

An Empirical Study of Organised Retailing Strategies in developing customer loyalty, changing purchase decision and developing satisfaction in Consumer of Indian Sub-Continent

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Abstract

The objectives are to examine the consumer buying behavior and to identify the factors involving in purchasing decision in organized retail sector. In addition, the study also attempted to examine the relationship between those factors with customer satisfaction and loyalty. By examining these factors, the empirical study would shed light on the different market strategies that could be adopted by the major players in penetrating Indian organized retail sector. In order to examine these factors, the study first undertake a review of the existing literature on various factors that affect consumer buying decision and its strength of relationship in predicting customer loyalty and satisfaction. The descriptive cross sectional design was conducted to identify the factors using structured questionnaire with five point likert scale format. The data was collected among 91 consumers in India. Reliability and validity of the data was ensured at every stage and cronbach's alpha value was 0.75. The descriptive statistics, one-way ANOVA, regression analysis was used to identify the consumer preference and analyse the retail marketing strategies. $P < 0.05$ was considered significant. The findings of the study indicated that consumer demographics especially age, income, occupation significantly influence purchasing decision. The findings further support that the marketing strategies of retailers are an important tool for enhancing the retail business values and sales. This study indicates that service and quality play an important role in the organised retailing sector.

Keywords: Consumer purchasing behaviour, customer satisfaction, loyalty, customer retention, consumer demographics

1.0 Introduction

In the last few years, retail has become one of the fastest growing sectors in the Indian economy and identified as the third most attractive retail destination globally (Kearney, 2010) but despite highest outlet density in the world, the sector is highly fragmented. In specific, organized retail sectors are still in the nascent stage which occupies less than 5 percent of the retailing industry (Ravindran, Ram & Kumar, 2009; Talwar, 2010). However, in the recent past, the scenario is changing rapidly from 3125 covering an area of 3.3 million square feet in 2001 to 27076 with an area of 31 million square feet in 2006, with an estimated growth at 13 percent annually (Kokatnur, 2009) due to change in lifestyle of consumers, particularly higher disposable income, greater ability to spend, urbanization, growing young population, changing taste and preferences due to westernization lifestyle. In addition, other significant factors such as economy liberalization, retail store attributes, and effective marketing strategies also played a major role for the

development of organized retail stores in India (Mishra, 2008; Arshad & Hisan, 2008; Aggarwal, 2008). Although there is a tremendous potential for organized retail sectors, but the entry of global retailers (multinational hypermarkets) like Wal-Mart, GAP, Tesco, Carrefour, and Sears poses serious hurdle to the growth opportunity for the retail industry. The sector already in the face of experiencing several challenges from supply side such as taxation, legal, real estate, supply chain capabilities, and lack of technology but change in consumer behaviour needs immediate attention that challenges to formulate marketing strategies in order to achieve competitive advantage (Kokatnur, 2009; Gupta, 2007).

In addition, to the customer satisfaction, retention of existing customer is five times more profitable than adding new ones (Reichheld & Scheffer, 2000). Thus, customer perceived value is an important indicator of their continued intention and therefore the loyalty incentives provided by the store. Based on the importance of loyalty (Bandyopadhyay, Gupta & Dube, 2005) of satisfaction (Pritchard *et al.* 1999) and of one's

(re)purchase behavior of a product (Reichheld 1994), we assert that additional research is needed to further our understanding of these constructs and their potential relationships. Such studies would likely yield new knowledge that scholars can disseminate to practitioners to help them develop more successful marketing strategies (Bennett & Rundle-Thiele 2004). Given this understanding, the present study objectives are to examine the consumer buying behaviour and to identify the factors involving in purchase decision in organized retail sector. In addition, the study also attempted to examine the relationship between those factors with customer satisfaction and loyalty. By examining these factors, the empirical study would shed light on the different market strategies that could be adopted by the major players in penetrating Indian organized retail sector. In order to examine these factors, the study first undertake a review of the existing literature on various factors that affect consumer buying decision and its strength of relationship in predicting customer loyalty and satisfaction. This is followed by the development of conceptual framework and describes the methodology. We present the results followed by a discussion, managerial implications, and suggestions for further research. We contribute to the existing literature by basing our reasoning on widely accepted concepts especially among practitioners (Reichheld, 1996) that have not been tested empirically.

2.0 Literature Review

Previous studies had identified several factors that affect consumer buying decision in organized retail sector such as age, income, gender, occupation and education, as these factors affect the chosen organized formats (Mishra, 2007). The prospects of India was highlighted by several authors (e.g. Arshad *et al.*, 2007; Kaur & Singh, 2007; Ghosh *et al.*, 2010) projected that 47% of India's population are under the age of 25 which will further increase to 55% by 2015, while this younger generation immensely contribute to the retail sector growth. Similarly, growing middle class, increase in spending and large number of earning young customers also provides several opportunities for organized retail sector expansion (Dash *et al.*, 2009; CII, 2008; Jham & Kiran, 2012).

Previous study by Myers *et al.*, (2008) predicted that younger consumers seek environment while older focuses on leisure and convenience. In terms of attributes of retailing, various factors like location, ambience, assortment, sale promotion schemes and in-store services influence consumer's shopping behaviour (Dalwadi *et al.*, 2010; Thang *et al.*, 2003). In specific, one shop stop concept was attractive to consumers due to convenience and time saving. Further, layout, ambience, display, self-service, value added services, technology based operations are the dimensions with modern outlook found to influence the buying behaviour as opined by

Jayaraman and Aggarwal (2001); Rajagopal (2007); Jain and Bagdare (2009) and Jacobs *et al.*, (2010). The changing retail structure with large variety of products, quality and less travel time has positively attracted the consumers (Gupta, 2004; Urbonavicius *et al.*, 2005). The other major attributes are convenient services, marketing strategies, product variety, and quality of service, price, and behaviour of sales personnel. Although the factors like retail formats and consumer demographics plays major role in buying decision, but consumer choice of particular retail format is highly influenced by type of retailers marketing strategies. For an instance the study Mittal and Mittal (2008) identified two set of attributes such as shopping experience enhancers (reputation, temperature, ambient conditions, temperature) and loyalty drivers including sales promotion, price, recommendation/relationships as an important factor that needs to be considered during marketing. In addition, while designing retail operations Dalwadi *et al.*, (2010) emphasized on the following factors that includes proximity, comfort and elegance, free gifts and discounts, customer attention, courteous staff members, speedy service and assurance.

The academic marketing literature increasingly focuses on customer relationships, a focus that is also apparent in marketing practices and in firms' significant investments in customer relationship management (CRM) systems. While scholars take disparate views, extant literature contains frequent discussion of consumer satisfaction as being an important phenomenon. We believe that furthering our understanding of satisfaction's significance, such as its predictive relationship with (re)purchase behavior, is important for one to fully comprehend the phenomenon (Szymanski & Henard 2001; Pappu & Quester 2006).

However, we would be remiss if we failed to recognize some consequences of satisfaction that are noted in current literature. For an instance, satisfied consumers, will have an enhanced ability to extend its brand(s) to other products and product categories, which saves the firm money by reducing its cost of launching new products (Thamaraiselvan & Raja 2008), positive word-of-mouth (Soderlund & Ohman 2003; Golobic, Broyles and Woodruff 2003; Lymperopoulos & Chaniotakis 2008), which is one of the most important factors in acquiring new customers (Jones & Sasser 1995, p. 94); enable a firm to charge higher prices for its product(s) because consumers will typically tolerate higher prices (Reichheld 1996; Oliver 1997); Consumers' (re)purchase decision process is simplified if they are satisfied (Jacoby, Chestnut and Fisher 1978); and satisfied consumers have a greater likelihood of (re)purchasing a firm's product(s) in the future (Oliver 1980, 1997; Vanhamme & Snelgers 2001). The overall significance of these outcomes of consumer satisfaction is captured by Oliver's (1997, 1999) discussion that they have predictive relationships with the level of a firm's sales, profitability, and market valuation.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Sample

The present descriptive cross sectional study design is to examine the consumer buying behavior and to identify the factors influencing purchase decision and in turn satisfaction and loyalty. Since, the focus is to examine the relationship between factors, explanatory study design was adopted with quantitative research strategy. Both primary and secondary data was collected.

3.2 Sampling

In order to identify the factors that influence buying behavior of consumers, consumers greater than >18 years were selected. Data were collected from customers and are related to six variables that are associated with customer values (Quality, Product variety, Brand consciousness, Service, Pricing, Customer satisfaction).

Data were collected from randomly selected 105 respondents who were involved in shopping at chosen retail self-service stores in India and administering structured closed ended questionnaire. Out of 105 respondents, only 91 respondents participated in the study yielding a response rate of 86.67%. The data collected from the respondents were tested for reliability applying cronbach's alpha test.

4.0 Objectives of Study

The objectives are to examine the consumer buying behavior and to identify the factors involving in purchasing decision in organized retail sector. In addition, the study also attempted to examine the relationship between those factors with customer satisfaction and loyalty.

5.0 Results

Table 1: Frequency for demographic variables

Demographic variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Female	45	49.5
Male	46	50.5
Total	91	100
Age group		
18-35	54	59.3
36-55	19	20.9
>55	18	19.8
Total	91	100.0
Education		
No schooling	2	2.2
Primary school	12	13.5
Secondary school	28	31.5
Under graduate	32	36.0
Post graduate	15	16.9

Total	89	100.0
Income (every month)		
Less than 5000	24	26.4
5000-10000	11	12.1
10000-25000	34	37.4
25000-50000	15	16.5
50000-100000	7	7.7
Total	91	100.0
Marital status		
Married	27	29.7
Unmarried	38	41.8
Divorced	6	6.6
Widowed	20	22.0
Total	91	100.0
Occupation		
Student	28	30.8
Professional	20	22.0
Business	13	14.3
Housewife	2	2.2
Unemployed	28	30.8
Total	91	100.0
Reason for the preferred choice		
Income	17	19.1
Lifestyle choice	56	62.9
Status related satisfaction	16	18.0
Total	89	100.0
Family size		
1	5	6.0
2-4	61	73.5
5-7	15	18.1
More than 7	2	2.4
Total	83	100.0

The above table reveals that study has a higher male of 50.5% than female of 49.5% with family size 2-4 (73.5%). In regard to age group most of them are young people with 59.3% with unmarried (41.8%). When education is considered most of them are under graduation with income 10000-25000 (37.4%). When occupation is considered most of them of student and unemployed with (61.6%) with lifestyle as a preferred choice (62.9%).

Table 2: Descriptive statistics

Variables	Mean±SD	Cronbach's alpha
Quality	3.16±0.70 (4.50-1.50)	0.753
Product variety	3.16±0.80 (4.67-0.00)	
Brand consciousness	3.21±0.79 (5.00-1.50)	
Service	2.97±0.78 (4.67-0.67)	
Pricing	3.00±0.78 (5.00-1.00)	
Customer satisfaction	3.20±0.82 (5.00-2.00)	
Overall	2.95±0.46 (4.37-1.55)	

A figure in brackets represents (Max-Min) values

The above table reveals that the descriptive of the variables with brand consciousness as a higher mean of 3.21 and standard deviation of 0.79. Overall, the study

Table 3: Comparison of factors between demographic variables

Variables	Quality	Product variety	Brand consciousness	Service	Pricing	Customer satisfaction
Male	3.11±0.62	3.09±0.75	3.13±0.67	2.84±0.81	2.98±0.80	3.17±0.85
Female	3.22±0.77	3.22±0.85	3.30±0.90	3.10±0.73	3.02±0.77	3.22±0.79
18-35 yrs	3.14±0.72	3.33±0.73**	3.34±0.86	3.22±0.75**	3.31±0.6**8	3.20±0.81
36-55 yrs	3.26±0.69	2.74±0.94	3.00±0.62	2.54±0.77	2.24±0.77	3.26±0.93
>55 yrs	3.14±0.68	3.07±0.69	3.06±0.68	2.70±0.58	2.86±0.45	3.11±0.76
Less than 5000	3.31±0.73	3.51±0.75**	3.27±0.93	3.21±0.72	3.10±0.61	3.25±0.78
5000-10000	3.50±0.77* *	3.45±0.70	3.59±0.63	3.03±0.69	2.73±0.68	3.64±1.03
10000-25000	3.24±0.64	3.04±0.87	3.28±0.73	2.96±0.91	3.13±0.89	3.26±0.71
25000-50000	2.87±0.52	2.76±0.61	2.80±0.59	2.60±0.62	2.60±0.78	2.87±0.83
50000-100000	2.43±0.45	2.90±0.57	3.00±0.96	2.95±0.52	3.29±0.64	2.71±0.76
Student	3.25±0.81	3.51±0.70**	3.45±0.91**	3.33±0.74**	3.11±0.60	3.21±0.79
Professional	3.25±0.68	3.05±0.86	3.43±0.82	2.83±0.63	3.00±0.78	3.45±0.94
Business	3.42±0.53	3.23±0.70	3.23±0.63	2.51±1.11	2.81±0.99	3.38±0.65
Housewife	3.00±0.71	2.64±1.09	3.00±0.00	1.83±0.71	3.00±0.71	3.00±0.00
Unemployed	2.91±0.62	3.17±0.71	2.83±0.62	3.01±0.52	2.98±0.88	2.93±0.81

** represents Significant

Table 4: Independent sample t-test for type of retail

Factors	Type of retail	Mean	SD	t-value	P-value
Quality	Organized retail	3.22	0.71	1.178	0.242
	Unorganized retail	3.02	0.65		
Product variety	Organized retail	3.25	0.86	1.845	0.068
	Unorganized retail	2.90	0.54		
Brand consciousness	Organized retail	3.30	0.84	1.711	0.091
	Unorganized retail	2.98	0.60		
Service	Organized retail	2.98	0.84	0.016	0.988
	Unorganized retail	2.97	0.57		
Pricing	Organized retail	3.00	0.78	0.000	1.000
	Unorganized retail	3.00	0.79		
Customer satisfaction	Organized retail	3.25	0.77	1.089	0.279
	Unorganized retail	3.04	0.95		

reported acceptable reliability with coefficient alphas 0.753 which demonstrated that scale demonstrates acceptable reliability.

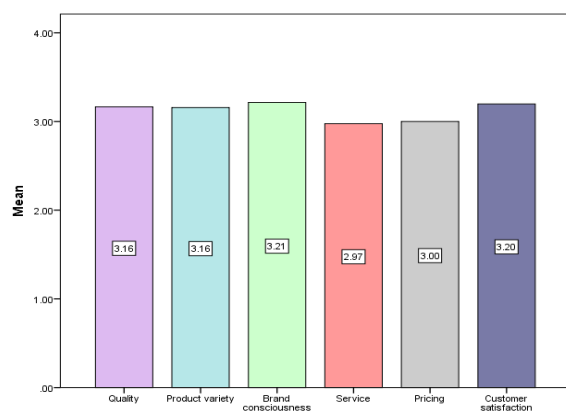
**Figure 1:** Mean chart for factors

Table 3 compares the Quality, Product variety, brand consciousness, service, pricing and customer satisfaction with the demographic variable. The figures with double star represents significant, with higher mean compare to other group.

Table 4 compares the factors with type of retail. The P-value for all the factors ($P > 0.05$) so accept the hypothesis hence there is no significant difference in factors between type of retail.

Table 5 compares the factors with reason for the preferred choice. The P-value for service factor ($P = 0.027 < 0.05$) so reject the hypothesis hence there is significant difference in service factor between reason for the preferred choice. In service factor income has a higher mean (3.38) compare to life style and status related satisfaction.

It is clear from the above table 6 of linear regression analysis the beta coefficient of the regression of customer satisfaction on quality is significant

Table 5: One way anova for reason for the preferred choice

One way anova	Preferred choice	Mean	SD	F-value	P-value
Quality	Income	3.03	0.67	1.681	0.192
	Lifestyle choice	3.26	0.71		
	Status related satisfaction	2.94	0.68		
Product variety	Income	3.16	0.70	2.407	0.096
	Lifestyle choice	3.25	0.84		
	Status related satisfaction	3.29	0.63		
Brand consciousness	Income	2.85	0.83	2.606	0.080
	Lifestyle choice	3.21	0.72		
	Status related satisfaction	3.00	0.98		
Service	Income	3.38	0.66	3.778	0.027**
	Lifestyle choice	3.00	0.86		
	Status related satisfaction	3.24	0.78		
Pricing	Income	3.24	0.72	1.604	0.207
	Lifestyle choice	3.06	0.74		
	Status related satisfaction	2.58	0.65		
Customer satisfaction	Income	3.01	0.74	0.924	0.401
	Lifestyle choice	2.76	0.75		
	Status related satisfaction	3.13	0.74		

** P<0.05

Table 6: Association between Customer satisfaction and demographic variables/factors

Model	Un standardized		Adjusted R-square	F-value	t-value	P-value
	B	S.E				
(Constant)	-.379	.646	0.567	14.440	-.587	.559
Gender	.092	.137			.671	.504
Age group	-.031	.083			-.377	.707
Family size	.060	.092			.653	.516
Income (every month)	.037	.059			.631	.530
Quality	.858	.102			8.395	.000
Product variety	.060	.093			.640	.524
Brand consciousness	.089	.098			.908	.367
Service	.023	.093			.246	.807

Dependent variable: Customer satisfaction, ** represents P<0.01

(beta=0.858, t=8.395, p<0.001). Since the significance is less than alpha of 0.05 values, the null hypothesis is rejected and hence there is a support of the hypothesis. Thus, there is a significant association between customer satisfaction and quality. Independent variables together accounted for 57% of the variance (R square) which indicates that customer satisfaction is more significant predictor of quality.

6.0 Discussion

The survey results indicated that among the demographic variables, gender was the only variable which is not affected by retailing attributes. Similar findings are provided by Bashar *et al.* (2012), who suggested that gender has no role on consumer buying behavior. On the other hand, a statistically significant relationship was found between respondents in the age group of 18-35 yrs and product variety, service and pricing. This clearly indicates that youngsters and adults are affected by three major retailing attributes: product variety, service and pricing. This is in-line with the findings by Arshad *et al.*,

(2007); Kaur and Singh, (2007) who also suggested that younger generation of India are affected by retailing service attributes. In terms of income, respondents in the income group of Rs. 5000-10000/month and less than Rs. 5000/month are influenced by quality and product variety, respectively. In addition, the study results indicated that students are mainly influenced by retail attributes like product variety, brand consciousness and service.

The study also indicated that there is no significant difference between organized and unorganized retailing sector in terms of selected buying attributes in this study. In addition, this study indicates that service is the preferred choice of retailing attribute. Finally, this study reveals that there is a significant relationship between quality and customer satisfaction. This finding is consistent with the study results of Bastos and Gallego (2008); Chai *et al.*, (2009) who pointed out the significance of product and service quality in enhancing customer satisfaction. Lu *et al.* (2011) also indicated that product quality in terms of freshness of the product resulted in customer satisfaction when compared to other retailing

attributes. Moreover, for a retailing sector customer satisfaction is an important attribute since it helps to improve the customer loyalty as evident from the studies of Sivadas and Baker-Prewitt (2000); Bansal and Gupta (2001); Silvestro, and Low (2006), which indicated a positive relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty. This clearly indicates the role of customer satisfaction in the success of retailing sector.

7.0 Conclusion

This study attempts to contribute to existing theories by adding value to existing literature on retailing sector. In addition, this study reveals that service is another important retail attribute preferred by majority of respondents. This study concludes that quality plays an important factor that helps to attain customer satisfaction. Hence, in order to have an organized retailing sector, it is necessary to focus on service and quality of the product.

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