A STUDY ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND EXPECTATION TOWARDS DEPARTMENTAL STORES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO COIMBATORE CITY

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Introduction
Gone are the days were the consumer went in search of materials from shop to shop. Today, things are made available in one shop, one place. These days, consumer buying is not mere transfer of item from seller to buyer. Consumer wants buying to become a happy affair. They would like to see, touch and feel the commodities that they buy. Understanding this psychology for the consumer many organizations have come to make purchase of happy affair. Retailing as an occupation came into existence when farmers started producing more food than they required. Trading was an important part of daily life in ancient world.

Marketing
Business today, concentrating on marketing is found to be fairly successful though success depends on many other factors. The purchase decision being an essence is an important aspect of marketing. Consumers are liable for influence under different environment. Under these circumstances a study has been conducted to analysis the preference of consciences towards departmental stores. Channel of distribution is also called marketing channel or trade channel, are used to provide consumer with a convenient means of obtaining the products and services they desire. Thus, the route or path through which goods more from the place of production to the place of consumption is called channel to distribution. There are various persons or business consumer such as middlemen consisting of wholesalers and retailers.
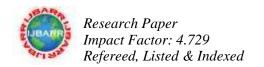
Department Store
A department store is a retail establishment with a building open to the public, offering a wide range of consumer goods. It typically allows shoppers to choose between multiple merchandise lines, at variable price points, in different product categories known as "departments". Department stores usually sell a variety of products, including clothing, furniture, home appliances, toys, cosmetics, gardening, toiletries, sporting goods, do it yourself, paint, and hardware and additionally select other lines of products such as food, books, jewelry, electronics, stationery, photographic equipment, baby needs, and pet supplies. Customers check out near the front of the store or alternatively, sales counters within each department. Some are part of a retail chain of many stores, while others may be independent retailers, existing entirely independently or as licensed dealers. Big-box stores, hypermarkets, and discount stores are modern equivalent of historical department stores.

How To Measure Customer Satisfaction & Expectation
A customer buying a product may associate satisfaction on a number of parameters and the degree of satisfaction will depend upon the extent to which the brand scores on the parameters. For measuring the customer satisfaction, a right kind of measurement system and an effective instrument system and an effective instrument must be developed that can measure the perception and attitude of the customers. Customer's perception and attitude towards quality of products and services and their overall satisfaction are expressed through some observable indicators, expressed in response to the questions asked, as per a predesigned questionnaire. If the customers indicate good response about the product on customer satisfaction questionnaire and demonstrate positive behavior, it is concluded that they are satisfied with the product and services delivered to them. Measurement is accomplished by means of quantitative interviews among a representative sample of customers and prospective buyers.

1.2 Need of the Study
Customer satisfaction has become a crucial point of differentiation in a retail store, where consumers make weekly, fortnightly or monthly trips to departmental store and then spend more on these trips than other times,

especially in countries like India when competition in retailing is very fierce. Unfortunately in retail industry, most of the unsatisfied consumers do not complain, they just go shopping somewhere else. So the lesson for the retailers is that customer expectations always move upward and it is only the retailers is that just go shopping somewhere else. So the lesson for the retailers is that customer expectations always move upward and it is only the satisfied customers who are more likely to remains loyal in the long run. Departmental store is one of the fastest growing retail formats in India. Hence, the study was taken up to understand the satisfaction of customers of departmental stores and the factors which motivate the departmental stores.

1.3 Objectives of The Study
A study on customer`s satisfaction towards departmental stores in Coimbatore district was taken up with the following objectives.
1. To analyze the socio-economic profile of the respondents.
2. To find out the shopping behavior of the respondents at the departmental stores.
3. To study the factors influencing customer's purchases at the departmental stores.
4. To measure the level of satisfaction of the customers of the departmental stores.

1.4 Scope of the Study
The study is basically aimed at studying the satisfaction of customers of departmental stores and services provided by departmental stores to their customers. The sample covered the customers of departmental stores functioning in Coimbatore district.

1.5 Research Methodology
Introduction
Research is an intensive study in a particular field to achieve at a better conclusion of a problem. Research Methodology is a systematic way of solving the problem. Research Methodology explains the various steps that are generally adopted by the researcher in studying the research problem along with logic behind him.

Research Design:A Research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with the economy in procedure.

Data Collection: The primary data is collected for the present day. Questionnaire was used to collect the information from the respondents.
1. **Primary Source:** Primary source of data collection was from the walk in customers of Reliance Life Insurance.
2. **Secondary Source:** Related books, magazines, journals, company records and the website of the company.

Area of study:The area of study refers to Coimbatore city.

Questionnaire Design: The questionnaire method was used to collect primary data. This method was chosen for following reasons. Answers are in the respondents own words so it is free from being biased. The universe was small hence this method was found suitable. And the questionnaire contains the questions related to the field.

Sampling Techniques: The sampling technique used was non-probability sampling as each population numbers had an unknown chance of being included in the sample. Under the non-probability sampling, the convenience sampling technique was chosen.

Non-Probability Sampling
Non-probability sampling is that sampling procedure which does not afford any basis for estimating the probability that each item in the population has being included in the sample. In this type of sampling, items for the sample are selected deliberately by the researcher; his choice concerning the items remains supreme. In other words, under non-probability sampling the organizers of the inquiry purposively choose the particular units of the

universe for constituting a sample on the basis that the small mass that they so select out of a huge one will be typical or representative of the whole. Non-probability sampling is also known by different names such as deliberate sampling, purposive sampling, and judgment sampling.

Size of sample
This refers to the number of items to be selected from the universe to constitute a sample. This is the major problem before a researcher. The size of the sample should neither be excessively large, nor too requirements of efficiency, representativeness, reliability and flexibility. While deciding the size of sample, researcher must determine the desired precision as also an acceptable confidence level for the estimate. In this study the size of the sample is 300.

In the following research non-probability sampling was used. In non- probability, convenient sampling was used in this research.

Convenient Sampling
In this method, the samples are drawn for the convenience s of the researcher, such as nearness easy availability of data. Though this method is not scientific it will be useful for getting insight into the subject matter of study such as pilot study. It is useful for studies with the objectives of getting insight and learning research methodology.

Statistical Tools
The accuracy of a research study is enhanced by the use of statistical tools. It helps in clear interpretation of quantitative and qualitative information, in a way that is under stable.
he statistical tools used are,
1. Percentage analysis
2. Rank Analysis
3. Chi-square.

2.Review of Literature
Andrea Geoeppel and Brian Bloch (2017) in their study on "An investigation of experience – orientated consumers in retailing" observed that the experience orientated marketing is based on the concept that many buyers enjoy shopping and regard it as a leisure time - activity. This studycomprises an empirical investigation of what customers understand by experience-orientated buying, the types of consumer attracted by it, and the consequences for store location, design etc. Using the environmental psychological behavior model of Mehrabian and Russell as a basic, an investigation was conducted in a leading clothing department store in Paderborn, West Germany. Cluster analysis was used to categorize buyers as 'indolent', 'sensual', 'young extremists'; the nature of these clusters is examined, as well as the implications for the retail marketing of clothing.

3. Profile of the Company
The origins of the department store lay in the growth of the conspicuous consumer society at the turn of the 19th century. As the Industrial Revolution accelerated economy expansion, the affluent middle-class grew in size and wealth. This urbanized social group, sharing a culture of consumption and changing fashion, was the catalyst for the retail revolution. As rising prosperity and social mobility increased the number of people with disposable income in the late period, window was transformed into a leisure activity and entrepreneurs, like the potter Josiah Wedgwood, pioneered the use of marketing techniques to influence the prevailing tastes and preferences of society. One of the first department stores may have been Bennett's in Derby, first established as ironmongers in 1734. It still stands to this day, trading in the same building. However, the first reliably dated department store to be established was Harding, Howell & Co, which opened in 1796 on Pall Mall, London.

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4. Data Analysis and Interpretation   Table No: 01

Name of the Respondents	Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	Male	149
	Female	Female	151
	Total	**300**	**300**
Age group	Below 20 years	14	4.67
	21years to 40 years	194	64.67
	41 years to 60 years	80	26.67
	Above 60 years	12	4.00
	Total	**300**	**100**
Marital Status	Single	84	28
	Married	216	72
	Total	**300**	**100**
Educational qualification	Up to school level	74	24.67
	Diploma	37	12.33
	Graduate	109	36.33
	Post graduate	66	22.00
	Illiterate	14	4.67
	Total	**300**	**100**
Types of Family	Nuclear	196	65.33
	Joint	104	34.67
	Total	**300**	**100**
Members in the family	Up to 2 members	43	14.33
	3-5 members	186	62.00
	6-8 members	54	18.00
	Above 8 members	17	5.67
	Total	**300**	**100**
Occupational Status	House wives	59	19.67
	Employees	129	43.00
	Self employed	98	32.67
	Professionals	7	2.33
	Retired persons	7	2.33
	Total	**300**	**100**
Monthly Income	Up to Rs.10,000	184	61.33
	Rs.10,001 – Rs.15,000	43	14.33
	Rs.15,001 – Rs.20,000	30	10.00
	Above Rs.20,000	43	14.33
	Total	**300**	**100**
In-Store	Attractive display of products	140	46.67
	Reasonable price	210	70.00
	Wide variety of products	75	25.00
	Store ambience	7	2.33
	Immediate necessity of goods	2	0.67
	300	**100**	**300**

Chart No: 01

Table No:02 Factors Influencing Customers Purchase At Department Stores

No	Factors	Mean score	Rank
1.	Convenient location	4.85	3
2.	Provisions for parking facilities	4.02	13
3.	Availability of goods under one roof	4.84	4
4.	Reasonable price	4.62	5
5.	Availability of products of all price range	4.51	8
6.	Attractive display of products	4.53	7
7.	Pleasant shopping environment	4.27	10
8.	Cordial employee services	3.99	14
9.	Wide varieties of products	4.28	9
10.	Entertainment to children	3.72	16
11.	Door delivery	4.23	11
12.	Extended store hours	4.88	1
13.	Free gift – wrapping	3.65	17
14.	Packing of the products purchased	4.86	2
15.	Price discount	4.58	6
16.	Operating more billing counters	4.12	12
17.	Provisions for restaurant	3.93	15

source : Primary Data

Interpretation

Table 17 list the factors influencing the customers purchase at departmental stores. The most influencing factors on customers is the extended store hours, followed by proper packing of the products purchased, convenient location, availability of goods under one roof and reasonable price. Other factors influencing the respondents include price discounts offered, attractive display of products, availability of products of all price ranges, wide varieties of products, pleasant shopping environment, and door delivery. It was found that operating more billing counters, parking facilities, cordial employee services, restaurant services, entertainment to children and free gift wrapping suggest lowest rank by the customers.

5.Findings, Suggestion & Conclusion
5.1 Findings
1. Majority of the respondents are female.
2. Majority of the respondents belong to the age group of 21years to 40 years.
3. Majority of the respondents are Graduate.
4. Majority of the respondents are married.
5. Majority of the respondents are nuclear
6. Majority of the respondent's family member belong to 3-5 members.
7. Majority of the respondents are employees.
8. Majority of the respondent's family income is Up to Rs.10,000.
9. Majority of the respondents decides to buy the goods at departmental stores due to reasonable price.

5.2 Suggestions
1. Departmental stores should have a wide range of advertisement in all means of communication
2. Billing counters should be increased in order to reduce the long queues in the billing section. So that the customers can save more time.
3. Adequate parking facilities should be provided for their customers.
4. Customer care services should be improved
5. Advanced infrastructure facilities should be provided.
6. More entertainment should be provided for children. It helps the parents to shop in a pleasant manner.

Conclusion
Today, the retail market in India is highly competitive due to increase in the number of consumers belonging to middle income groups, change in consumption pattern and opening up of economy due to liberalization, privatization and globalization. Against this background the study was attempt to analyze the customer's satisfaction in departmental stores and organization to frame suitable strategies and enhance the market share. Most of the customer's prefer departmental stores because of high quality and low price. Majority of the customer's opining that the qualities of the products are good. Customers prefer the departmental stores because of the availability of goods under one roof. It helps the customers to save their time. While purchasing, the customers used to see product assortments, availability of all brand and store location and door delivery of the departmental stores and level of satisfactions in the services provided by the departmental stores. Customers who are satisfied tend to continue shopping and recommend the departmental stores to others.

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