
**“AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF CUSTOMER AND RETAILER
PERCEPTION TOWARDS SELECTED AMUL DAIRY PRODUCTS”**

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ABSTRACT

This study examines customer and retailer perceptions towards selected Amul dairy products and identifies the major factors influencing customer purchase decisions and retailer preference. The study uses a descriptive research design and combines primary survey data with secondary sources. The final analysis reported in the project covers 159 customer respondents and 50 retailer respondents. Customer perception was measured across product quality, product availability, price, taste and brand image, while retailer perception was examined through product quality, product availability, retailer satisfaction, profit margin and service quality. Customer responses were measured through a five-point Likert scale. The customer questionnaire demonstrated good internal consistency, with Cronbach's Alpha of 0.786. The data were non-normal; therefore, non-parametric Kruskal–Wallis tests were used for group comparisons. Customer perception was strongly positive, with an overall mean of 4.4447, while retailer perception was also positive, with an overall mean of 4.2760. Product quality, taste, price, availability and brand image were important contributors to customer purchase decisions. Retailers highlighted product quality, brand reputation, consumer demand, distribution support and profit margin as important considerations. Significant differences were observed in selected customer groups for availability, price and overall perception, while retailer differences were particularly associated with profit margin across outlet type and business ownership. The study concludes that Amul should preserve its strong quality and brand position while strengthening supply reliability, retailer profitability, promotional support, customer feedback systems and product innovation.

KEYWORDS: Amul, customer perception, retailer perception, dairy products, product quality, product availability, price, brand image, retailer satisfaction, FMCG.

INTRODUCTION

The Indian dairy sector is an important component of the food and agricultural economy, with a broad network covering milk producers, cooperative societies, processing units, distributors, retailers and consumers. Amul, marketed by Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation Ltd. (GCMMF), occupies a distinctive position within this ecosystem because its cooperative structure connects milk producers with the consumer market. The internship report underlying this paper describes Amul as a major dairy brand with a wide product portfolio and a strong distribution presence. It also emphasizes that both customer and retailer perceptions influence commercial outcomes.

Customer perception refers to the way consumers evaluate product quality, freshness, price, taste, availability and brand image before and after purchase. Retailer perception is broader from a channel perspective and includes product quality, product availability, satisfaction with sales, profit margin and service quality. For a dairy brand, these perceptions are particularly important because products may be perishable and depend on continuous distribution and appropriate storage.

The study is therefore designed as a dual-stakeholder investigation. Rather than examining customer behaviour alone, it considers the perceptions of both customers and retailers to provide a more complete view of Amul's market position. The report identifies product quality, taste, price, availability and brand image as major customer-side factors and identifies quality, availability, retailer satisfaction, profit margin and service quality as major retailer-side factors. The research gap identified in the source report is that previous studies have concentrated comparatively more on product quality, price, brand image and customer satisfaction, while retailer-related issues such as trade margins, supply reliability, promotional support, return policies and availability have received less attention. The present study addresses this gap by examining both stakeholder groups within one research framework.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study customer perception towards selected Amul dairy products.
- To analyse retailer perception towards selected Amul dairy products.
- To identify the factors influencing customer purchase decisions.
- To examine the factors influencing retailer preference for Amul products.

- To evaluate the impact of product quality, price, availability, packaging and brand image on customer perception.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Prakash (2017) examined consumer perception towards Amul dairy products using a structured questionnaire among 180 consumers in Rohtak. The study identified product quality, taste, hygiene and brand name as major factors contributing to preference and reported high satisfaction with the quality and purity of Amul products.

Palanichamy et al. (2024) studied brand personality and consumer attitude towards Amul dairy products among 120 consumers in Coimbatore. Their analysis identified activity, simplicity, responsibility and emotionality as dimensions of Amul brand personality, with activity showing a strong positive relationship with consumer attitude. The study indicates that brand personality can contribute to emotional connection and loyalty.

Mwangi and Kihoro (2016) investigated factors influencing milk-brand choice in Nairobi. Quality, taste, price and availability were among the important attributes considered by consumers, showing the relevance of functional product and retail factors in dairy purchase decisions.

Rani and Ali (2020) discussed retailer acceptance and consumer behaviour in the milk-products context and highlighted the role of cooperative dairy structures and consumer buying behaviour. Trivedi et al. (2024) examined retailer insights related to Amul fresh milk products in Anand and Vidyanagar, reinforcing the relevance of distribution and retailer experience in dairy marketing.

Mojeedra et al. (2023) studied retailer satisfaction in selling Amul milk in Vadodara and used convenience sampling among retailers. The study provides direct support for examining retailer satisfaction as a separate dimension of dairy-channel performance. Isher et al. (2017) also examined retailer satisfaction towards Amul's distribution channel in Jammu. Recent work included in the source report further indicates that price, brand image and product quality can influence customer loyalty and repurchase intentions, while perceived quality and brand image can be important in strengthening loyalty. Collectively, the literature supports the importance of customer-side attributes while also indicating a need for stronger integration of retailer-side variables.

RESEARCH GAP AND CONCEPTUAL FOCUS

- The literature reviewed in the project shows strong attention to customer perception, product quality, brand image, price, taste and satisfaction. However, retailer perceptions are less consistently integrated with customer perceptions in the same study. Retailer profitability, supply reliability, promotional support and service quality can directly influence stocking and recommendation behaviour, yet these channel variables are often examined separately. The present study therefore adopts a combined customer–retailer perspective.

For customers, the analytical dimensions are product quality, product availability, price, taste and brand image. For retailers, the dimensions are product quality, product availability, retailer satisfaction, profit margin and service quality. This framework allows the study to connect market-facing perceptions with channel-facing perceptions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design: The study adopts a descriptive research design because the purpose is to describe and analyse opinions, attitudes, preferences and perceptions of customers and retailers towards selected Amul dairy products. The source report states that primary data were collected through structured questionnaires and secondary information was drawn from books, research journals, company reports, annual reports, websites, government publications and previous studies.

Sampling: The report describes non-probability convenience sampling, selecting accessible and willing customers who regularly purchase selected Amul products and retailers who stock and sell the products. Although the methodology chapter mentions a proposed sample of 150 customers and 30 retailers, the final analysis contains 159 customer responses and 50 retailer responses. This paper uses the final analysed sample sizes so that reported results correspond to the actual analysis.

Measurement: Customer perceptions were measured using five-point Likert-scale statements across five dimensions: product quality, product availability, price, taste and brand image. The customer instrument contained 20 Likert-scale items. Retailer perception was measured across product quality, product availability, retailer satisfaction, profit margin and service quality.

Data analysis: The source report used Microsoft Excel and SPSS for classification, coding, tabulation and analysis. Descriptive statistics included frequencies, percentages and mean scores. Reliability was examined using Cronbach's Alpha. Because the data were reported as

non-normal, Kruskal–Wallis non-parametric tests were used to examine differences across demographic and business groups.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Customer Profile and Perception

The customer sample comprised 159 respondents, of whom 129 were male and 30 were female, representing approximately 81% and 19%, respectively. The largest age group was 21–30 years, with 93 respondents (about 58%). The source report notes that the higher male representation was partly associated with the timing and accessibility of respondents during data collection.

Customer measure	N	Mean
High quality	159	4.5283
Hygienically packaged	159	4.4151
Meets expectations	159	4.3585
Overall quality	159	4.4654
Easily available	159	4.5094
Usually find product	159	4.4528
Reasonable price	159	4.3774
Good value for money	159	4.4277
Taste like Amul	159	4.4340
Positive brand image	159	4.4403
Reliable brand	159	4.5094
Overall customer perception	159	4.4447

The customer item means were consistently high, ranging approximately from 4.36 to 4.53. The overall customer perception mean was 4.4447, indicating a strongly favourable perception. The source report also indicates relatively low dispersion for most customer items, with responses concentrated toward Agree and Strongly Agree.

The strongest individual customer perception was associated with the statement that Amul products are of consistently high quality (mean 4.5283). Easy availability and reliable brand perception also recorded means of 4.5094. These results suggest that quality, accessibility and brand trust form major strengths in the customer experience.

Reliability and Normality

Test	Result	Interpretation
Cronbach's Alpha	0.786	Good internal consistency
Standardized Alpha	0.787	Good internal consistency
Customer sample	159	Valid responses
Measurement items	20	Five customer dimensions

The customer questionnaire produced Cronbach's Alpha of 0.786 and standardized Alpha of 0.787. The source report interprets these values as reliable because they exceed the commonly used 0.70 threshold. The normality analysis reported non-normal data, which supported the use of non-parametric tests for group comparisons.

Customer Kruskal–Wallis Results

Grouping variable	Significant customer dimensions	p-value
Age	Product availability	0.045
Marital status	Price	0.004
Occupation	Availability; Price; Overall perception	0.031; <0.001; 0.035
Monthly income	Price	0.027
Education	None	>0.05

The Kruskal–Wallis results show that customer perceptions are not uniformly different across all demographic groups. Age was significantly associated with product-availability perception ($p=0.045$). Marital status was significantly associated with price perception ($p=0.004$). Occupation was associated with product availability, price and overall perception, while monthly income was associated with price perception ($p=0.027$). Education did not show significant differences across the measured customer dimensions.

Retailer Perception

The final retailer analysis included 50 respondents. The descriptive results show a favourable outlook across the five retailer dimensions. The overall retailer perception mean was 4.2760 with a standard deviation of approximately 0.451. Product quality recorded the strongest individual item mean of 4.64, indicating strong retailer confidence in the quality of Amul products.

Retailer dimension	Overall interpretation	Evidence from analysis
Product quality	Positive	Highest item mean 4.64
Product availability	Positive	Favourable responses overall
Retailer satisfaction	Positive	Favourable overall mean pattern
Profit margin	Positive but sensitive	Significant variation by outlet/ownership
Service quality	Positive	Favourable responses overall
Overall perception	Positive	Mean = 4.2760

Retailers reported positive perceptions of product quality and were generally satisfied with the sale and distributor services associated with Amul. However, the report also identifies operational concerns such as delays in receiving products and differences in perceptions of profit margins across types of retail outlets.

Retailer Kruskal–Wallis Results

Grouping variable	Dimension	H	p-value	Decision
Age	Overall perception	4.245	0.374	Not significant
Education	Overall perception	3.350	0.187	Not significant
Retail outlet	Profit margin	8.670	0.034	Significant
Business ownership	Profit margin	5.768	0.016	Significant
Business ownership	Overall perception	3.919	0.048	Significant

Retailer perceptions did not differ significantly by age or education. In contrast, profit-margin perception differed significantly across retail-outlet types ($p=0.034$) and business ownership categories ($p=0.016$). Overall retailer perception also differed significantly by business ownership ($p=0.048$). The findings indicate that commercial conditions, particularly profitability, are more sensitive to retailer structure than general product-quality perceptions.

DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that Amul has a strong positive perception among both customers and retailers in the surveyed sample. The customer overall mean of 4.4447 and retailer overall mean of 4.2760 show that the brand performs well on core product and channel dimensions. The customer findings are consistent with the literature reviewed in the source report, where quality, taste, hygiene, brand name and availability repeatedly appear as important dairy-purchase factors.

Product quality is the most consistently strong dimension. Customers reported high agreement that Amul products are high quality, hygienically packaged and capable of meeting expectations. Retailers similarly gave the highest item-level mean to product quality. This suggests that quality is a shared strength across the demand and distribution sides of the market. Availability is another important strength, but the demographic tests show that perceptions of availability are not identical across all customer groups. The significant age and occupation results suggest that access conditions may vary by consumer profile or purchasing context. For

a perishable product category, maintaining consistent supply remains important because stockouts can affect both customer satisfaction and retailer confidence.

Price is positively perceived overall, but it is also the most sensitive customer variable across several demographic comparisons. Significant differences were observed by marital status, occupation and income. This means that although customers generally consider Amul products reasonably priced, price-value judgments can vary across consumer segments.

On the retailer side, the most important managerial issue is profitability. The significant differences in profit-margin perception across outlet types and ownership categories indicate that a uniform retailer strategy may not produce the same response in every channel. Amul can therefore benefit from differentiated retailer support, clearer trade communication and stronger attention to outlet-specific commercial realities.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

- Maintain product quality and freshness through regular quality checks, hygiene controls and continuous monitoring across procurement, processing, storage and retail handling.
- Strengthen distribution and inventory management so that stock shortages and delivery delays are minimized across urban, semi-urban and rural retail outlets.
- Review retailer profitability and communicate trade margins clearly, especially where outlet type and business ownership create different expectations.
- Improve retailer relationship management through periodic meetings, faster grievance resolution, timely distributor support and regular feedback collection.
- Provide retailers with adequate promotional material, product information and point-of-sale support to strengthen product visibility and recommendation behaviour.
- Use television, digital media and social platforms to communicate product quality, nutritional benefits and new-product information while maintaining the established Amul brand identity.
- Continue developing products that respond to changing lifestyles and health-conscious demand, including value-added and protein-oriented dairy products where commercially appropriate.
- Strengthen customer complaint and feedback systems so that quality, availability and service concerns are captured and resolved promptly.
- Use customer segmentation when reviewing price communication because price perception differs significantly across selected demographic groups.

- Maintain innovation in packaging, distribution and digital/e-commerce channels without weakening the cooperative brand positioning that supports consumer trust.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that customer and retailer perceptions towards selected Amul dairy products are strongly positive within the surveyed sample. Customers particularly appreciate product quality, hygiene, availability, taste, reasonable price and brand reliability. Retailers also express favourable views, especially regarding product quality, consumer demand, distribution support and the overall commercial value of selling Amul products.

The study also demonstrates that positive overall perception does not mean that all respondent groups think identically. Customer price perceptions vary significantly across marital status, occupation and income, while availability perceptions vary across age and occupation. Among retailers, profit-margin perceptions vary across outlet types and business ownership, and overall retailer perception also differs by business ownership. These findings make retailer profitability and channel-specific support important areas for management attention.

Overall, Amul's strong product quality and brand image provide a solid foundation for sustained market performance. To maintain this position, the company should focus not only on consumers but also on the economic and operational needs of retailers. Better supply reliability, differentiated retailer support, stronger feedback systems, promotional assistance and product innovation can help reinforce satisfaction and loyalty across both stakeholder groups.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

- The study is limited to selected Amul dairy products and therefore may not represent the full Amul portfolio.
- The sample is based on convenience sampling, so the findings should not be generalized to all customers and retailers across India.
- The study relies on respondent perceptions, which are subjective and may change with market conditions or recent product experiences.
- The geographic scope is limited to the study area covered during the internship project.
- Future studies can use probability sampling and larger, geographically diverse samples.
- Future research can apply regression, structural equation modelling or multi-group analysis to examine causal relationships among perception, satisfaction, loyalty and purchase intention.

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