A STUDY ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION TOWARDS RETAIL STORES IN TIRUCHIRAPPALLI TOWN

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Abstract: *Customer satisfaction is widely recognized as a key pressure in the information of customers future purchase intentions. Satisfied customers are also likely to tell others favourable experience and thus engage in positive work of mouth advertising. The present study aims to investigate customer satisfaction in the organised retail stores in the Tiruchirappalli city of Tamil Nadu state in India. The objectives are to identify the decisive factors which can help those retail stores to retain the existing customers and to study the future prospects of retail stores in Tiruchirappalli town. Customer satisfaction is a major subject in the marketing strategies. A total of 375 questionnaires have been randomly distributed to retail customers. Using descriptive statistics method cross table analysis and one way ANOVA f test   in this study the result of this analysis suggests the degree of customer satisfaction in terms of services provided by the organised retail stores in Tiruchirappalli Town.*

Key words: *Retailing concepts, Retail stores, Customer satisfaction*

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INTRODUCTION

RETAILING

Retail is derived from the French word "retailer". It means to cut off a piece or to break bulk. Retailer is defined as dealer or trader who sells goods in small quantities, or one who repeats or relates. Retailing is the last stage in movement of goods or services to the consumer. Retailing can thus be defined as consisting of all such activities involved in the marketing of goods and services directly to the consumer.

Retailing encompasses the business activities involved in selling goods and services to consumers for their personal, family or household use. It includes every sale to the final consumer – ranging from cars to apparel to meals at restaurants to movie tickets. Retailing is the last stage in the distribution process.

Retailing today is at a fascinating crossroads. On the one hand, retail sales are at their highest point in history. Wal-Mart is now the leading company in the world in terms of sales—ahead of Exxon Mobil, General Motors and other manufacturing giants. New technologies are improving retail productivity. There are lots of opportunities to start a new retail business—or work for an existing one—and to become a franchisee. Global retailing possibilities abound. On the other hand retailers face numerous challenges. Many consumers are bored with shopping or do not have much time for it. Some locales have too many stores, and retailers often spur one; another into frequent price cutting (and low profit margin). Customer service expectations are high at a time when more retailers offer self –service and automated systems at the same time, some retailers remain unsure what to do with the Web; they are still grappling with the emphasis to place on image enhancement, customer information and feedback, and sales transactions.

RETAILING CONCEPTS

Target stores have a sincere long-term desire to please customers. In doing so, it uses a customer-centered, candid approach to strategy development and implementation; it is value-driven; and it has clear goals. Together, these four principles form the retailing concept, which should be understood and applied by all retailers:

❖ **Customer orientation:** The retailer determines the attributes and needs of its customers and endeavour to satisfy these needs to the fullest.

❖ **Coordinated effort:** The retailer integrates all plans and activities to maximize efficiency.

❖ **Value-driven:** The retailer offers good value to customers, whether it be upscale or discounted. This means having prices appropriate for the level of products and customer service.

❖ **Goal orientation:** The retailer sets goals and then uses its strategy to attain them.
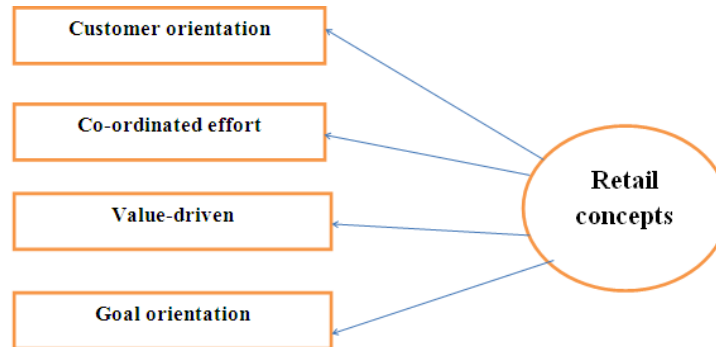
GROWTH OF RETAIL INDUSTRY IN INDIA

The Indian retail sector has been boxing with job opportunities. Some of the big players on the field like the Big Bazaar, J.C. Penny, Tesco, Shopper's top Reliance, subhiksha, I.T.C. are all competing in the retail chain's business. The Government's nod recently, for the entry of multinational companies like Wal–Mart, etc. In the Indian retail sector has opened up a plethora of job opportunities in this field. There are numerous opportunities in this field. D apart from becoming a retail manager one can load for becoming floor managers where the job is to maintain the individual floor, inventory manager looking and managing the inventory in the store, shopping operational manager looking towards the replacement of the stock and customer service. The retailing sector in India is highly fragmented and consists predominantly of small, independent. An owner-managed e shops. There are some 12 million retail outlets in India. Besides, the country is also dotted with low-cost kiosks and pushcarts.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

"**SATISFACTION** is a person's feelings to pleasure or disappointment resulting from comparing a product's perceived performance (or outcome) in relation to his or her expectations".

As this definition makes it clear, satisfaction is a function of perceived performance and expectations. If the performance falls short of expectations, the customer is dissatisfied. If the performance matches the expectations, the customer is satisfied, if the performance exceeds expectations; the customer is highly satisfied or delighted.

Customer satisfaction occurs when the value and customer service provided through a retailing experience meet or exceed consumer expectations. If the expectations of value and customer service are not met, the consumer will be dissatisfied: "Retail satisfaction consists of three categories: "shopping systems satisfaction which includes selection and actual purchasing of products; and consumer satisfaction derived from the use of the product. Dissatisfaction with any of the three aspects could lead to customer disloyalty, decrease in sales, and erosion of the market share."

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

✓ To identify decisive factors which can help these retail stores to retain the existing customers.

✓ To study the future prospects of retail stores in Tiruchirappalli.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

➢ **Research Design :**

A descriptive study was undertaken in order to know the satisfaction level of the customers towards organized retail stores in Tiruchirappalli district.

➢ **Questionnaire of the study :**

The questionnaire formed an integral part of this research. It as a mix of both closed ended and open-ended questions. Also questions about rating the choices of the respondent were also included. The first part of the questionnaire was designed to obtain information about the personal details. The second part was framed by using the Liker type scale to examine the perception and satisfaction of customers regarding selected organised retail stores in Tiruchirappalli town.

➢ **Sampling techniques:**

The selection criteria were based upon the data availability, convenience and the level of participation. Hence, the investigator chose convenience sampling   for this study among the various sampling methods.

> ➤ **Data Collection:**

This study was covered with both primary and secondary data. The primary data were collected from 375 respondents relating to the selected, organized retail stores in Tiruchirappalli town and also secondary data were collected from the magazines, Journals, News paper and websites.

> ➤ **Sampling Size:**

The research investigator has adopted a convenience   sampling method from the collected information of 375 respondents   Tiruchirappalli. The researcher was selected five organised retail stores from this District. From each retail store, 75 respondents have taken for this study is known the satisfaction level of the customers regarding these stores in Tiruchirappalli town.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Chattopadhya et.al., (2010) stated that India is a home of small traditional stores (STS). They conducted the research in four cities viz., Mumbai, Kolkata, Aligarh and Vizag. The results showed that modern retailing makes rapid inroads in India, most STS outlets are resilient in terms of their service mix and remain competitive. Shoppers, even in large metro cities, are still loyal to neighborhood STS outlets.

An article published about the Retail industry in India in Economic Times (2010) stated that the retail businesses in India also need to focus on nurturing the customers base to enhance the profitability of the retail firms and contribute to their superior performance.

Kalia and Kalia (2011) opined that the share of the unorganized Kirans will come down in the future, and the share of the organised sector will go up because o its efficiency in buying and distributing , but retailers must find the USP of these sectors, because this sin an extremely low margin business, and ultimately, everybody had to sell within the cost.

Malik (2012) found that the organised retailers need to enhance customer satisfaction in terms of ensuring product quality, store convenience, after sales services, availability of new products and lure buyers with attractive promotional schemes.

PERSONAL AND DEMOGRAPHY FACTOR

Particulars	Tiruchirappalli	
	(n=375)	*(100%)*
Age		
Upto 20yrs	57	15.2%
21 to 30yrs	163	43.5%
31 to 40yrs	128	34.1%
Above 41yrs	27	7.2%
Gender		
Male	197	52.5%
Female	178	47.5%
Educational Qualification		
School Level	37	9.9%
Graduate / Diploma	85	22.7%
Post graduate	164	43.7%
Professional	89	23.7%
Occupation		
Students	75	20.0%
House Wife	27	7.2%
Employed	256	68.3%
Business	13	3.5%
Others	4	1.1%
Family type		
Joint	161	42.9%
Nuclear	214	57.1%
Members in family		
Small (Below 3)	166	44.3%
Medium (4 to 5)	135	36.0%
Large (6 & above)	74	19.7%
Earning members in the family		
One	127	33.9%
Two	132	35.2%
Three	66	17.6%
Four and above	50	13.3%
Monthly Income		
Below Rs.10000	100	26.7%
Rs.10001 to 25000	137	36.5%
Rs.25001 to 50000	103	27.5%
Rs.50001 & above	35	9.3%

Source: Primary data

The above table shows that 43.5% of the respondents were belonged to the age group of 21-30 years; 52.5% of the respondents were male; 43.7% of the respondents had post graduate; 68.3% of the respondent were working in the various institutions. 57.1% of the

respondents were belonging to nuclear family; 42.9% of the respondents were belonging to the joint family; 44.3% of the respondents are having 3 members in their family; 35.2% of the respondents were having two earning members in their family; 36.5% of the respondents had the monthly income of Rupees from 10,001- 20, 000 and 9.3% of the respondents had the monthly income above of Rs.50,000

One way ANOVA –Association between Organized Retail Stores Respondents and their Overall Customer Satisfaction in Tiruchirappalli District

Particulars	Mean	S.D	SS	Df	MS	Statistical inference
1.Facilities						
Between Groups			67.851	4	16.963	F=.666 .616>0.05 Not significant
FSM (n=75)	30.04	6.187				
Kavery (n=75)	30.79	3.595				
Chinthamani (n=75)	30.47	4.150				
Spenser (n=75)	30.79	5.295				
Reliance mart (n=75)	31.33	5.549				
Within Groups			9417.387	370	25.452	
2.Influential						
Between Groups			293.200	4	73.300	F=1.646 .162>0.05 Not significant
FSM (n=75)	40.17	8.462				
Kavery (n=75)	39.67	4.584				
Chinthamani (n=75)	38.99	5.554				
Spenser (n=75)	39.63	6.941				
Reliance mart (n=75)	41.61	7.141				
Within Groups			16475.733	370	44.529	
3.Ambience						
Between Groups			444.443	4	111.111	F=2.257 .063>0.05 Not significant
FSM (n=75)	33.69	7.803				
Kavery (n=75)	34.05	6.430				
Chinthamani (n=75)	34.29	6.104				
Spenser (n=75)	35.19	6.912				
Reliance mart (n=75)	36.73	7.673				
Within Groups			18215.333	370	49.231	
4.Medium used for advertising offers/Schemes						
Between Groups			352.784	4	88.196	F=2.376 .052>0.05 Not significant
FSM (n=75)	22.96	7.636				
Kavery (n=75)	24.60	6.609				
Chinthamani (n=75)	25.09	5.302				
Spenser (n=75)	25.68	4.992				
Reliance mart (n=75)	25.45	5.527				

Particulars	Mean	S.D	SS	Df	MS	Statistical inference
Within Groups			13732.133	370	37.114	
5.Sales promotion techniques						
Between Groups			549.669	4	137.417	F=1.683 .153>0.05 Not significant
FSM (n=75)	35.03	11.510				
Kavery (n=75)	35.35	9.912				
Chinthamani (n=75)	36.60	7.543				
Spenser (n=75)	37.65	7.592				
Reliance mart (n=75)	38.08	7.932				
Within Groups			30205.440	370	81.636	
6.Store performance						
Between Groups			856.731	4	214.183	F=3.438 .009<0.05 Significant
FSM (n=75)	35.28	11.899				
Kavery (n=75)	38.48	5.401				
Chinthamani (n=75)	37.72	4.617				
Spenser (n=75)	37.96	7.223				
Reliance mart (n=75)	39.95	8.203				
Within Groups			23053.627	370	62.307	
7.Quality of staffs						
Between Groups			435.771	4	108.943	F=5.954 .000<0.05 Significant
FSM (n=75)	19.51	6.484				
Kavery (n=75)	22.20	2.726				
Chinthamani (n=75)	21.76	2.808				
Spenser (n=75)	21.81	3.924				
Reliance mart (n=75)	22.60	4.328				
Within Groups			6769.813	370	18.297	
Overall customer satisfaction						
Between Groups			14330.667	4	3582.667	F=2.522 .041<0.05 Significant
FSM (n=75)	216.68	49.137				
Kavery (n=75)	225.13	29.491				
Chinthamani (n=75)	224.92	26.607				
Spenser (n=75)	228.71	38.031				
Reliance Mart (n=75)	235.76	40.789				
Within Groups			525567.733	370	1420.453	

Inference:

From the above table, one was to be understood that there is no association between selected retail stores respondents and their overall customer satisfaction. In Tiruchirappalli district. Hence, the calculated value is lesser than the above table value (p<0.05).

Research hypothesis

There is no association between selected retail stores respondents and their overall customer satisfaction in Tiruchirappalli district.

Null hypothesis

There is an association between selected retail stores respondents and their overall customer satisfaction in Tiruchirappalli district.

Statistical Test

Oneway ANOVA 'f' test was used in the above table.

FINDINGS

The above table reveals that there is no association between selected retail stores respondents and their overall customer satisfaction in Tiruchirappalli district. Hence, the calculated value is lesser than the above table value ($p<0.05$). So the research hypothesis is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

- 43.5% of the respondents were belonged to the age group of 21-30 years;

- 52.5% of the respondents were male; 43.7% of the respondents had post graduate;

- 68.3% of the respondent were working in the various institutions.

- 57.1% of the respondents were belonging to nuclear family;

- 42.9% of the respondents were belonging to the joint family;

- 44.3% of the respondents are having 3 members in their family;

- 35.2% of the respondents were having two earning members in their family;

- 36.5% of the respondents had the monthly income of Rupees from 10,001- 20, 000

- 9.3% of the respondents had the monthly income above of Rs.50,000

CONCLUSION

Retailing is playing a vital role in our Indian economy. Retail store is b part of the retail business. Nowadays, retail stores is being a part of the human beings. It ensures the prosperity of the nation in terms of employment creation and deployment of resources. It is also increase the standard of living of the people. They are providing lot of innovative services to their customers like all things under one roof, desired goods, affordable prices, ambience facility etc.

Hence, the retail stores should adopting   customer- friendly   marketing strategies in terms of selling the best quality products and services continuously to the consumers.

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