share and profitability of the

dairy industry. According to Porter's five forces analysis model, if companies have more bargaining power, it can lead to a reduction in market share and profitability. A company with greater bargaining power can gain advantages such as higher profitability, less competition, and a competitive advantage in product development due to better sourcing of raw materials and new technologies. Increasing market share can be considered an important indicator of a company's competitive position and its ability to generate profit. The ability to increase market share can result from various factors such as offering superior products or services, effective marketing and advertising, efficient operations, and effective pricing strategies. However, it is important to note that increasing market share is not always a reliable indicator of long-term success. While a company may be able to gain market share in the short term through aggressive pricing or other tactics, if it fails to address fundamental issues such as product quality, customer satisfaction, etc., it may not be able to sustain this growth in the long term. Increasing market share is presented as an important goal for dairy companies. Marketing managers should focus on product quality and customer satisfaction, product diversification, presence in new markets, and the use of efficient marketing. These findings are consistent with results reported by other researchers (Ar et al., 2020; Bahari & Taheri rouzbahani, 2023; Honarvar & Rezaee, 2019; Jafari et al., 2017; Sahafzadeh & Haghighi, 2023).

Based on the validation of the paradigm model, the following overall results can be inferred: Hypothesis 1: The competitive environment affects market share development strategies. Utilizing innovation such as developing new products or improving existing ones is an effective strategy for standing out in a competitive market, using modern technologies like pasteurized milk, social media as an essential tool for reaching audiences in today's digital age, understanding consumer needs and behaviors can help identify untapped segments and create a competitive advantage, collaborating with other businesses or brands can create new market opportunities, increase brand recognition, and support market share development strategies, and pricing in the competitive dairy industry market is essential.

Hypothesis 2: Marketing mix elements affect market share development strategies. Adjusting product offerings to align with market demands can positively impact satisfaction, loyalty, and customer retention; companies can set their pricing based on customer behavior, market trends, and competitor prices to effectively position their products and gain a competitive advantage; distribution channels

implemented by dairy companies can help reach potential customers and expand the company's capacity to access new emerging markets; promotional materials, influencer marketing, social media campaigns, and content production can help associate the brand with health and wellness in consumers' minds and positively impact market share.

Hypothesis 3: Competitive strategy affects market share development strategies. Regularly identify and analyze the competitive landscape and both direct and indirect competitors, invest in research and development, create innovative products, improve supply chain management, diversify their product portfolio, and increase their brand value, collaborate with other players in the industry, and examine potential partnerships or mergers to strengthen their market position, focus on market segments that demand low-priced products, use marketing discounts in different geographical areas, produce based on the demand and taste of each of these areas, increase the number of retailers to cover the maximum range of products, and ultimately, focusing on customer retention and loyalty through marketing strategies and effective communication to meet their changing needs and preferences is essential. By doing so, dairy companies can stay ahead of competitors and ensure long-term growth and profitability.

Hypothesis 4: Internal marketing affects market share development strategies. Creating a strong internal culture, enhancing internal collaboration, empowering employees, aligning with company values, and providing incentives are crucial.

Hypothesis 5: Sustainable competitive advantage does not affect the relationship between the competitive environment and market share development strategies.

Hypothesis 6: Sustainable competitive advantage does not affect the relationship between marketing mix elements and market share development strategies, meaning sustainable competitive advantage does not influence the relationship between the competitive environment and market share development strategies in this sample. No similarity with previous studies was found.

Hypothesis 7: Sustainable competitive advantage does not affect the relationship between competitive strategy and market share development strategies.

Hypothesis 8: Sustainable competitive advantage does not affect the relationship between internal marketing and market share development strategies.

Hypothesis 9: Market share development strategies affect advertising. Focusing on target audiences, branding, product

promotion, focusing on key messages, allocating advertising costs, and ultimately using various media are recommended.

Hypothesis 10: Market share development strategies affect market share management. The results of this finding did not match previous studies. Expanding the company's product line, increasing marketing efforts, improving customer services, or entering new markets, setting realistic market share targets and overall business objectives that are aligned and measurable are essential. Dairy companies should regularly monitor their market share, analyze sales data, customer feedback, and consumer behavior trends, adjust pricing, promotional activities, and product offerings to remain competitive and capture a larger share of the market.

Hypothesis 11: Market share development strategies affect brand equity. Focus on maintaining product quality, focus on creating brand awareness through targeted advertising campaigns, social media marketing, and other promotional activities, strengthen customer engagement, create a strong brand identity that includes creating a unique brand story, logo, and slogan that distinguishes the brand and builds brand equity over time, pay attention to customer needs and preferences, build strong relationships with customers through excellent customer services, engage with customers on social media, and offer loyalty programs to encourage repeat purchases are recommended.

Hypothesis twelve: Advertising affects market share increase. Advertising on television networks can help you have the most impact on your audience, advertising on industry-related websites allows you to reach your audience and increase your market share, and offering special discounts, participating in industry events, collaborating with chain stores, and developing new products in the dairy industry are recommended.

Hypothesis thirteen: Market share management affects market share increase. Identifying growth opportunities in different areas and according to that need and product preferences and using creative and attractive advertisements to promote the product are recommended.

Hypothesis fourteen: Brand equity affects market share increase. Creating a brand name, logo, packaging, and other brand elements that are attractive and recognizable to customers, maintaining high standards for production and manufacturing, and ensuring that products meet customer expectations, and offering customer loyalty programs for the dairy industry are recommended.

Hypothesis fifteen: Advertising affects profitability. Before advertising, it is better to analyze the market and

customers, gain information about the needs and popularity of your products, create targeted advertising campaigns to understand customer preferences and buying behavior, focus on the benefits of your products in your advertising campaigns, such as quality, taste, and health benefits, to attract customers and encourage them to buy more. Companies can collaborate with influencers and continuously measure the effectiveness of their advertising campaigns. Companies should consider metrics such as views, click-through rates, sales conversions, and return on investment (ROI), and diversify advertisements.

Hypothesis sixteen: Market share management affects profitability. Regularly monitor market trends and consumer behavior, achieve customer satisfaction, provide exceptional services to customers, including easy ordering and delivery options, responsive customer service support, and timely resolution of customer complaints, invest in technology solutions, and expand production lines are recommended.

Hypothesis seventeen: Brand equity affects profitability. Focus on building a strong brand, such as using images of green farms and healthy, natural breeds, maintaining quality and consistency through meticulous inspection of raw materials, production processes, and packaging stages, obtaining customer feedback, and expanding the product range are recommended.

Hypothesis eighteen: Market share increase affects profitability. Penetrating the market, market analysis, product improvement, product purchase share, customer loyalty programs, increasing public awareness about the benefits of consuming dairy products, collaborating with restaurants and cafes to include dairy products in their menus, developing foreign markets and exports of dairy products, and collaborating with universities and research institutes to research the benefits of consuming dairy products and increase public awareness are recommended.

Based on the results, the following recommendations are made: Regarding causal conditions, it is recommended that dairy companies allocate more funds for research and development and pursue the development of new dairy products. Reviewing and analyzing the product life cycle and offering suitable solutions for optimizing products at each stage of the life cycle are other recommendations provided regarding causal conditions.

Regarding contextual conditions, it is suggested that dairy companies use fair pricing strategies to attract more

customers. Also, various strategies for competing with rivals, improving product quality, reducing prices or offering additional services to customers, and using automation or robotic technologies should be pursued.

Regarding the core phenomenon, it is suggested to use social media advertisements if more customers are young or sell products through urban stores and supermarkets if residing in urban areas. Also, targeting customers with higher income levels for pricing and offering higher prices is recommended.

Regarding intervening conditions, it is suggested that senior managers of dairy companies more seriously follow risk management approaches. Also, using internet and digital distribution channels is another recommendation for dealing with unpredictable conditions.

Regarding strategies, it is suggested that in dairy companies, quality management and control be pursued more seriously. Also, companies can search for better suppliers to obtain raw materials of higher quality or at lower prices, which will be reflected in reducing the final price for the consumer.

Regarding outcomes, it is suggested that dairy companies use the creation of online communities and customer online clubs. Also, conducting periodic surveys of customers will undoubtedly impact the improvement of product quality in dairy companies.

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## Declaration of Interest

The authors of this article declared no conflict of interest.

## Authors Contributions

All authors have contributed significantly to the research process and the development of the manuscript.

## Ethics principles

In this research, ethical standards including obtaining informed consent, ensuring privacy and confidentiality were observed.

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