

A STUDY ON CONSUMER SATISFACTION IN TOWARDS ORGANISED APPAREL RETAIL STORE

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Abstract

One of the earliest types of companies that human society has ever been aware of is retailing. The majority of industrialised economies as well as emerging economies have adopted organised retail a significant amount of time ago, and the percentage share of organised retail in overall retailing has increased over the years. Despite this, India, a land of villages capable of supporting themselves, has continued to rely mostly on small shops located in close proximity to homes. Because the level of happiness a customer has with a product or service is the most essential component in determining a retail store's or other company's level of success, it is critical to both measure this level of satisfaction and identify the factors that have an impact on it. This article presents a review of the topic of customer satisfaction, focusing on three distinct aspects of the topic: the antecedents of consumer satisfaction, the measurement of satisfaction, and the implications of consumer pleasure. The primary research that was done on 52 customers found that different types of customers have different influences on their perceptions of service quality and that elements related to service quality have a substantial impact on the level of pleasure that customers feel they receive.

Keywords: Store, Retail, Consumer, Apparel

INTRODUCTION

It is interesting to note that consumption has been on the rise over the past five decades in line with a growth in customer happiness, with a link to profitability and other business results. A more in-depth comprehension of what it means to be satisfied as a customer is essential to get to the bottom of the driving forces behind consumption. Because modern consumerism is such complicated evidence that is associated with other ecological, social, political, ethical, economic, and technological concerns, anyone who seeks to discover fulfilment is obliged to also investigate the relation to each of those components one at a time. Concerning consumerism, the topic "What are the sources of consumer dissatisfaction?" is brought up more frequently than any other.

One such possibility is that consumerism is the result of dissatisfaction on the side of customers who feel as though they have been promised much but have received much less. It is possible to draw the conclusion that this motivation is a primary force behind consumption. Since the 1950s up until today, the idea of providing a product or service that satisfies the needs and expectations of the target market has had a central position in marketing, and its importance and interest continue to grow. The marketing activity that links the processes involved in buying and consuming is thought to have a significant impact on the outcome of satisfaction. In addition, it links post-purchase phenomena such as shifts in attitude, further purchases, and brand loyalty. The assumption that profits are generated through the satisfying of consumer needs and wants reflects the positioning of the concept as one that lies at the very centre of marketing. Researchers have been focusing on the formulation and evaluation of consumer happiness in response to what appears to be a pressing need to transfer a significant marketing idea into day-to-day operational practise.

CONSUMER SATISFACTION

In the early 1970s, consumer satisfaction started to become recognised as a viable area of study. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Index of Customer Satisfaction is a ground-breaking study that provides policymakers with direct data on consumer satisfaction. The Swedish National Customer Satisfaction Barometer is then introduced in 1989.

Conceptually, satisfaction is a result of purchase and use that comes from the buyer weighing the benefits and expenses of the purchase in light of the expected outcomes. Operationally, satisfaction is comparable to attitude in that it may be calculated as the total of a person's satisfactions with a product's or service's numerous features. When the topic of contentment is brought up, it is typically understood to include a broad range, encompassing both extremely high levels of satisfaction and neutral levels where there is no dissatisfaction. It is also proposed that varied levels of satisfaction with various effect ranges and varying I magnitudes of impact on business outcomes require their own assessment. According to the Random House Dictionary, "contemplating what falls short of one's wishes or expectations" leads to discontent. Therefore, the degree of discrepancy between expectations and actual product performance may be used to gauge consumer discontent.

The perceived performance of the product in relation to a buyer's expectations determines customer happiness. The customer is not satisfied if the product doesn't operate as expected. When performance meets expectations, the client is happy. When performance meets or surpasses expectations, the client is extremely happy and grateful. When businesses do not give their customers' contentment adequate consideration, they frequently make a serious error. The best advantage over rival businesses is maintaining happy consumers. Customers are fantastic external marketers since they are loyal and willing to spend more.

Here are a few benefits of creating long-term connections with clients:

- The expenditures associated with satisfying and keeping current consumers might range from 5 to 10 times higher than those associated with acquiring new ones.
- Loyal consumers typically spend more money and require less service.
- Happy clients are more likely to advocate for your goods and services.
- Retaining departing clients keeps rivals from acquiring market share.
- Depending on the sector, a 5% decrease in customer churn might boost profitability by 25 to 85%.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Solomon (2009), Customers are those who purchase products or services from businesses. In other words, a customer is a stakeholder in an organisation who pays for the offer made to him by the company in exchange for the offer, with the goal of meeting a demand and maximising satisfaction. The terms customer and consumer can occasionally be misunderstood. Although a consumer may not always be a customer, a customer can be a consumer. This distinction was described by another author. For example, a customer is someone who purchases goods, whereas a consumer is someone who uses those goods.

According to **Kotler & Keller (2009)**, satisfaction refers to a consumer or customer's happiness with a good or service. When a person compares the apparent performance or result of a product with their expectations, they may feel satisfied or disappointed.

Customer satisfaction is described as "the individual's perception of the performance of the products or services in relation to his or her expectations" by **Schiffman & Karun (2004)**. Simply put, customer contentment might be the joy experienced after utilising an offer.

Levy (2009), Because it attempts to gauge how customers feel, measuring customer happiness can occasionally be very challenging. The simplest approach to find out how customers feel and what they want is to ask them, according to some current research, which was provided in relation to informal measurements.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To determine the factors that influence the level of satisfaction experienced by consumers shopping at organized retail shops.
2. To investigate the mentality and actions of consumers shopping in organized retail establishments.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the current study is to gain an understanding of the types of customers who shop at new generation retail outlets such as Lifestyle, Pantaloons, and Westside Store; to determine the level of satisfaction that customers have with the retail outlets of today; and to determine the level of loyalty that customers have towards the stores and brands that they shop at. The research had a descriptive approach in terms of its design, and it was carried out all around Ahmedabad. The number of people in the sample was 52, and the convenience sampling method was utilised. The major method of data collection consisted of filling out a structured questionnaire with closed-ended questions. SPSS was used to do the analysis on the collected data. We utilised the statistical mean in addition to the z test.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic Characteristics	Total Number	Percentage
Gender		
Male	23	44.23%
Female	29	55.76%
Age		
Less than 20	4	7.69%
Between 20 to 30	48	92.30%
Occupation		
Student	27	51.92%
Housewife	0	0
Employed	25	48.07%
Monthly Income (in INR)		
Less than 10,000	25	48.07%
10,001 – 30,000	20	38.46%
30,001 – 50,000	3	5.76%
50,001 and above	0	0

Table 2: Status of Variables According to Survey

PARAMETERS	Service Quality	Reliability	Facilities	Customer satisfaction	Customer loyalty
Mean	7.65	8.03	7.09	16.21	9.13
Strongly Agree	30	35	17	62	6
Agree	36	44	45	108	46
Neutral	30	18	26	27	63
Disagree	6	6	10	9	31
Strongly Disagree	2	1	6	2	10

The following hypotheses were tested using the z test:

H01: There is low level of satisfaction if the store layout is unfavourable.

H02: There is a low level of customer loyalty if the brand does not focus on customer relationship

H03: Less queue and welcoming staff positively affects service quality.

H04: Accuracy of bill, price and discounts positively affects customer reliability

H05: Additional facilities attract customers towards a store

The following table provides a representation of the findings obtained by applying the z test:

VARIABLE	Service Quality	Reliability	Facilities	Customer Satisfaction	Customer Loyalty
CALCULATED Z VALUE	4.717	4.996	4.264	3.612	3.468
TABULATED Z VALUE	-1.650	-1.650	-1.650	-1.650	-1.650
DECISION	Accepted	Accepted	Accepted	Accepted	Accepted

CONCLUSION

It's true that a company's customers are its most valuable asset. Customer satisfaction is seen as a significant differentiator and is gradually becoming a major part of business strategy by many organisations producing textile products in today's competitive marketplace (offline) and market space (online), where enterprises struggle for customers. Brand loyalty can be fostered by the high quality of an apparel product as well as its social and ecological worth. Maintaining happy customers is essential to a company's success. Customers are happy when they receive quality service, and that quality is determined by their preferences. Regular surveys of customers are essential, and the insights gleaned from them must inform strategic decisions and daily operations.

According to the literature on customer retention and loyalty, providing bare-bones service isn't good enough to keep up with the competition. Customers prefer to deal with a salesperson face to face, especially one who takes the time to get to know them and their unique needs.

The retail sector of India's clothing industry is at a crossroads. In India, both contemporary and conventional stores will continue to coexist for the foreseeable future. Attractive quality attributes of today can evolve into mandatory quality attributes of tomorrow, and eventually into a single dimensional quality trait.

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