

**CUSTOMER SATISFACTION OF TWIN CITY SHOPPERS:
WITH RESPECT TO SERVICES OF VARIOUS RETAIL STORE TYPES**

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ABSTRACT

India is a land of increasing retail opportunities. The retailers have realized that creating superior customer service is the key for their success. The challenge to the retailer is not only to satisfy the customers, but also to offer various additional services to the customers. In this situation, well carved-out marketing design is essential to have a customer-centric approach. But, since the retailing is yet to take its final shape, they are to be proactive in identifying the customer satisfaction and conduct an analysis to measure the same across various dimensions. On the other hand, customers are also demanding more than what the retailers can provide. In this backdrop, this paper attempts to study the customer satisfaction in the perspective of twin city shoppers of various retail store types.

KEYWORDS: Retail Stores, Store Types, Retail Factors, Retail Services, Overall Satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

Retail is a part of the service sector. This is due to the fact that today, retailers operate in a customer based market. Today's customers demand a lot and so the retailers are trying to meet their expectations. Customers are also empowered to ask for better services round the clock. They also wish to have services with lots of dignity and special treatment. In this relevance, a retailer can succeed only by providing better service and by maximizing the satisfaction levels of the customers. [1]

The term Customer Satisfaction defines a state of perception that the customer holds regarding a product or service in which the customer feels content with the service quality that has been provided. Customer Satisfaction levels can actually increase based on how retailers offer retail service. So, in establishing a customer satisfaction tracking system, the retailers have to monitor their retail factors and retail services. [2]

This paper aims to study the customer satisfaction in the perspective of twin city shoppers of various retail store types. For the purpose of analysis, the various retail stores considered for the study were grouped into twelve store types and an attempt was made to find out the significant differences among the retail factors by using few statistical tools. In this process, a modest attempt has also been made to rank the various retail store types based on their services and relate them to the overall satisfaction obtained by the customers. [3]

Objectives of the study

1. To know the demographics of customers of various store types.
2. To identify whether there are any significant differences among the store types with respect to various retail factors.
3. To relate the retail services of various store types to customers' overall satisfaction.

Methodology and Sampling

The main aim of the study was to relate the retail services to customers' overall satisfaction, of various retail store types located in Hyderabad and Secunderabad, listed in ReachoutHyderabad.com, numbering hundred. However, the information needed for the study was collected from four hundred customers of these retail store types on a convenience sampling basis.

Data Collection

The present study made use of primary and secondary data. A structured questionnaire was prepared to collect the primary data. A pilot study was undertaken before administering the questionnaire to the customers and it was found that there was no need for any modification, so the questionnaire was used for collecting data for this study. The primary data was collected from 400 customers of 100 retail stores through questionnaire. The secondary data has also been collected from textbooks, journals and magazines.

Limitations

1. The areas of the study were restricted only to the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad.
2. Due to the time constraints, only 400 customers of 100 retail stores were considered for the study.
3. The findings of the study were on the basis of the information provided by the customers and hence may be biased.

Data analysis

For the purpose of analysis, 100 retail stores considered for the study had been grouped into twelve retail store types and the data thus gathered from 400 customers had been classified, tabulated and presented in the form of simple tables. The statistical tools were used as and when necessary for the analysis of the data which include percentages, mean values and chi square test.

Objective 1: To know the demographics of customers of various store types

TABLE 1.1: DEMOGRAPHICS OF CUSTOMERS

Demographics	Store types												
	Department	Hyper Market	Footwear	Supermarket	Optical	Electronic Stores	Food retailers	Furniture stores	Gifts and novelties	Jewellery stores	Garment stores	Other retail outlets	Total
Gender													
Male	5	17	14	26	3	14	34	10	15	16	81	51	286
Female	2	7	3	10	4	1	22	6	6	13	27	13	114
Age													
<=18 Yrs	1	3	2	3	1	-	2	-	-	1	10	7	30
19-25 Yrs	0	5	3	4	1	-	4	3	2	6	16	7	51
26-35 Yrs	2	8	4	13	1	5	18	5	7	5	24	19	111
36-45 Yrs	3	2	5	8	3	7	17	5	8	9	29	18	114
>45 Yrs	1	6	3	8	1	3	15	3	4	8	29	13	94
Education													
<= SSC	1	1	4	2	1	2	2	3	2	4	11	5	38
Inter	2	-	1	6	-	-	1	1	2	1	5	3	22
Graduate	2	19	8	22	5	12	43	8	16	18	69	43	265
PG	1	3	2	2	1	1	4	2	1	4	16	7	44
Others	1	1	2	4	-	-	6	2	-	2	7	6	31
Socio-Economic status													
Upper	2	3	3	11	2	1	17	8	4	7	34	20	112
Middle	5	19	12	23	5	13	38	8	15	20	69	42	269
Lower	-	2	2	2	-	1	1	-	2	2	5	2	19
Income levels In Rupees													
<=10,000 pm	-	1	2	5	1	4	4	-	2	6	8	2	35
10,001-20,000 pm	1	13	7	16	2	6	18	7	8	11	49	24	162
20,001-30,000 pm	3	6	5	7	2	2	19	5	6	7	33	25	120
> 30,000 pm	2	1	2	6	2	-	9	3	4	4	15	11	59
Non earning	1	3	1	2	-	3	6	1	1	1	3	2	24
Total Customers	7	24	17	36	7	15	56	16	21	29	108	64	400

Source: Questionnaire to the customers

Interpretation: From the demographics of the customers considered for the study, it is seen from the above table that the number of male customers was high. The table also shows that **most of the customers** belonged to the age group of 36-45 years, education as Graduation, socio-economic status as Middle class and fell in the income group of Rs. 10,001 to 20,000pm.

Objective 2: To identify whether there are any significant differences among the store types with respect to various retail factors.

Hypotheses Testing

The following hypotheses relating to various important retail factors like frequency of visits, patronage of membership card, purchase points, recommending the retail store and distance travelled by the customers were tested with the help of Chi-square tests and the results are discussed below.

2.1: Frequency of visits

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in frequency of visits to various store types by customers.

Alternate Hypothesis: There is significant difference in frequency of visits to various store types by customers.

TABLE 2.1: FREQUENCY OF VISITS

Visit frequency	Store types												
	Department store	Hyper Market	Footwear	Supermarket	Optical	Electronic Stores	Food retailers	Furniture stores	Gifts and	Jewellery stores	Garment stores	Other retail	Total
Very Regular	-	6	4	9	1	4	11	2	7	7	31	13	95
Regular	4	9	7	14	4	7	24	6	7	12	38	26	158
Occasional	3	8	5	11	2	4	12	6	2	7	27	17	104
First Time	-	1	1	2	-	-	9	2	5	3	12	8	43
Total Customers	7	24	17	36	7	15	56	16	21	29	108	64	400

Source: Questionnaire to the customers

Interpretation: The table value of Chi Square for 33 degrees of freedom at 5 per cent level of significance is 47.40 and the calculated value is 23.40. Since, the calculated value is less than the table value, the null hypothesis is accepted and it may be concluded that there is no significant difference in frequency of visits to various store types by customers.

2.2: Patronage of Membership card

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the patronage of membership card by customers at various store types.

Alternate Hypothesis: There is significant difference in the patronage of membership card by customers at various store types.

TABLE 2.2: PATRONAGE OF MEMBERSHIP CARD

Patronage of Membership card	Store types												
	Department store	Hyper Market	Footwear	Supermarket	Optical	Electronic Stores	Food retailers	Furniture stores	Gifts and novelties	Jewellery stores	Garment stores	Other retail outlets	Total
Yes	-	2	1	5	-	-	2	-	3	6	5	1	25
No	7	21	15	29	7	15	45	14	13	20	91	55	332
NA	-	1	1	2	-	-	9	2	5	3	12	8	43
Total Customers	7	24	17	36	7	15	56	16	21	29	108	64	400

Source: Questionnaire to the customers

Interpretation: The table value of Chi Square for 22 degrees of freedom at 5 per cent level of significance is 33.92 and the calculated value is 36.09. Since the calculated value is more than the table value, the null hypothesis is rejected and it be concluded that there is significant difference in the patronage of membership card by customers at various store types.

2.3: Purchase points

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the purchase points to the credit of customers at various store types.

Alternate Hypothesis: There is significant difference in the purchase points to the credit of customers at various store types.

TABLE 2.3: PURCHASE POINTS

Purchase Points	Store types												
	Department store	Hyper Market	Footwear	Supermarket	Optical	Electronic Stores	Food retailers	Furniture stores	Gifts and novelties	Jewellery stores	Garment stores	Other retail outlets	Total
Yes	4	4	-	10	-	4	47	4	-	4	26	14	117
No	3	19	16	24	7	11	9	10	16	22	70	42	249
NA	-	1	1	2	-	-	-	2	5	3	12	8	34
Total Customers	7	24	17	36	7	15	56	16	21	29	108	64	400

Source: Questionnaire to the customers

Interpretation: The table value of Chi Square for 22 degrees of freedom at 5 per cent level of significance is 33.92 and the calculated value is 122.05. Since the calculated value is more than

the table value, the null hypothesis is rejected and it may be concluded that there is significant difference in the purchase points to the credit of customers at various store types.

2.4: Recommending the retail stores

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the customers recommending the retail stores with respect to various store types.

Alternate Hypothesis: There is significant difference in the customers recommending the retail stores with respect to various store types.

TABLE 2.4: RECOMMENDING THE RETAIL STORES

Recommending the retail stores	Store types												
	Department store	Hyper Market	Footwear	Supermarket	Optical	Electronic Stores	Food retailers	Furniture stores	Gifts and novelties	Jewellery stores	Garment stores	Other retail outlets	Total
Yes	2	20	12	29	3	11	51	14	20	26	96	53	337
No	1	2	3	5	1	3	4	2	-	2	4	5	32
NA	4	2	2	2	3	1	1	-	1	1	8	6	31
Total Customers	7	24	17	36	7	15	56	16	21	29	108	64	400

Source: Questionnaire to the customers

Interpretation: The table value of Chi Square for 22 degrees of freedom at 5 per cent level of significance is 33.92 and the calculated value is 56.04. Since the calculated value is more than the table value the null hypothesis is rejected and it may be concluded that there is significant difference in the customers recommending the retail stores with respect to various store types.

2.5: Distance Travelled

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the distance travelled by customers to retail stores with respect to various store types.

Alternate Hypothesis: There is significant difference in distance travelled by customers to retail stores with respect to various store types.

TABLE 2.5: DISTANCE TRAVELLED

Distance Travelled	Store types												
	Department store	Hyper Market	Footwear	Supermarket	Optical	Electronic Stores	Food retailers	Furniture stores	Gifts and novelties	Jewellery stores	Garment stores	Other retail outlets	Total
< 1 km	-	5	1	4	-	4	6	3	3	4	21	9	60
1-5 km	3	12	12	26	3	8	41	9	14	19	63	38	248
> 5km	4	7	4	6	4	3	9	4	4	6	24	17	92
Total Customers	7	24	17	36	7	15	56	16	21	29	108	64	400

Source: Questionnaire to the customers

Interpretation: The table value of Chi Square for 22 degrees of freedom at 5 per cent level of significance is 33.92 and the calculated value is 22.64. Since the calculated value is less than the table value, the null hypothesis is accepted and it may be concluded that there is no significant difference in the distance travelled by customers to retail stores with respect to various store types.

Objective 3: To relate the retail services of various store types to customers' overall satisfaction.

The customers were asked to rank the twenty five retail services listed in Table 3.1, on a 10 point scale with 1 as least and 10 as best satisfactory. In the similar way, the overall satisfaction derived was also ranked by the customers.

TABLE 3.1: RETAIL SERVICES

Sl. No.	Retail Services
1.	Reputation of the store
2.	Arrangement to locate needed product
3.	Neatness and orderliness of displays
4.	Convenience of the store
5.	Convenient timings
6.	Lighting and layout
7.	Safety and security
8.	Ambience and esthetics
9.	Friendliness
10.	Sense of fun while in the outlet
11.	Customer care
12.	Customer sensitivity and concern
13.	Customer greetings / relation
14.	Complaint handling
15.	Receive communication
16.	Speed of checkout
17.	Attentiveness by the retailer
18.	Stock availability
19.	Open on holidays
20.	Speed and efficiency of the retailer
21.	Packing of purchased items
22.	Pricing
23.	Accuracy of signage and displays
24.	After-sales service
25.	Fulfill expectations
	Overall Satisfaction

Source: Questionnaire to the customers

The various ranks given by all the customers for the twenty five retail services as depicted in Table 3.1 were grouped and average ranks were taken for each store type. Similarly, ranks given

for Overall satisfaction` derived by the customers of various store types were also grouped and average ranks were taken and the same is depicted in the Table 3.2

TABLE 3.2: CUSTOMERS' OVERALL SATISFACTION BASED ON RETAIL SERVICES

Sl. No.	Store Types	Average of ranks of twenty five retail services	Average of ranks on Overall satisfaction
1	Departmental stores	9	9
2	Electronic Stores	7	8
3	Food Retailers	7	6
4	Furniture Stores	7	7
5	Footwear	7	7
6	Gifts and Novelties	6	6
7	Garment Stores	7	7
8	Hypermarkets	7	8
9	Jewellery Stores	7	7
10	Optical	7	8
11	Super Markets	7	7
12	Other outlets	7	7

Interpretation: As seen in the above table based on the average ranking done for various store types, Departmental stores were ranked high for their retail services and for the overall satisfaction derived by the customers.

CONCLUSION

It is a well know fact that no retail store can exist without customers. The requirements of the customers are ever changing and are demanding more than what is needed. They are smarter, more price conscious, less forgiving and are open to similar or better offers by the competitors. In this relevance, a retail store can succeed, only by taking care of its customers and maximizing customers' overall satisfaction. [4] So, the concept of customer satisfaction occupies a central position in offering retail services. In this backdrop, a retail store is viewed as a cluster of retail factors and retail services that are important to attain overall satisfaction by the customers. [5] It could thus be concluded that with the immense relevance that customer satisfaction has gained, every retail store type should give importance to it and make the customers feel delighted with respect to the retail services. [6]

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