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A Study on Customer Expectation Management in Organized Retail Outlets in Coimbatore

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ABSTRACT

Organized retailing, in India, refers to trading activities undertaken by licensed retailers, that is, those who are registered for sales tax, income tax, etc. These include supermarkets, hypermarkets and retail chains. Food, beverage, personal care, Apparel, Footwear, Furnishing, Durables and IT, Furniture, Jewellery & Watches, Health services and Entertainment are some of the sectors emerging in Indian Retail Industry. This study attempts strategies adopted by the Organized Retail Outlets in Coimbatore to manage the expectations of the customers.

Keywords : Organized retailing, Hypermarkets, Expectations, Supermarkets.

INTRODUCTION

Organized retailing, in India, refers to trading activities undertaken by licensed retailers, that is, those who are registered for sales tax, income tax, etc. These include supermarkets, hypermarkets and retail chains. Organized retailing was absent in most rural and small towns of India. Supermarkets and similar organized retail accounted for just 4% of the market. India has about 11 shop outlets for every 1000 people.

Faster Growth Rate of Organized Retail as Compared to Unorganized Retail

The Organized retail has grown at a much higher rate as compared to unorganized retail in India during last few years. The Organized retail has been showing annual growth rate of over 35 percent and 10-15 million Sq. Ft quality spaces being added every year. Overall retail industry is growing at 8-10 percent per annum. Thus, proportionate share of Organized retail in total retail is projected to move up to 25 percent by 2015 from 5 percent in 2007.

Total retail market in India is projected to be USD 800 billion by 2017 from USD 340 billion in 2007. The total investment into modern retail formats likely to be USD 36 billion by 2011 by both global and Indian retail majors. Almost two-third of total retail investment is going into modern retail formats like hyper markets, super markets and Specialty stores.

Different Sectors of Retailing in India

Food, beverage, personal care, Apparel, Footwear, Furnishing, Durables and IT, Furniture, Jewellery & Watches, Health services and Entertainment are some of the sectors emerging in Indian Retail Industry.

A Global Comparison of Organized Retail with Unorganized Retail

The following table will highlight the growth of Organized Retail when compared with Unorganized Retail, globally. India has only 8 percent of Organized Retail which has got enormous scope in the future.

Customer Expectations in an Organized Retail Outlet

1. Choice of several brands
2. High quality fruits and vegetables
3. Wide selection of Brands and Private Labels
4. Consistent availability of products
5. Reasonable prices
6. Fast checkout
7. Courteous, friendly and trained employees
8. Spacious, wide alleyways
9. Visual Merchandizing
10. In-shop sales promotion
11. Overall experience

Parameters for Customer Evaluation

1. Selection of product
2. Wide range of variety
3. Get what a customer is looking for
4. High Quality and Attractive Visual Merchandizing
5. Conveniently located
6. Convenient Store hours
7. Lowest prices
8. Very good store ambience

Challenges in front of an Organized Retailer to meet out the Expectations of a Customer

1. Changing attitudes of the customer
2. Organizational structures and servicing the "new task" of relationship building
3. Collecting, analyzing and using market intelligence and customer data
4. Managing two-way interaction between the firm and the customer
5. Measuring customer satisfaction and service quality
6. Partnerships, positioning and formsulating sales strategy
7. Training, support and implementation.

Statement of the Problem

Globally Customers are becoming more powerful. Companies and firms which are producing Products and giving Services, are trying to satisfy their ultimate customers. The Concept of Customer Relationship Management is emerged to do this. Customers are treated as Gods.

Due to the emergence of Retailing, there are plenty of choices in front of a customer. Heavy competition is also an important reason. If a company doesn't satisfy its customer, some one will do that and that company will take the customer. The CRM concept is to retain the customer with the existing com-

pany, so that it can achieve sustainability in the long run.

Companies want to know more about customers and their needs. What are the needs of a customer? Why customers prefer certain Brands or Private Labels? How they make their purchase decisions? In the family, who makes the decision in terms of making a purchase? Why certain customers prefer certain Outlets for their purchase? What attracts the customers towards their shop? What are the expectations of the customers while they select their shop? Why certain customers are loyal to certain Outlets? Why they come to the same Outlet for repeat purchase? How a retail outlet can fulfill the expectations of its customer?

Objectives of the study
Primary Objective
To study about the strategies adopted by the Organized Retail Outlets in Coimbatore to manage the expectations of the customers.

Secondary Objectives
1. To analyze the expectations of the consumers those who visit Organized Retail Outlets in Coimbatore.
2. To find out the problems that the customers those who visit these Organized Retail Outlets.
3. To reach out solutions for the problems of customers.

Limitations of the Study
1. This study in conducted only in Coimbatore city.
2. There are only three Organized Retail Outlets had been taken for this study. They are Kannan Departmental Stores, Big Bazaar and Reliance Fresh.
3. Getting information from the respondents was quite difficult.
4. The opinions of the respondents may be biased.

This study is focused on analyzing the Customer Expectation Management in Organized Retail Outlets in Coimbatore City. This also analyzes the problems faced by the Retail Outlets to meet the expectations of the customers. This study also explores the customers changing behaviors while selecting their Shops and purchasing behaviors while making their purchase decisions. Hence the nature of this study is Descriptive.

Universe of the Study
The Researcher has selected Coimbatore City as the Universe of study. Even though many Organized Retail Outlets are emerging in Coimbatore, the Researcher has chosen Kannan Departmental Stores, Big Bazaar and Reliance Fresh as main Outlets for his study. When compared with the other Organized Retail Outlets in the City, these three Outlets have most number of customers. Many customers are Loyal Customers to these stores. These stores have attracted new customers also.

Period of Study
Both primary and secondary data were collected for this study. The secondary data which includes concepts and reviews related to the topic were collected from various management journals, books and Libraries. Internet is the prime source for the data collection. Primary data were collected through Questionnaires. These Questionnaires were given to the customers and the Researcher has got their answers. Primary data were collected for 3 months i.e. from December 2011 to February 2012.

Data
Primary Data include the responses of Customers those who visited the Organized Retail Outlets. Irrespective of the nature, all the customers were included as samples for the study. Housewives, Professionals, Male customers, Children, employees of various private and government services were the respondents. Academicians were also approached as they visit these stores. All the opinions of the customers were recorded in the Questionnaire.

Sampling Method
Convenience Sampling Technique is used to select the re-

spondents for the primary data collection. All the customers those who visited these Outlets were approached to fill the Questionnaire. When they had difficulties to fill the Questionnaire, the Researcher had helped them to fill them. But he never influenced any one for a biased view.

Pilot Study
The Researcher personally met the respondents and the Questionnaires were distributed to them. While filling the Questionnaires, the respondents faced few difficulties and they were clarified by the Researcher. Based on the feed back received from the respondents and also with the consultation of Research Experts in the field, appropriate changes were carried out in the Questionnaire. The administered Questionnaire is tested for validity and reliability with the help of experts and senior academicians and both found satisfied.

Data Collection
The administered Questionnaires were distributed to the customers those were visiting the selected Organized Retail Outlets. When the customers were filling the Questionnaires, they had some doubts. Those doubts were clarified and the Researcher personally helped them to fill the Questionnaire. Out of 200 Questionnaires distributed, 50 were rejected due to insufficiency of information. 150 Questionnaires were filled with all necessary data. They were interpreted.

Data Analysis
The collected data were analyzed and inferences were drawn. To analyze the collected data the researcher used Simple percentage analysis, anova, Chi-square, F-Test and Weighted Mean.

H1-Null Hypothesis: There is no relationship between Gender of the Respondents and their opinion towards selecting convenience stores

H2-Alternative Hypothesis: There is relationship between Gender of the Respondents and their opinion towards selecting a convenience stores

Relationship between Gender of the Respondents and their opinion towards selecting A convenience stores

Gender	opinion towards selecting a convenience stores					Total
	Not at all important	Somewhat Unimportant	Neutral	Somewhat Important	Extremely Important	
Male	9	24	24	21	9	87
	7.0	17.4	17.4	20.9	24.4	87.0
Female	3	6	6	15	33	63
	5.0	12.6	12.6	15.1	17.6	63.0
Total	12	30	30	36	42	150
	12.0	30.0	30.0	36.0	42.0	150.0

Chi-Square Value   : 36.406
Degree of Freedom : 4
Table Value   : 9.488
Result   : Significant

The result of the chi-square test reveals that the calculated chi-square value (36.406) is more than the table chi-square value (9.488) at 5% level of significance and therefore, the relationship between Gender of the Respondents and their opinion towards selecting a convenience stores is significant. Thus the hypothesis is that the relationship between the two factors holds good. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

H1-Null Hypothesis: There is no relationship between Age of the Respondents and their opinion towards selecting convenience stores

H2-Alternative Hypothesis: There is relationship between Age of the Respondents and their opinion towards selecting a convenience stores

Relationship between Age of the Respondents and their opinion towards selecting convenience stores

| Age | opinion towards selecting a convenience stores | | | | | Total |
	Not at all important	Somewhat Unimportant	Neutral	Somewhat Important	Extremely Important	
21 to 25	1	5	7	4	5	22
	1.8	4.4	4.4	5.3	6.2	22.0
26 to 30	3	8	8	6	10	35
	2.8	7.0	7.0	8.4	9.8	35.0
31 to 35	0	6	7	10	7	30
	2.4	6.0	6.0	7.2	8.4	30.0
36 to 40	3	5	2	8	7	25
	2.0	5.0	5.0	6.0	7.0	25.0
41 to 45	2	2	1	4	8	17
	1.4	3.4	3.4	4.1	4.8	17.0
46 to 50	3	4	5	4	5	21
	1.7	4.2	4.2	5.0	5.9	21.0
Total	12	30	30	36	42	150
	12.0	30.0	30.0	36.0	42.0	150.0

Chi-Square Value   : 16.645
Degree of Freedom   : 20
Table Value   : 31.41
Result   : Not Significant

The result of the chi-square test reveals that the calculated chi-square value (16.645) is less than the table chi-square value (31.41) at 5% level of significance and therefore, the relationship between Age of the Respondents and their opinion towards selecting a convenience stores is not significant. Thus the hypothesis is that the relationship between the two factors does not hold good. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted.

Factor Analysis showing the Variance between Educational Qualification of the Respondents and their opinion towards selecting convenience stores

| Educational Qualification | opinion towards selecting a convenience stores | | | | | Total |
	Not at all important	Somewhat Unimportant	Neutral	Somewhat Important	Extremely Important	
Below Graduation	4	3	0	6	8	21
Under Graduate	4	18	22	19	15	78
Post Graduate	0	7	4	9	7	27
Technically Qualified	4	2	4	2	12	24
Total	12	30	30	36	42	150

Source of Variation	SS	d.f.	Mean Square	F-ratio	5% F-limit
Between Columns	126	(5-1) =4	31.50	1.70	F(4,12)=3.26
Between Rows	441	(4-1) =3	147.00	7.95	F(3,12)=3.49
Residual of error	222	4 x 3 = 12	18.50		
Total	789	(5 x 4)-1 = 19			

The table value at 5% level of significance and the calculated F Ratio is 3.26 between columns and 3.49 between rows. The calculated value is less than the table value between columns and the calculated value is more than the table value between rows. Hence there is significant variance between Educational Qualification of the Respondents and their opinion towards selecting a convenience stores.

Therefore it is clear that there is no significant variance between Educational Qualification of the Respondents and their opinion towards selecting a convenience stores.

Factor Analysis showing the Variance between Occupation of the Respondents and their opinion towards selecting convenience stores

| Occupation | opinion towards selecting a convenience stores | | | | | Total |
	Not at all important	Somewhat Unimportant	Neutral	Somewhat Important	Extremely Important	
Business	3	4	7	5	6	25
Government Servant	1	7	4	8	3	23
Home maker	0	0	0	3	6	9
Lecturer	0	0	0	3	0	3
Private	7	16	12	10	20	65
Student	1	3	4	4	4	16
Teacher	0	0	3	3	3	9
Total	12	30	30	36	42	150

Source of Variation	SS	d.f.	Mean Square	F-ratio	5% F-limit
Between Columns	72	(5-1) = 4	18.00	3.35	F(4,24)=2.78
Between Rows	518	(7-1) =6	86.39	16.10	F(6,24)=2.51
Residual of error	129	4 x 6 = 24	5.37		
Total	719	(5 x 7)-1 = 34			

The table value at 5% level of significance and the calculated F Ratio is 2.78 between columns and 2.51 between rows. The calculated value is more than the table value between columns and the calculated value is which is also more than the table value between rows. Hence there is significant variance between Occupation of the Respondents and their opinion towards selecting convenience stores.

Therefore it is clear that there is no significant variance between Occupation of the Respondents and their opinion towards selecting a convenience stores.

Factor Analysis showing the Variance between Family Monthly Income of the Respondents and their opinion towards selecting a convenience stores

| Family Monthly Income | opinion towards selecting a convenience stores | | | | | Total |
	Extremely Important	Neutral	Not at all important	Somewhat Important	Somewhat Unimportant	
11000 to 15000	3	12	3	9	9	36
16000 to 20000	21	6	9	18	21	75
21000 to 25000	9	9	0	6	0	24
26000 to 30000	0	3	0	3	0	6
30000 & above	9	0	0	0	0	9
Total	42	30	12	36	30	150

Source of Variation	SS	d.f.	Mean Square	F-ratio	5% F-limit
Between Columns	101	(5-1) = 4	25.20	1.26	F(4,16)=3.01
Between Rows	623	(5-1) =4	155.70	7.78	F(4,16)=3.01
Residual of error	320	4 x 4 = 16	20.03		
Total	1044	(5 x 5)-1 = 24			

The table value at 5% level of significance and the calculated F Ratio is 1.26 between columns and 7.78 between rows. The calculated value is less than the table value between columns and the calculated value is which is more than the table value between rows. Hence there is significant variance between Family Monthly Income of the Respondents and their opinion towards selecting convenience stores

Therefore it is clear that there is significant variance between Family Monthly Income of the Respondents and their opinion towards selecting convenience stores.

H1-Null Hypothesis: There is no relationship between respondents opinion towards Monthly Grocery Bill and their opinion towards selecting a convenience stores

H2-Alternative Hypothesis: There is relationship relationship between respondents opinion towards Monthly Grocery Bill and their opinion towards selecting a convenience stores

Relationship between respondent's opinion towards Monthly Grocery Bill and their opinion towards selecting convenience stores

| Monthly Grocery Bill | opinion towards selecting a convenience stores | | | | | Total |
	Not at all important	Somewhat Unimportant	Neutral	Somewhat Important	Extremely Important	
Below 5000	6	14	18	24	29	91
	7.3	18.2	18.2	21.8	25.5	91.0
6000 to 10000	6	12	6	9	0	33
	2.6	6.6	6.6	7.9	9.2	33.0
11000 to 15000	0	4	6	3	13	26
	2.1	5.2	5.2	6.2	7.3	26.0
Total	12	30	30	36	42	150
	12.0	30.0	30.0	36.0	42.0	150.0

Chi-Square Value : 28.689
Degree of Freedom: 8
Table Value   : 15.507
Result   : Significant

The result of the chi-square test reveals that the calculated chi-square value (28.689) is more than the table chi-square value (15.507) at 5% level of significance and therefore, the relationship between respondents opinion towards Monthly Grocery Bill and their opinion towards selecting a convenience stores is significant. Thus the hypothesis is that the relationship between the two factors holds good. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

Factor Analysis showing the Variance between percent of monthly grocery from the respondents nearby Kirana Stores and their opinion towards selecting convenience stores

| Percent spent for Grocery at Nearby Kirana Stores | opinion towards selecting a convenience stores | | | | | Total |
	Extremely Important	Neutral	Not at all important	Somewhat Important	Somewhat Unimportant	
10 to 20%	39	18	0	36	0	93
21 to 30%	0	12	9	0	18	39
31 to 40%	3	0	3	0	9	15
41 to 50%	0	0	0	0	3	3
Total	42	30	12	36	30	150

Source of Variation	SS	d.f.	Mean Square	F-ratio	5% F-limit
Between Columns	126	(5-1) =4	31.50	0.24	F(4,12)=3.26
Between Rows	956	(4-1) =3	318.60	2.40	F(3,12)=3.49
Residual of error	1591	4 x 3 = 12	132.60		
Total	2673	(5 x 4)-1 = 19			

The table value at 5% level of significance and the calculated F Ratio is 3.26 between columns and 3.49 between rows. The calculated value is less than the table value between columns and the calculated value is which is also less than the table

value between rows. Hence there is no significant variance between percent of monthly grocery from the respondents nearby Kirana Stores and their opinion towards selecting a convenience stores.

Therefore it is clear that there is no significant variance between percent of monthly grocery from the respondents nearby Kirana Stores and their opinion towards selecting a convenience stores

Factor Analysis showing the Variance between opinion towards Monthly Family Income of the respondents and opinion towards Preference of Retail Store for the Purchase of Grocery

| Family Income | Retail Stores | | | Total |
	Kannan Departmental Stores	Big Bazaar	Reliance Fresh	
11000 to 15000	9	24	3	36
16000 to 20000	30	42	3	75
21000 to 25000	12	3	9	24
26000 to 30000	0	3	3	6
30000 & above	6	0	3	9
Total	57	72	21	150

Source of Variation	SS	d.f.	Mean Square	F-ratio	5% F-limit
Between Columns	275	(3-1) = 2	137.40	1.34	F(2,8)=4.46
Between Rows	1038	(5-1) =4	259.50	2.52	F(4,8)=3.84
Residual of error	823	2 x 4 = 8	102.90		
Total	2136	(3 x 5)-1 = 14			

The table value at 5% level of significance and the calculated F Ratio is 4.46 between columns and 3.84 between rows. The calculated value is less than the table value between columns and the calculated value which is also less than the table value between rows. Hence there is no significant variance between opinion towards Monthly Family Income of the respondents and opinion towards Preference of Retail Store for the Purchase of Grocery.

Therefore it is clear that there is no significant variance between opinion towards Monthly Family Income of the respondents and opinion towards Preference of Retail Store for the Purchase of Grocery.

findings
➤ The relationship between Gender of the Respondents and their opinion towards selecting convenience stores is significant. Thus the null hypothesis is rejected.
➤ The relationship between Age of the Respondents and their opinion towards selecting a convenience stores is not significant. Thus the null hypothesis is accepted.
➤ It is clear that there is no significant variance between Educational Qualification of the Respondents and their opinion towards selecting a convenience stores.
➤ It is clear that there is no significant variance between Occupation of the Respondents and their opinion towards selecting a convenience stores
➤ It is clear that there is significant variance between Family Monthly Income of the Respondents and their opinion towards selecting a convenience stores
➤ The relationship between respondents opinion towards Monthly Grocery Bill and their opinion towards selecting a convenience stores is significant. Thus the null hypothesis is rejected.
➤ It is clear that there is no significant variance between percent of monthly grocery from the respondents nearby Kirana Stores and their opinion towards selecting a convenience stores.
➤ It is clear that there is no significant variance between opinion towards Monthly Family Income of the respondents and opinion towards Preference of Retail Store for the Purchase of Grocery.

➤ To sum-up, it was found that Reliance Fresh overtook the other two stores with a lead in its points score for 5 attributes out of the 12 attributes available, closely followed by Kannan Department stores with 4 attributes and with 3 attributes Big Bazaar was found to be rated last by the respondents based on the priorities in selecting their retail outlet for shopping.

SUGGESTIONS

The researcher would like to suggest the following for the upliftment of an organized retail outlet.

➤ It is always better to go for extension step-by-step. This would help to maintain and to improve the brand image of the Retail Store.
➤ Due to the economical and social changes that are taking place in our country, more and more people are shopping to suit their requirements (quantitative, qualitative and economical in nature). This gives plenty of scope for the manufacturers to grab the market.
➤ Most of the consumers are more conscious about their health. Hence, it is suggested that companies shall also give due importance in promoting hygienic products.
➤ Due to information technology revolution, consumers are updated with product knowledge. Hence, the producers shall concentrate on giving transparent information to the customers.
➤ The customer care executives may have to maintain discipline that may be preferred by the customers.
➤ Satisfying the existing customers will keep the word-of-mouth advertising about the retail outlet alive. That will acquire new customers and will also enhance the brand image.
➤ Front end service factors which facilitate comfort, convenience, flexibility and deliver superior value to customers. Innovation will help to the growth.

Conclusion

Through this study, the research found that fulfilling the expectations of the consumers is very essential. That alone will keep the customers to be loyal to the store. The growth and long term sustainability of the Retail outlet are depended on this factor.

Organised retail outlets and the companies which are supplying products and services have realized the importance of retaining the existing customers and acquiring new customers are extremely important for the growth.

The following are the expectations of consumers in an Retail Outlet when they decide to buy.

• Consumers expect several brands. They are expecting several choices
• Consumers expect high quality of fruits and vegetables.
• Consumers expect multiple brands and private labels. They expect these brands and private labels are to be displayed in neat way. They give importance to Visual Merchandising. Whenever promotions are offered they expect that the POP materials are to be displayed near the product or in the shelf.
• They expect consistent availability of the products at reasonable prices at all times.
• Consumers expect that they need to exit as soon as they complete their purchase. All the customers expect a fast checkout, which was found to be lagging in all the convenience stores and retail outlets.
• Customers expect that all the employees of the stores are more knowledgeable, courteous and friendly. They suggest that the Retail Outlet Management should give adequate training to them. So that they could be moulded in a better way.
• While selecting a retail outlet, most of the customers look for good ambiance and spacious wide alleyways.
• Customers expect that overall shopping experience should be a pleasurable one.

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