



Shopping Malls and Customer Satisfaction: A Study of Consumer Behavior and Service Quality

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ABSTRACT

Retailing is a fundamental aspect of marketing, involving acquiring products from various sources and their direct sale to consumers. The organized retail sector in India has been expanding rapidly, with an annual growth rate reaching up to 30% by 2015. The retail sector significantly influences purchasing behaviors and decision-making processes. Customer satisfaction, a critical retail factor, reflects consumers' experiences and feedback regarding purchased products and services. This study examines the influence of sales promotion strategies and marketing techniques on customer satisfaction in Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar shopping malls. It also explores demographic variations in consumer satisfaction levels. Data were collected from 100 respondents using a self-designed questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale. The findings highlight key consumer satisfaction factors, categorized into sales promotion and marketing mix components. The study provides valuable insights for retailers, enabling them to develop more effective promotional strategies and better understand customer preferences across gender demographics.

Keywords:- *Customer satisfaction, sales promotion strategies, shopping malls, organized retailing*

Introduction

Marketing is an ever-evolving process that plays a vital role in the economy, centered around exchanging goods, services, and ideas to meet consumer needs and desires. It encompasses various activities designed to facilitate the seamless flow of products from producers to end users. Among these activities, promotion stands out as a critical component. Its primary objective is to captivate potential customers and persuade them to choose specific products or services over competing options. The sales promotion mix is central to effective promotional strategies, which includes various tools such as attractive discounts, engaging contests, and enticing incentives. These tactics are carefully crafted to boost customer



engagement, drive sales performance, and create a sense of urgency that encourages immediate purchases.

Retailing holds a rich historical significance, serving not only as a commercial hub but also as a vital social institution where approximately 30% of all consumer spending occurs. Modern shopping malls, which represent a contemporary evolution of traditional marketplaces, house a variety of independent retail stores under a single operational framework. These malls not only provide a diverse shopping experience but also create a communal atmosphere where consumers can socialize and enjoy various entertainment options.

In today's retail landscape, customer satisfaction has become an increasingly critical focus. Marketers are tasked with the responsibility of identifying their target consumer segments, understanding their preferences, and effectively fulfilling their needs. This demands a proactive approach to gathering continuous feedback to enhance service quality and ensure that customers feel valued and appreciated. By prioritizing customer satisfaction, retailers can foster loyalty, drive repeat business, and ultimately thrive in a competitive marketplace.

Literature Review

Research into customer satisfaction has revealed a multitude of factors that profoundly shape consumers' shopping experiences. In his 2006 study, Johan discovered that customer satisfaction in shopping malls is inherently subjective, greatly influenced by each individual's unique perceptions and personal interactions during their visit. He noted that several key elements play a critical role in shaping this satisfaction, including the variety and quality of product offerings, the overall ambiance of the store environment, and the level of service provided by staff members.

Hui et al. (2001) highlighted the necessity of offering specialized services that address the diverse needs of various customer segments. This includes providing accessibility features for individuals with disabilities, ensuring they can navigate the shopping space comfortably, as well as incorporating entertainment options for children, such as play areas or interactive displays, which can enhance the family shopping experience. These considerations not only improve customer satisfaction but also foster a more inclusive shopping environment that caters to a broader audience.

Other studies (Ha & Muthaly, 2008) have linked advertising spending to customer expectations and satisfaction levels. Surveys remain a standard method for assessing consumer feedback, providing valuable insights for improving service quality (Hekman et al., 2010).



Erasmus and Lebani (2008) examined the role of credit and store cards in shopping behavior, concluding that easy financial access enhances consumer satisfaction. The evolving retail landscape necessitates continuous adaptation of promotional strategies to maintain consumer engagement and loyalty.

Objectives of the Study

1. To identify key factors in sales promotion that influence customer satisfaction in organized retailing.
2. To analyze the impact of sales promotion strategies on customer satisfaction across gender demographics.
3. To assess the role of marketing mix components in shaping consumer experiences.
4. To determine the demographic variations in marketing mix effectiveness.

Research Methodology:-

The research employed a meticulously designed questionnaire that encompassed 15 distinct items related to sales promotions, alongside 39 variables associated with the marketing mix. Data collection was conducted with a sample of 100 participants, all aged 22 years or older, residing in the city of Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar. The demographic factors examined in this study included various aspects such as age, educational attainment, professional background, gender, and income levels. To analyze the collected data, advanced statistical techniques, specifically Factor Analysis and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), were utilized with the assistance of SPSS and Microsoft Excel software. A significance threshold of 5% was established for conducting hypothesis testing, ensuring that the findings were statistically robust.

Findings and Discussion

Four key sales promotion factors and eleven marketing mix factors were identified using factor analysis. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity confirmed the dataset's appropriateness for factor analysis.

Impact of Gender on Sales Promotion Strategies:

- 1) Lucky Offers: Women showed higher responsiveness to festival and seasonal promotions.
- 2) Spot Offers: Gender did not significantly impact impulse-driven promotions.
- 3) Price Sensitivity Offers: Female shoppers demonstrated greater price sensitivity.



- 4) Prize and Exchange Offers: Promotional gifts and exchange schemes had limited gender-based variation.

Impact of Gender on Marketing Mix Factors:

- 1) Product Seeking: Male consumers exhibited higher concern for product variety and brand availability.
- 2) Comfort & Entertainment: Shoppers prioritized store ambiance and entertainment facilities.
- 3) Service Convenience: Loyalty programs and personalized services contributed to higher satisfaction levels.
- 4) Pricing & Billing: Female consumers showed greater sensitivity to pricing strategies and fast billing services.
- 5) Staff Interaction: Women placed higher importance on salesperson engagement.

Conclusions:-

The study highlights the critical role of sales promotion and marketing mix strategies in enhancing customer satisfaction. Gender differences were observed in response to promotional schemes and service expectations. Female consumers demonstrated greater responsiveness to pricing strategies, personal attention from sales staff, and promotional offers. The findings offer valuable insights for retailers seeking to tailor their marketing strategies to different demographic segments, ultimately improving customer experiences in organized retail environments.

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