Research Paper   **Management**

Customer Preference Towards Selected Retail Stores In Coimbatore City

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ABSTRACT

One of the most important decision problems in the retail market is where to locate a new retail store. The customers usually select a store for shopping according to their own preferences and store locations. In recent years, the supermarket industry has become increasingly competitive. One outcome has been the proliferation of a variety of pricing formats, and considerable debate among academics and practitioners about how these formats affect consumers' store choice behavior.

Keywords : Customer, Retail stores, shopping

NTRODUCTION

Retail store is a large departmental retail establishment offering a relatively broad and complete stock of dry groceries, fresh meat, perishable products and dairy products supplemented by a variety of convenience, non food merchandise and operated primarily on a self-service basis.

A retail store format is more prevalent among all modern retail formats in India. These are neighborhood stores offering home and personal care products and food products that a typical household consumers on a day-to-day basis. These stores are often part of a chain that owns or controls (sometimes by franchise) other retail stores locates in the same or other towns attaining the economies of scale. These stores offer convenience of shopping by making available a large variety of products at one place. Retail stores usually offer products at Low Prices by reducing margins. Certain products (typically staples such as bread, milk, and sugar) are often sold as loss leaders that are with negative margins. To maintain a profit, retail stores attempt to make up for the low margins with a high overall volume of sales and with sales of higher-margin items.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

At present the customers are more dynamic. The factors like high price, after sales services, poor reply enquiry and poor quality of products are highly dissolved their decision. The customer has certain expectation from branded items of its quality, price and services. Further, the retailers are faced various troubles in their retail marketing for finding the customer perception. At this juncture, the research is a need to find out the customer perception about the retail store in Coimbatore city.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

❖ To study the demographic profile of the respondents.
❖ To study the customer perception and preference towards retail stores.
❖ To offer Findings, Suggestions and Conclusion.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study titled as "Customer Preference Towards Selected Retail Stores In Coimbatore City" aims to probe in to the satisfaction derived by the consumers for the use of retail stores and because of the perception and preference towards the retail stores and their level of satisfaction on the various facilities provided by the retail stores. The preference and sat-

isfaction of the consumers on retail stores may be influenced by many factors.

METHODOLOGY

A research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure. Since the percentage approach is more suitable for this research it has been adopted. A data was collected through Primary & Secondary.

TOOLS FOR ANALYSIS:

In this study the raw data collected are classified, edited and tabulated for analysis. The following were the some of the tools used. They are:
1. Simple Percentage Analysis
2. Simple Ranking
3. ANOVA

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

McDermott's (1936) study conducted on 6334 housewife – customers of department stores in the city of Chicago related the factors, which influenced the imageries of Departmental stores in the minds of the customers.

Gordon.E, Greenley, David Shipley (1992), states in this article "A comparative study of operational marketing practices among British Departmental Stores and Supermarket" that there is a death of empirical analysis of how and to what extent British retailers literature and tests prepositions concerning the retail sectors finds many cross-sectorial similarities and many consistent differences which appears to be related to situational conditions in the respective sectors.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:
SIMPLE PERCENTAGE ANALYSING :
GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS

Sex	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Male	81	32.4	32.4
Female	169	67.6	100.0
Total	**250**	**100.0**	

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION
From the above table shows that the gender of the respondents. Out of the 250 respondents, 67.6% of the respondents are female and 32.4% of the respondents are male.

AGE GROUP OF THE RESPONDENTS:

Age Group	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Below 25 years	55	22.0	22.0
26 – 35 years	154	61.6	83.6
36 – 45 years	28	11.2	94.8
Above 46 years	13	5.2	100.0
Total	250	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION
From the above table, it is clear that, 22% of the sample studied belong to the age group of below 25years, 61.6% of the sample belongs to the age group between 26 - 35 years, 11.2% of the sample belongs to the age group between 36 - 45 years, and 5.2% of the sample belongs to the age group of above 46 years.

MARITAL STATUS OF THE RESPONDENTS:

Marital Status	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Married	225	90.0	90.0
Unmarried	25	10.0	100.0
Total	250	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION
From the above table reveals that, out of 250 respondents, 90% of the respondents are married, 10% of the respondents are unmarried.

RANKING FOR PERFERENCE OF THE RETAIL STORES:

Preference	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Rank
Convenient Location	45	18.0	II
Cheaper Prize	20	8.0	VII
Attractive Offers/ Schemes	27	10.8	VI
Better Quality	34	13.6	IV
Wider Product Variety	52	20.8	I
Better Availability	31	12.4	V
Better Service	41	16.4	III
Total	250	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION
From the above table clear that, out of 250 respondents, majority of the respondents have given First Rank to Wider Product Varity, Second Rank to Convenient Location, Third Rank to Better Service, Fourth Rank to Better Quality, Fifth Rank to Better Availability, Sixth Rank to Attractive Offers/Schemes and Seventh Rank to Cheaper Prize.

RANKING FOR PERFERENCE OF PRODUCT CATEGORY:

Name of the Products	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Rank
Groceries	55	22	II
Bakery Products	46	18.4	III
Fruits & Vegetables	63	25.2	I
Processed foods	15	6.0	VI
Personal care Products	42	16.8	IV
Other Non-Food items	29	11.6	V
Total	250		

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION
From the above table clear that, out of 250 respondents, majority of the respondents have given First Rank of preference is Fruits & Vegetables, Second Rank of preference is Groceries, Third Rank of preference is Bakery Products, Fourth Rank of preference is Personal care Products, Fifth Rank of preference is Other Non-Food items, and Sixth Rank of preference is processed foods.

RANKING FOR PREFERENCE OF THE RETAIL STORES:

Name of the Retail Store	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Rank
Reliance Fresh	56	22.4	II
More	58	23.2	I
Nilgiri's	44	17.6	IV
Shri Kannan Departmental Stores (P) Ltd	50	20.0	III
Big Bazaar	42	16.8	V
Total	250		

Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION
From the above table clear that, out of 250 respondents, majority of the respondents have given First Rank of preference to More, Second Rank of preference to Reliance Fresh, Third Rank of preference to Shri Kannan Departmental Stores (P) Ltd, Fourth Rank of preference to Nilgiri's, Fifth Rank of preference to Big Bazaar.

ANOVA
TABLE SHOWING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SEX AND THE OVERALL FACTORS RELATING TO CUSTOMER OPINION:

Sex	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Total
Male	26(32.0%)	34(41.9%)	21(25.9%)	81
Female	54(31.9%)	71(42%)	44(26%)	169
Total	80	105	65	250

Source: Primary Data

The above table clearly depicts that the overall factors relating to satisfaction of retail store. The majority, Female (71) respondents have the overall impact as Satisfied about the factors of the Retail Stores.

TABLE SHOWING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AGE GROUP AND THE OVERALL FACTORS RELATING TO CUSTOMER OPINION:

Age Group	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Total
Below 25 years	18(32.7%)	21(38.1%)	16(29.0%)	55
26 – 35 years	49(31.8%)	58(37.6%)	47(30.5%)	154
36 – 45 years	9(32.1%)	11(39.2%)	8(28.5%)	28
Above 46 years	4(30.7%)	5(38.4%)	4(30.7%)	13
Total	80	95	75	250

Source: Primary Data

The above table clearly depicts that the overall factors relating to satisfaction of retail store. The majority, 36-45 Years (11) respondents have the overall impact as Satisfied about the factors of the Retail Stores.

FINDINGS:
SIMPLE PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS:

➢ Majority of the respondents are female since they have high percentage (67.6%).
➢ Majority of the respondents are age group between 26-35 yrs. since they have high percentage (61.6%).
➢ Majority of the respondents are married since they have high percentage (90%).

SIMPLE RANK METHOD:
➢ Majority of respondents ranked to prefer for Wider Product Variety in Retail Stores.
➢ Majority of respondents ranked to prefer for the product of Fruits and Vegetables.
➢ Majority of respondents ranked to prefer for the Retail Store of More.

ANOVA ANALYSIS:
➢ There is no significant relationship between sex and satisfaction level of customers.

➢ There is no significant relationship between age group and satisfaction level of customers.

SUGGESTIONS:
➢ Retail Stores should sell their products at reasonable price, which will induce more customers to purchase.

➢ It should also adopt various customer loyalty programs and recognize the loyalty customers by providing them discounts, free gifts and so on.

CONCLUSION:
As the world of retailing have moved from the age of consumer satisfaction to customers delight, the organization are remodeling their strategies around the customers need with the aim of bringing him back and keeping him for life. Understanding their evolving needs aspirations and life style is the underlying key to success for any retailers. As everything in the retail environment is subject to change, the retailer must constantly update their knowledge of the retail environment to survive. Hence, the retail stores should concentrate mainly on consumer preference.

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