



A Study of Market Survey, Retailer Engagement and Brand Awareness Activities in the Indian Dairy Industry: A Case Study of Govind Milk and Milk Products, Pune

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Abstract

Retail availability and brand recognition shape the fortunes of regional dairy brands in India, yet few studies document how routine field activities contribute to both. This paper examines the market survey, retailer engagement and brand awareness work carried out for Govind Milk and Milk Products in Pune during an On-the-Job Training (OJT) assignment from 15 May to 15 July 2026. The four objectives were to document product availability and visibility, examine retailer requirements, complaints and lead-generation opportunities, assess consumer responses during society-based activities, and identify practical challenges and improvements. A descriptive and exploratory design was used. Primary data came from field observations, retailer and consumer interactions, Google Forms entries and GPS-tagged photographs, supported by peer-reviewed literature and official sources. A practical field-coverage approach, not probability sampling, was followed. The field team visited 460 outlets (200 grocery shops, 120 medical shops and 140 bakeries), reported 200+ leads and 90 complaints, and interacted with 550+ consumers in two residential societies; a separate analytical base of 220 was used for selected indicators. Ghee, chaas, basundi, curd and buttermilk were commonly observed as available, curd attracted notable consumer interest, and shoppers frequently compared Govind with Amul. Retailer time constraints and limited brand awareness were the main practical barriers. The paper recommends structured lead and complaint

tracking, a retailer communication kit, availability monitoring, a clear differentiation message and measurable performance indicators. The findings are descriptive and are not statistically representative of Pune or the Indian dairy market.

Keywords: dairy marketing, retailer engagement, brand awareness, market survey, FMCG, regional brands

1. Introduction

India is the world's largest milk producer. Official statistics estimate production at 247.87 million tonnes in 2024–25, a rise of 3.58% over 239.30 million tonnes in 2023–24, with Maharashtra among the leading producing states (Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying [MoFAHD], 2025). Scale of supply, however, does not guarantee success for an individual brand. In fresh and value-added categories such as curd, buttermilk, ghee and traditional desserts, many brands offer similar basic products, so purchase depends on whether the product is on the shelf, how its price and quality are perceived, and whether the buyer recognises and trusts the name. Because dairy products are bought frequently from nearby outlets, the retailer is a decisive point of contact.

Three activities connect these concerns. Market surveys record what is actually stocked, requested and complained about. Retailer engagement turns a single visit into a working relationship that supports display and recommendation.



Direct consumer interaction builds awareness and allows trial. Regional brands pursue all three while competing against nationally recognised names; in Pune, the OJT observed Amul as the strongest reference brand, with Gokul and Chitale also present.

Govind Milk and Milk Products is a Maharashtra dairy company with a corporate office in Baner, Pune and a manufacturing headquarters in Phaltan (Govind Milk and Milk Products, n.d.). Its portfolio spans milk, curd, chaas, ghee, paneer, lassi, basundi, shrikhand and related products, and its stated positioning is value to farmers and quality to consumers. The author worked with its Pune team on market research and brand awareness. This paper converts that experience into a structured case study. It reviews relevant scholarship, states the gap the case addresses, describes the method, analyses the reported figures, and offers recommendations while separating field observation from published evidence and from the author's interpretation.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Consumer preferences for dairy products

Studies of dairy choice consistently point to quality, price and availability. A review of more than twenty articles found that quality and nutrient content were the major influences on dairy choice, with price significant and promotion following in the marketing mix (Parasuraman et al., 2021). A multiple-regression study of Indian consumers likewise identified quality, health consciousness, price and availability as the strongest influences (Bahety et al., 2024). Research in a retail setting in Chennai reported that product safety and taste were the main reasons for buying at university outlets, which ranked third as a source after supermarkets and specialised outlets (Shree et al., 2025). Evidence from Poland ranked sensory and functional impressions and the use-by date highest while confirming that marketing stimuli also matter (Grębowiec, 2021), and a logistic-regression study of ghee in Bengaluru linked brand preference to flavour, shelf life and consumption experience among other factors (Sivaram, 2016).

These studies are useful but limited. Most rely on stated preferences from consumer samples in a few cities, and the review by Parasuraman et al. (2021) synthesises earlier work rather than collecting new data. They rarely observe what retailers stock. Awareness research is more suggestive: 53% of 1,112 Bengaluru consumers knew of probiotic dairy products but only 23% consumed them (Kumar et al., 2026), and a pan-India yogurt study ($n = 409$) described a push-marketing market in which friends and relatives were the main information source and supermarkets the main purchase point (Singh et al., 2026). Both suggest that awareness and purchase can diverge, though their samples differ from the grocery, medical and bakery outlets covered here.

2.2 Brand awareness, equity, value and loyalty

Keller (1993) places awareness and brand associations at the centre of customer-based brand equity, and Aaker (1996) and Yoo and Donthu (2001) operationalised equity through measurable dimensions. For frequently bought goods, awareness works as a decision shortcut: aware brands are favoured in choice, particularly when other information is scarce (Hoyer & Brown, 1990; Macdonald & Sharp, 2000). Zeithaml (1988) showed that perceived value reflects the trade-off between perceived quality and price rather than price alone, while Oliver (1999) argued that satisfaction is necessary but not sufficient for loyalty. These works are conceptual or measurement-oriented, largely consumer-level, and none addresses a regional dairy brand competing for shelf space.

2.3 Retailer engagement and channel relationships

Trust and commitment are central to successful long-term exchange relationships (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), and retail buyers' trust in a vendor shapes long-term orientation (Ganesan, 1994). In Indian food retailing, retailer awareness, association, perceived quality and loyalty were positively related to purchase intention (Das, 2014). The common limitation is that these studies measure perceptions through surveys; they do not document the field routine through which a regional supplier builds trust with small outlets.

2.4 Promotions, sampling and trial

Advertising and trade promotions interact with existing brand loyalty (Agrawal, 1996), and retailer-branded promotions can raise purchase intent beyond generic offers (Hamlin et al., 2012). Free-sample experiments found measurable sales effects lasting up to twelve months, although effectiveness varied widely even between brands in one category (Bawa



& Shoemaker, 2004). These results come from other product categories and markets, which cautions against assuming equivalent effects for society stalls in Pune.

2.5 Customer relationship management and integrated communication

Payne and Frow (2005) frame customer relationship management as cross-functional processes that use customer information to create value, and Duncan and Moriarty (1998) argue that consistent, interactive communication across touchpoints sustains relationships. Both are conceptual. Applied to this case, they imply that leads and complaints should be recorded, owned and followed up, and that brochures, conversations, stalls and digital reporting should carry one coherent message.

3. Research Gap

Gap identified from the literature. Within the sources reviewed for this paper, dairy research concentrates on consumer preference surveys, and channel and relationship research is largely conceptual or drawn from other sectors. None of the reviewed sources documents, for a regional dairy brand, how retailer-level surveys, availability checks, lead generation, complaint capture and society-based promotion operate together as marketing execution. A systematic database search would be needed to confirm that no such study exists.

Assumptions that remain untested. This paper does not test whether retailer visits raise awareness, whether leads convert into orders, whether complaint capture improves availability, or whether stall interest, such as that shown for curd, becomes purchase. These are propositions for future research, not findings.

4. Research Objectives

1. To study the availability and market visibility of selected Govind Milk products across retail outlets in Pune.
2. To examine retailer requirements, complaints and lead-generation opportunities related to Govind products.
3. To assess customer responses to Govind products during society-based brand awareness activities.
4. To identify challenges affecting retailer acceptance and consumer awareness and recommend practical marketing improvements.

5. Research Methodology

Design and setting. The study is descriptive, because it documents coverage, availability, complaints and consumer interactions, and exploratory, because it seeks reasons for retailer resistance and consumer questions (Malhotra, 2019). Fieldwork took place in Pune, Maharashtra, from 15 May 2026 to 15 July 2026, covering assigned routes and two residential societies.

Data sources. Primary data comprise field observations, retailer interactions, consumer interactions, reported leads, complaints and product availability observations. Secondary data comprise peer-reviewed publications, official company information and government statistics.

Sampling and analytical base. A practical field-coverage approach was followed; outlets were visited as part of assigned routes, and no probability sampling was used. Two figures must be kept apart. The field team visited 460 outlets. Separately, the OJT report applies an analytical base of 220 retailer interactions for selected calculations, and it does not state how those 220 relate to the 460 visits. They are therefore not treated as one sample.

Tools and analysis. Tools were retailer conversations supported by a product brochure, Google Forms, field notes, GPS-tagged photographs and the company reporting group. A ten-item retailer checklist (Appendix A) structured each visit. Analysis uses counts, percentages, tables, charts and thematic interpretation of observations. No inferential statistics are reported.



6. Data Analysis and Results

6.1 Outlet coverage

Table 1 and Figure 1 show the 460 outlets visited. Grocery shops formed the largest group, followed by bakeries and medical shops, indicating coverage across three outlet types rather than reliance on one.

Table 1

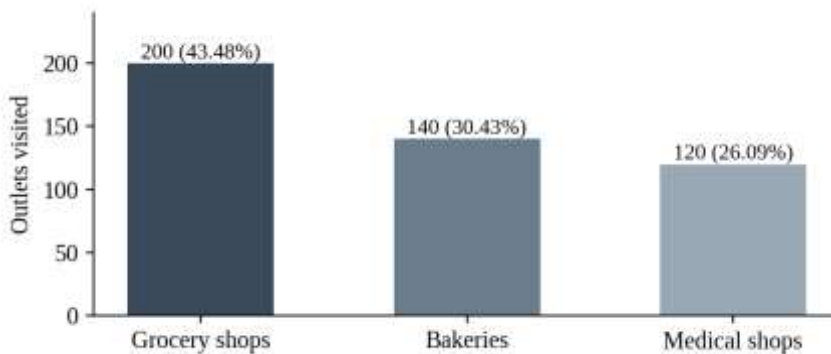
Retail Outlets Visited by Type

Outlet type	Visits	Share of 460 (%)
Grocery shops	200	43.48
Medical shops	120	26.09
Bakeries	140	30.43
Total	460	100.00

Source: OJT field records. Percentages are shares of the 460 outlets visited.

Figure 1

Outlet Coverage by Type (n = 460)



Source: OJT field records.

6.2 Reported activity indicators

Table 2 and Figure 2 present activity indicators reported against the analytical base of 220. The percentages are arithmetic ratios for reference only. The counts of leads, complaints and non-selling shops may overlap, are not mutually exclusive categories, and come from a base that is not the 460 outlets. They should not be read as market share, conversion or complaint rates.

Table 2

Reported Indicators Relative to the Analytical Base of 220

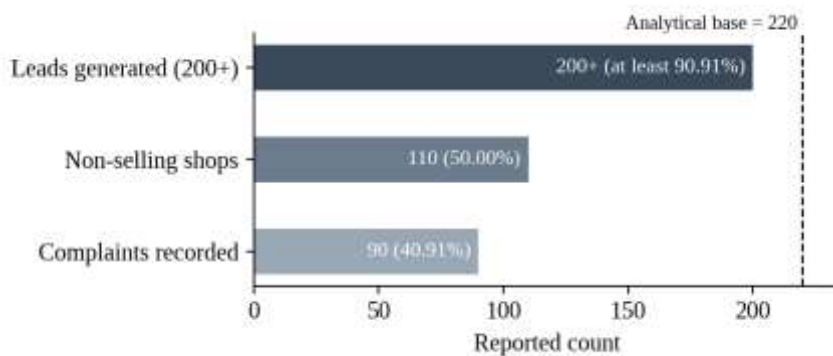
Indicator	Count	Ratio to 220 (%)	Reading
Non-selling shops	110	50.00	Reported in the specified comparison
Leads generated	200+	At least 90.91	Activity indicator; may overlap
Complaints recorded	90	40.91	Activity indicator; may overlap

Source: OJT field records. Ratios computed as count ÷ 220.



Figure 2

Reported Indicators Against the Analytical Base of 220



Note: Bars show reported counts; they are not mutually exclusive. *Source:* OJT field records.

6.3 Findings by objective

Objective 1: availability and visibility. Ghee, chaas, basundi, curd and buttermilk were commonly observed as available. Milk, milkshake, lassi, shrikhand, cheese and paneer were promoted during field activity. Product-wise availability counts were not recorded in the report, so no availability rate is calculated, and 110 outlets were reported as non-selling in the specified comparison.

Objective 2: requirements, complaints and leads. More than 200 leads arose from retailer requirements and interest in stocking Govind products, and 90 complaints were recorded through Google Forms. The report does not classify the complaints or state how many leads were followed up, so neither conversion nor complaint resolution can be assessed.

Objective 3: consumer responses. Two society stalls produced more than 550 consumer interactions. Curd drew strong interest, and consumers asked whether Govind was better than Amul and what made it different. Price and promotional offers, perceived quality, taste, brand familiarity and curiosity appeared to draw attention. No purchase counts, respondent profiles or satisfaction scores were captured.

Objective 4: challenges. Retailers were often busy and unable to discuss products in detail, some did not stock Govind, some showed little interest, consumers had limited awareness, and verifying information was difficult. Amul was the strongest competitive reference, with Gokul and Chitale also observed. These observations come from field interactions, not a formal competitor study.

7. Discussion

This section separates what was observed from what published research suggests. The links are interpretive and imply no causation.

Availability and value. *Observed:* availability varied by outlet, and consumers asked for reasons to choose the brand. *Literature:* availability, quality and price are recurring purchase factors (Bahety et al., 2024; Parasuraman et al., 2021), and perceived value reflects the quality–price trade-off (Zeithaml, 1988). The questions asked at the stalls are consistent with consumers weighing value, which suggests that a clear value message could matter as much as price.

Awareness. *Observed:* many consumers and retailers compared Govind with Amul, which the OJT identified as the strongest competitive reference. *Literature:* awareness can act as a decision shortcut for repeat-purchase goods (Hoyer & Brown, 1990; Macdonald & Sharp, 2000), and awareness may exceed consumption (Kumar et al., 2026). Interest in curd at the stalls is therefore best treated as an early signal, not evidence of purchase.

Retailer relationships. *Observed:* time pressure limited retailer conversations, and stocking varied. *Literature:* trust and commitment underpin lasting exchange relationships (Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Ganesan, 1994), and retailer perceptions relate to purchase intention (Das, 2014). Brief, repeated and consistent visits are a plausible way to build such trust, but this study did not test it.

Promotion and follow-up. *Observed:* stall offers attracted attention, and leads and complaints were logged digitally. *Literature:* sampling can have lasting sales effects that vary by brand (Bawa & Shoemaker, 2004), promotions interact



with loyalty (Agrawal, 1996), and relationship management depends on using recorded customer information (Payne & Frow, 2005). Without follow-up data, the value of the 200+ leads and 90 complaints remains unquantified.

8. Recommendations

The following proposals are drawn from the observations and literature above. None has been implemented, and no results are claimed.

Table 3

Recommendations, Implementation and Measures

Recommendation	What to do and how	What to measure
Retailer communication and product knowledge	Give field staff a one-page kit with product benefits, comparison points and ordering steps; schedule repeat visits so short conversations remain consistent.	Retailers able to name key products; repeat-visit coverage
Outlet-level visibility	Agree basic display points (shelf position, brochure, signage) with retailers during visits and record them with the GPS photograph.	Share of visited outlets meeting the display standard
Structured lead follow-up	Extend the Google Form with owner, status (new, contacted, converted, pending, closed) and next-action date; review weekly.	Leads contacted within an agreed time; leads converted
Complaint tracking	Classify complaints (availability, delivery, quality, other), assign an owner and record closure.	Complaints by category; average days to closure
Society demonstrations	Use a repeatable stall format with trial, a clear offer and QR or form-based lead capture; follow up after the event.	Interactions, trials and enquiries per event
Differentiation and value	Prepare a few proof points per category (quality, price-value, variety, heritage) and use them in all materials.	Prompted brand recall; recurrence of the comparison question
Availability and feedback monitoring	Keep an outlet matrix of products stocked, out of stock and retailer requests, updated at each visit.	Out-of-stock incidence; stocking gaps closed
Performance indicators	Set targets for coverage, lead conversion, complaint closure and availability, reviewed monthly.	Indicator trends against baseline

Source: Author's recommendations based on OJT observations and cited literature.

9. Limitations and Future Research

The study used field coverage rather than a probability sample, so results cannot be generalised. The geography is limited to assigned Pune routes and the period to two months. The 460-outlet coverage and the 220 analytical base are different figures, the relationship between them is not documented, and leads, complaints and non-selling shops may overlap. Retailer statements were largely verbal and could not always be verified, no sales or market-share data were available, and customer-level survey data are incomplete; there are no purchase counts or respondent profiles.

Future work could use structured questionnaires with a representative consumer sample, validated brand-awareness scales (for example Yoo & Donthu, 2001), retailer interviews on acceptance and stocking decisions, and longitudinal tracking of lead conversion, complaint closure and availability before and after the proposed interventions.



10. Conclusion

This paper examined how market surveys, retailer engagement and society-based activities supported brand awareness for a regional dairy brand in Pune. Coverage was broad (460 outlets), activity was substantial (200+ leads, 90 complaints, 550+ consumer interactions), and curd, price-value and the comparison with Amul stood out at consumer level, while retailer time and limited awareness were the main barriers. Because the evidence is descriptive, the findings indicate where attention is needed and not what produced any outcome. For regional dairy marketing, the implication is that field activity becomes valuable when it is recorded, followed up and measured. For the author, the OJT showed that a market survey involves route planning, listening, documentation and follow-up, not only a questionnaire.



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Appendix A: Retailer Interaction Checklist Used in the Field

Table A1

Retailer Interaction Checklist

No.	Field recorded
1	Name and type of outlet
2	Area / location
3	Are Govind products available?
4	Which Govind products are available?
5	Which products are most in demand?
6	Any product requirement?
7	Potential lead or order?
8	Any complaint or issue?
9	Which competitor brands are stocked?
10	Retailer comments and suggestions

Source: OJT retailer interaction instrument.