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Consumer Behavior Towards Departmental Stores

Sujan Raj .E
MBA, Department of Management Studies
Bharath Institute of Science and Technology,
Selaiyur, Chennai, Tamil Nadu 600 073
Bharath Institute of Higher Education and Research

ABSTRACT

Consumer Behavior is defined as activities people undertake when obtaining, consuming, and disposing of products and services. Simply stated, consumer behavior has traditionally been thought of as the study of "why people buy" - with the premise that it becomes easier to develop strategies to influence consumers once a marketer knows the reason people buy specific products and brands. Consumer behavior is the study of how individual customers, groups or organizations select, buy, use, and dispose ideas, goods, and services to satisfy their needs and wants. It refers to the actions of the consumers in the marketplace and the underlying motives for those actions. Marketers expect that by understanding what causes the consumers to buy particular goods and services, they will be able to determine which products are needed in the marketplace, which are obsolete, and how best to present the goods to the consumers. The study of consumer behavior assumes that the consumers are actors in the marketplace. The perspective of role theory assumes that consumers play various roles in the marketplace. Starting from the information provider, from the user to the payer and to the disposer, consumers play these roles in the decision process. The roles also vary in different consumption situations; for example, a mother plays the role of an influence in a child's purchase process, whereas she plays the role of a disposer for the products consumed by the family.

1. INTRODUCTION

Consumer behavior is not static. It undergoes a change over a period of time depending on the nature of products. For example, kids prefer colorful and fancy footwear, but as they grow up as teenagers and young adults, they prefer trendy footwear, and as middle-aged and senior citizens they prefer more sober footwear. The change in buying behavior may take place due to several other factors such as increase in income level, education level and marketing factors.

VARIES FROM CONSUMER TO CONSUMER

All consumers do not behave in the same manner. Different consumers behave differently. The differences in consumer behavior are due to individual factors such as the nature of the consumers, lifestyle and culture. For example, some consumers are technoholics. They go on a shopping and spend beyond their means. They borrow money from friends, relatives, banks, and at times even adopt unethical means to spend on shopping of advance technologies. But there are other consumers who, despite having surplus money, do not go even for the regular purchases and avoid use and purchase of advance technologies.

VARIES FROM REGION TO REGION AND COUNTRY TO COUNTY

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The consumer behavior varies across states, regions and countries. For example, the behavior of the urban consumers is different from that of the rural consumers. A good number of rural consumers are conservative in their buying behaviors. The rich rural consumers may think twice to spend on luxuries despite having sufficient funds, whereas the urban consumers may even take bank loans to buy luxury items such as cars and household appliances. The consumer behavior may also vary across the states, regions and countries. It may differ depending on the upbringing, lifestyles and level of development.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To trace out the reason for and factor motivating customer to choose departmental stores for their purchase
- To study the attitude of the customer towards quality and price of the product offered by the study unit.
- To study the level of customer satisfaction towards the service rendered by the study unit.

3. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

SAMPLE DESIGN

The researcher has adopted convenient sampling technique for the study 50 respondents were selected. From the 50 respondents, 40 respondents were from various localities and 10 respondents were from nearby the stores who purchase regularly.

DATA COLLECTION

The present study is based on the collection of primary data and secondary data. The researcher has collected primary data through printed questionnaire and secondary data was collected through the internet and text books. The study is mostly had been collected on the basis of primary data.

DATA PROCESSING

After the collection of relevant data the researcher made necessary verification. The master table was prepared by the researcher on the basis of the data collected and the entire table was carefully analyzed by the researcher. Statistical tools include tabulation and sample percentage.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study covers the extent of customer satisfaction regarding various service dimensions rendered by the departmental stores in Tirunelveli city. In the prevailing globalize economic scenario the consumers have ample opportunities to select any shop for buying good quality products. In an acutely competitive atmosphere it is important and challenging for the departmental store keepers to attract the customers to sustain and to promote their business. Among the various aspects that build the rapport with the buyers and keep them in their fold, service quality is much more important than the technical or product quality. Hence the present study aims at bringing out the various aspects concerned with customer satisfaction which would surely serve a purpose for departmental stores to work out their service quality with regard to the various dimensions such as tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy.

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4. LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

- Verbal transaction of the questionnaire to every respondent consumed more time while collecting data.
- Many respondents have studied up to plus two or below. Therefore they were not able to understand the printed questionnaire since the question is typed in English.
- Many respondents were busy with their purchase and they were not willing to answer to the questionnaire. Some respondent have no clear idea and knowledge about the stores and its service. In that case feedback given by them may not to find its reality and reliability.

5. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to **Leo and Philippe (2002)**, the shopping departmental stores image is a holistic entity created from the elements such as retail mix, infrastructure and atmosphere. Thus, the shopping departmental stores image can be managed to create a shopping destination for its potential shoppers. A strong image of a shopping location will influence customers' purchase intentions, longer shopping time and higher sales turnover, in effect, more positive shopping behavior. Specific image dimensions can influence emotional responses and shopping decision in particular shopping situations.

Sinha and Banerjee (2004) examined the store choice behavior of shoppers from buyer characteristics. The results revealed that shoppers gave prominence to proximity of the store, merchandise and service. While food (grocery) stores are chosen more on the basis of their proximity and long–term association, with merchandise and service contributing secondarily to enhance utility, consumer durables stores are chosen based on merchandise and personal referrals, with ambience affecting their choice slightly. Stores dealing in apparel, books and music are chosen purely on ambience

6. ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY

This study examines the impact of a customer buying attitude on various grocery products in departmental store. The growing competition among the retailers and the increased customer dissatisfaction among customer are reasons for the grocery retailers strive to know their customers. The different shopping patterns are evident owing to varied customer tastes and environment. Each customer develops the unique shopping style. Such decision making style provide information to understand different attitude and behaviors of customer. The study aims to focus the exact role of Retail Grocery in departmental store& thus incorporates the market vision in general. In order to study the customer satisfaction it was imperative to learn the general profile of the respondents and their shopping habits. Hence the questionnaire had been divided into three parts, namely

i) General profile of the respondents.
ii) Shopping habits of the customers.
iii) Customer satisfaction towards the product and service quality.

AGE GROUP OF THE RESPONDENTS

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	Frequency	Percent	Cum Percent
25 -35	12	8.0	8.0
35 – 45	26	17.3	25.3
45- 55	59	39.3	64.7
55- 65	53	35.3	100.0
Total	150	100.0	

Source: Primary data

TABLE NO 1

The above table provides information relating to the age of the respondents. It is found that 8% is in the age group of 25-35, another 39.3 % are in the age group of above 45-55 and the remaining 35.3 % are in the age 55-65 years.

OCCUPATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

	Frequency	Percent	Cum Percent
Government	34	22.7	22.7
Private	73	48.7	71.3
Business	27	18.0	89.3
Other	16	10.7	100.0
Total	150	100.0	

Source: primary data

TABLE NO 2

The above table provides information relating to the occupation of the respondents. It is found that, 22.7 % are working in government concern, 48.7% are working in the private concern, 18% are doing business and the remaining 10.7% of respondents are home makers and student

INCOME GROUP OF RESPONDENTS

Frequency	Respondents	Percent	Cum Percent
Below 2 lakhs	16	10.7	10.7
2 lakhs to 4 lakhs	21	14.0	24.7
4 lakhs to 6 lakhs	37	24.7	49.3
6 lakhs and above	76	50.7	100.0
Total	150	100.0	

Sources: Primary data

TABLE NO 3

The above table provides information relating to The Income Group respondents. It is found that, 10.7% of respondents are the people who earn below 2 lakhs ; 14% of respondents are the people who earn 2 lakhs to 4 lakhs . Respondents who earn 4 lakhs to 6 lakhs are 24.7 % and the remaining 50% are the respondents who earn above 6 lakhs .

REGULAR CUSTOMER TO THE STORES

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	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	106	70.7	70.7
No	44	29.3	100.0
Total	150	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

TABLE NO 3

The above table provides information relating to Regular Customer respondents. 70.7% of respondents are the people who are the regular customer to the stores, and the remaining 29.3 % are the respondents who are lopsided (irregular) customers to the stores

RESPONDENTS WHO ARE LONG PERIOD AS THE CUSTOMER TO THE STORES

	Frequency	**Percent**	**C P**
Not very long	12	8.0	8.0
New customer	23	15.3	23.3
Less than 6 month	51	34.0	57.3
Less than 1 year	30	20.0	77.3
More than 1 year	34	22.7	100.0
Total	150	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

TABLE NO 4

The above table provides information relating to Respondents Who Are Long Period as the Customer to the Stores. 8% of respondents are the people who are the normal customer, 15.3% of respondents are new customers to the stores.34 % of the respondents are customers of the stores less than 6 months. 22.7% of the respondents are customers of the stores for less than 1 year.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

	Frequency	**Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Strongly Agree	9	6.0	6.0
Agree	11	7.3	13.3
No option	32	21.3	34.7
Disagree	49	32.7	67.3
Strongly Dis Agree	49	32.7	100.0
Total	150	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

TABLE NO 5

The above table provides information relating to Customer Service in the departmental stores.18% of respondents have found customer service as strongly agree, 6% of the respondents have marked up towards agree, 21.3 % of them state that the service is no option 32.7% of the respondents go with disagree, 32.7% of the respondents have marked to strongly disagree.

ASSOCIATION BETWEEN ANNUAL INCOME AND CUSTOMER VISITS THE SHOP

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	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	3.591	4	.898	.84	.498
Within Groups	153.88	145	1.061		
Total	157.47	149			

Source:Primary data

TABLE NO 6

7. FINDINGS

From the survey it can be concluded that the customers are now rapidly shifting from unorganized retail store to organized Departmental stores. Youngsters who are having ample time are generally visiting the Departmental stores for window shopping. Customers are more conscious about the price they want quality product at affordable prices. The basic necessities products such as grocery product, then after Grocery Departmental stores faces competition from other Departmental stores in terms of quality, own brand, prices of the product. Grocery Departmental stores provided service satisfaction and that create the positive customers positive attitude towards retailing service. Various promotional activities also create positive attitude towards Departmental stores of the customers.

8. SUGGESTIONS

On the basis of the findings of the present study, the following are the suggestions made for the departmental store to gauge and increase the satisfaction level of the customers by concentrating in the aspects of their service quality. The number of cash counters must be increased in the store to save customers’ time as it is really tiring to wait for long at the counter. Sofas and such comfortable seating facilities must be provided to make people relaxed.

9. CONCLUSION

Customers behave differently while purchasing grocery product they view all decision making style. Women customer creates greater impact on purchasing pattern. Most of the people are price conscious while purchasing any grocery product. The basic necessities products such as grocery product, then after Grocery departmental stores face competition from other departmental stores in terms of quality, own brand, prices of the product. The basic necessities products such as grocery product, then after Grocery departmental stores face competition from other departmental stores in terms of quality, own brand, prices of the product.

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