



Research Paper

Perception and Awareness of Consumers' Towards Small Retail Outlets in South Tamilnadu

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts to study about small retail outlets in India. The small retail outlets are retail units that carry a wide and detailed assortment of merchandise. Small retail outlets are so named because they are organized by various departments each selling various products. The objective of the study is to analyse the customer awareness level towards small retail outlets, their purchasing habits and their opinion towards small retail outlets. The sample size for the study is 500 respondents. For the purpose of the study descriptive analysis has been administered in the study. The sample size was 500. Results were tabulated and interpretations were given according to the data so collected.

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I. INTRODUCTION

There are several types of retail outlets in India such as, Departmental stores, Discount stores, Supermarket, Warehouse stores, Speciality stores, Malls. The small retail outlets are retail units that carry a wide and detailed assortment of merchandise. They are retail establishments with an extensive assortment in variety. All departments are housed under the same roof to facilitate buying, customer service, merchandising, and control.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following objectives are framed for the study to study the level of awareness of customers about the small retail outlets,

- To study the existing practices of customers regarding purchasing in the small retail outlets
- To study the customer ideas, opinion and preference towards making purchase in the small retail outlets.

METHODOLOGY USED IN THE STUDY

The study has used primary data which is collected from 500 customers through interview schedule. Percentage/ Descriptive analysis is used for the study.

Definition of the term used: Small Retail Outlets

Everybody knows that the Small Retail Outlets are stores that have various departments under one roof selling various goods and services. The Departmental stores are generally bigger in size a located in prominent places in the city. The stores which do not have the above characteristics but selling different varieties under one roof are defined as Small Retail Outlets.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Naved Shamim Malik and Asif Ali Syed (2013) studied that the growing need for evaluating drivers of retail shopping behaviour forms a subject for research and analysis as the retailing environment is continuously changing. Ramachandran and Gokila (2013) studied on understanding the customer preference and satisfaction towards retail stores with respect to Coimbatore city. The study stated that the customers have certain expectations like branded items of its quality, price and services.

Mckinsey(2005). In his paper titled "Strategies for Wooing Customers" mentioned that the branded jewellery industry is still in its infancy, but increasing growth rates show that in a short time it will corner a significant chunk of the market. Shah, Ashwin (2008) Head of Retail at C. Mahendra Exports, he holds a similar view with regard to jewelers sales at modern shopping malls. Shah elucidates his point, "The young generation often resorts to some impulse buying."

Osjag, (2009) Concluded in his paper "Branding-success" that branding is "an irreversible trend". It gives clients a certain degree of confidence that they're buying a genuine product. Reddy Y.V (1996) said in his report that, in India, the share of gold import in total import bill rose from 8.1 per cent in 2001-02 to 9.6 per cent in 2010-11. The yearly growth rate of gold imports during the period of 2008-09, 2009-10, and 2010-11 was 23 per cent, 38.1 per cent and 18.3 per cent respectively. Srinivas Rao, Padma Charan Sahu, Sathyapriya and Deepa Ittimani Tholath (2014) stated in their article that the chemical form of gold is marked Au which comes from Latin word of gold aurum. It means shining dawn. This article focused the customer's attitude and behaviour toward purchase of ornamental gold. Asha and Edmund Christopher (2014) examined the factors which determine the behaviour of consumers towards branded and non branded jewels. For this purpose the researcher identified various factors like increasing consumer's false belief, decreasing investment compulsive purchases, fascinating retail channels and competition from other expensive products.

ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY

For the purpose of the study descriptive analysis has been administered in the study. It is found from the table1 that 266 (53.2%) respondents are female and 234 (46.8) are male and it is found from the table 2 that 323 (64.6%) respondents are in the age group between 20-40 years, 94 (18.8%) respondents are in the age group between 40-60 years and 67 (13.4%) respondents are in the age group of less than 20 years, 226 (45.2%) respondents completed college level education, 139 (27.8%) respondents are professionally qualified and 78 (15.6%) respondents have completed school level education. It is known from the table 3 that 153 (30.6%) respondents are private sector employees, 112 (22.4%) respondents fall under the categories business/professional and 83 (16.6%) respondents are home makers. It is known from the table 4 that 256 (51.2%) respondents have four & above in the size of family, 186 (37.2%) respondents have three members in their family and 40(8.0%) respondents have members in their family, 234 (46.8%) respondents have 2 earning members in their family, 166(33.2%) respondents have 1 earning member in their family and 100(20.0%) respondents have 3 and above earning members in their family. It is understood from the table 5 that 171 (34.2%) respondents' family monthly income is `30,000 and above, 142 (28.4%) respondents' family monthly income `10,000 - 20,000 and 116 (23.2%) respondents family monthly income `20,000 - 30,000.

It is observed from the table 6 that 458 (91.6%) respondents are aware of availability of products, 365 (73.0%) respondents are not aware of offers/discounts details, 351 (70.2%) respondents are aware of availability of brands, 277 (55.4%) respondents are not aware of attitude of sales persons, 260 (52.0%) respondents are not aware of price level of products. It is known from table 7 that 166 (33.74%) respondents stated that the reasons for shopping is availability of goods, 110 (22.36%) respondents have stated the reason as convenient location, 102 (20.73%) respondents stated the reasons for shopping is for time saving and 64 (13.01%) respondents stated the reason as door delivery. It is known from table 8 that 134 (27.68%) respondents feel that the price in small retail outlet is very high, 125 (25.83%) respondents feel that the price in small retail outlet is very low, 89 (18.39%) respondents feel that the price in small retail outlet is moderate and 78 (16.12%) respondents feel that the price in small retail outlet is low. It is understood the table 9 that 327 (65.4%) of respondents have very high satisfaction towards location, 291 (58.2%) of the respondents have high satisfaction towards availability of products, 270 (54.0%) of the respondents are moderately satisfied towards feedback system, 118 (23.6%) of them have low satisfaction towards offer. It is evident from table 10 that 235 (47.0%) of them strongly agree towards the factor that small retail outlet is nearer to residence of customers, 251 (50.2%) of them agree towards the factor that the small retail outlet is better than original departmental store, 215 (43.0%) of them have neutral opinion towards the factor that customers are able to get full information about the products.

Table 1

Gender	No. of respondents	%
Male	234	46.8
Female	266	53.2
Total	500	100.0

Table 2

Age group (years)	No of respondents	%	Educational level	No of respondents	%
Below 20	67	13.4	No formal education	55	11.0
20 - 40	323	64.6	School level	78	15.6
40 -60	94	18.8	College level	226	45.2
60 & above	16	3.2	Professional Qualification	139	27.8
			Others	2	0.4
Total	500	100	Total	500	100.0

Table 3

Occupational status	No of respondents	%
Agriculture	45	9.0
Public sector employee	27	5.4
Private sector employee	153	30.6
Business / professional	112	22.4
Home maker	83	16.6
Others	80	16.0
Total	500	100.0

Table 4

Size of the family	No of respondents	%	No of earning members	No of respondents	%
One	18	3.6	1	166	33.2
Two	40	8.0	2	234	46.8
Three	186	37.2	3 & above	100	20.0
Four & above	256	51.2			
Total	500	100.0	Total	500	100.0

Table 5

Family monthly income	No of respondents	%
Below 10000	71	14.2
10000-20000	142	28.4
20000-30000	116	23.2
30000 and above	171	34.2
Total	500	100.0

Table 6

Aspects	Aware	Not Aware
Availability of products	458 (91.6)	42 (8.4)
Availability of brands	351 (70.2)	149 (29.8)
Price level of products	240 (48.0)	260 (52.0)
Offers / Discounts details	135 (27.0)	365 (73.0)
Attitude of sales persons	223 (44.6)	277 (55.4)
Others – Please specify	10 (2.0)	16 (3.2)

Note: The values in brackets are percentages

Table 7

Reason for shopping	Number of respondents	Percentage
Convenient location	110	22.36
Availability of goods	166	33.74
Time saving	102	20.73
Door delivery	64	13.01
Unbranded items	49	9.96
Others	1	0.20
Total	492	100

Table 8

Opinion	Number of respondents	Percentage
Very high	134	27.68
High	58	11.98
Moderate	89	18.39
Low	78	16.12
Very low	125	25.83
Total	484	100

Table 9

Level of Satisfaction / Services	Very High Satisfaction	High Satisfaction	Moderate satisfaction	Low Satisfaction	Very low Satisfaction
Price	184 (36.8)	240 (48.0)	76 (15.2)	-	-
Quality	184 (36.8)	273 (54.6)	27 (5.4)	16 (3.2)	-
Availability of Products	104 (20.8)	291 (58.2)	88 (17.6)	17 (3.4)	-
Packaging	171 (34.2)	278 (43.0)	51 (10.2)	-	-
Salespersons' Services	143 (28.6)	215 (43.0)	118 (23.6)	16 (3.2)	8 (1.6)
Door Delivery	130 (26.0)	264 (52.8)	33 (6.6)	72 (14.4)	-
Offers	40 (8.0)	66 (13.2)	243 (48.6)	118 (23.6)	33 (6.6)
Location	327 (65.4)	129 (25.8)	20 (4.0)	16 (3.2)	8 (1.6)
Feedback System	8 (1.6)	57 (11.4)	270 (54.0)	116 (23.2)	49 (9.8)
Others	-	33 (6.6)	18 (3.6)	8 (1.6)	8 (1.6)

Note: The values in brackets are percentages

Table 10

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
All products are available	216 (43.2)	131 (26.2)	129 (25.8)	24 (4.8)	-
Price of products is found reasonable	198 (39.6)	125 (25.0)	137 (27.4)	24 (4.8)	16 (3.2)
Quality of products is always Good	177 (35.4)	199 (39.8)	108 (21.6)	16 (3.2)	-
Customers are well treated	154 (30.8)	234 (46.8)	80 (16.0)	32 (6.4)	-
Customers are able to get full information about the products	82 (16.4)	179 (35.8)	215 (43.0)	24 (4.8)	-
The services of sales person are Good	216 (43.2)	250 (50.0)	34 (6.8)	-	-
Small retail outlet is nearer to the residence of customers	235 (47.0)	152 (30.4)	71 (14.2)	42 (8.4)	-
Customers get good offers from this stores	109 (21.8)	208 (41.6)	82 (16.4)	61 (12.2)	40 (8.0)
Customers prefer small retail outlets even though the facilities are less	113 (22.6)	200 (40.0)	109 (21.8)	46 (9.2)	32 (6.4)
Small retail outlet is better than original Departmental store	96 (19.2)	251 (50.2)	65 (13.0)	24 (4.8)	64 (12.8)
Time saving is possible	145 (29.0)	152 (30.4)	125 (25.0)	32 (6.4)	46 (9.2)
Advertisement is not a must	50 (10.0)	171 (34.2)	177 (35.4)	86 (17.2)	16 (3.2)
There are only few complaints	24 (4.8)	121 (24.2)	187 (37.4)	96 (19.2)	72 (14.4)
Small retail outlets have adequate feedback system	73 (14.6)	156 (31.2)	191 (38.2)	56 (11.2)	24 (4.8)

Note: The values in brackets are percentages

III. CONCLUSION

Advertisement is essential for localized departmental stores and hence it is recommended to the management of small retail outlets to adopt the appropriate advertising strategy right from selection of media to the methods of display to cover the customers. Price is a not only an influencing factor but also a sensitive aspect that the variations if any, should be kept under control, for the reason that customer preference will be totally affected due to high price. Therefore, it is suggested to the management of small retail outlets to avoid such a situation and be alter on maintaining price level either at lower than or equal to actual departmental stores. The study reveals that the customers buy not only from small retail outlets but also from other stores. Therefore, it is very much essential that the customers preference should be analyzed so that their perception towards small retail outlets can be ascertained and accordingly take remedial action for attracting the customers.

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