CHAPTER VII

FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION
7.1 INTRODUCTION

Earlier, perception of retail outlet customers and retailers of organized retail outlets about various aspects of customer relationship management practices in retail outlets. The retailers’ response to defective items and methods adopted by the retailers to develop relationship with existing customers along with the opinion of the customers in the sample regarding their willingness for going to same shop again and recommending the shop to others are analyzed empirically.

The relationship between perceived CRM practices and customer perceived retailers’ respondent defective items and also the relationship between perceived CRM practices and customer perceived methods adopted by the retail outlets to develop relationship with customers as well as the effect of perceived CRM practices on customers’ intention of going to same shop again and recommending the shop to others is evaluated. From inferences of the results of the analysis, many findings have emerged out. The findings are summarized in this chapter along with conclusions and suggestions.

7.2 FINDINGS

The followings are the list of findings from the inferences of the results of the analysis.

FINDINGS FROM CRM PRACTICES OF RETAIL OUTLETS; CUSTOMERS PERCEPTIONS.

(1) The Customer Relationship Management (CRM) practices in retail outlets as perceived by the retail outlet customers comprises of five major aspects viz., “Responding to queries and customers complaint”, “Providing information on
purchased products”, “payment and delivery system”, “price discount and seasonal offers” and “Ensuring the availability of variety products and delivering them with stylish packing”.

(2) It is found with 95 per cent confidence that CRM practice of retail outlets in respect of “payment and delivery system” as well as in terms of “ensuring the availability of variety products and delivering them with stylish packing” is good and practicing other CRM practices than above two vary between moderate to good level.

(3) CRM practice in retail outlets in ensuring the availability of variety products and delivering them with stylish packing is good and consistent whereas payment / delivery system is good but not consistent. On the whole, the CRM practice in retail outlets is perceived differently between male and female customers, in turn indicating inconsistency in it.

(4) There is significant difference in the perceived status of CRM practice in retail outlets across customer groups with different age levels, educational status, occupational status, family income levels, marital status and family size, in turn indicating that there is inconsistency in CRM practices in retail outlets.

(5) The perceived status of CRM practice in retail outlets differ by area of domicile of the respondents in turn indicating that residential area of the customers is an important factor for CRM practices of retail outlet.

(6) It is found that highly educated married customers of organized retail outlets have high perception about retail outlets’ practice of responding to queries and customer complaint and also about their practice regarding payment and
delivery system as well as about “ensuring the availability of variety products and delivering them with stylish packing”

FINDINGS FROM RETAILERS RESPONSE ON GOODS – CUSTOMERS PERCEPTION.

(7) The organized retail outlets’ CRM practice in providing information on purchased products on urban customers is more.

(8) The retail outlets respond to change the defected product with another one of same kind but they do not give either another product of different kind, repay the money or repair the product and give it back.

(9) There is significant relationship between CRM practices and “giving another product” of different kind against defective item in organized retail outlets.

(10) The organized retail outlets who are “ensuring the availability of variety products and delivering them with stylish packing” and those who do not respond much to the queries and customer complaint but whose practice of payment and delivery system is higher are unlikely to give another product of different type against defected product.

(11) It is found that changing the defective product with another one of similar type in retail outlets is significantly related to their CRM practices.

(12) The retail outlets that do not change the defective product with another one of similar type tend to practice more on payment and delivery system whereas the retail outlets that change the defective product with another one of similar type practice more on providing information on purchased products.

(13) Repaying or not repaying the money for defective items is independent of the overall CRM practices but significantly related to responding to queries and
customers complaint, providing information on purchased products, payment / delivery system and price discount / seasonal offers in retail outlets.

(14) The CRM practice in terms of price discount and seasonable offers and payment / delivery system is more in retail outlets who repay the money for defective items whereas CRM practice of “responding to queries and customers complaint” and “providing information on purchased products” is higher in retail outlets who do not repay the money for defective product.

(15) The CRM practices in respect of payment / delivery system and price discount / seasonal offers are important in determining the retail outlets’ behaviour of repairing the defective product and giving it back”.

(16) The practice of payment / delivery system is high in retail outlets who do not repair the defective product and give it back to customers whereas the practice of price discount / seasonal offers is more in retail outlets who repair the defective product and give it back to customers.

(17) It is found that sending seasonal greetings is the method mostly used by the retailers followed by providing information about new products through mail and sending sales representative to home as method to develop the relationship with customers.

(18) There is significant relationship between CRM practices and sending seasonal greeting to develop relationship with customers in retail outlets as perceived by the customer respondents.

(19) The organized retail outlets that are more in giving price discount / seasonal offers as part of promoting CRM, are more likely to send seasonal greetings to develop relationship with customers.
(20) Providing information about new products through e-mail to develop customer relationship is found with retail outlets where CRM practices are good.

(21) The organized retail outlets, which practice payment and delivery system in better way, is more likely to provide information on new products through email.

(22) The organized retail outlets’ method of sending sales representative to home to develop relationship with customers is significantly related to their CRM practices.

(23) The organized retail outlets that are ensuring the availability of variety products and delivering them with stylish packing and responding to queries and customer complaints are unlikely to send sales representative to home to develop customer relationship.

(24) It is found that using or not using certain methods to develop relationship with customers is significantly determined by the CRM practices.

(25) The retail outlets that use some methods to develop relationship with customers are more likely to practice price discount / seasonal offers.

**FINDINGS ON RETAILERS PERCEPTION OF CRM.**

(26) The customers have not changed their retail outlets in which they have made earlier purchase due to better CRM practice.

(27) It is found that ‘going to same shop again’ is significantly associated with educational status of respondents and independent of their gender status, age levels, occupational status, income, marital status, family size and area of domicile in the study region.
(28) There is significant relationship between perceived CRM practices in retail outlets and customers' intention of going to same shop again.

(29) The customers are highly likely to go for the same retail outlet (shop) again if CRM practices in retail outlets in respect of “responding to queries and customers complaints” and “ensuring the availability of variety products and delivering them with stylish” is more.

(30) It is found that recommending the shop (retail outlet) to other is higher in the study region. Further, the customers’ intention of recommending their retail outlet to others is significantly associated with educational status and area of residence and such intention is independent of other socio-economic variables like sex, age, occupation, income, marital status and family size.

(31) There is notable effect on CRM practices of retail outlets on customers’ willingness to recommend the shops (retail outlets) to others.

(32) The customers tend to recommend the retail shops (to others) where CRM practice in respect of payment and delivery system as well as responding to queries and customer complaint” is more. At the same time, the customers do not like to recommend the retail shops where CRM practice of providing information on purchased products is less.

(33) It is found with 95 per cent confidence level that the behaviour of customers in respect of their expectation, attitude, perception, knowledge on selecting products, relationship with salesman, making complaint as well as their behaviour after making purchase has been good according to retailers in the study region.
However, the above perceived status of customer behaviour vary significantly (not consistent) with variation in the years of business experience in retail outlet business. It is found that perceived status of customer behaviour decreases from good to moderate range when there is an increase in years of business experience among the retailers in the study region.

34. It is found that the good opinion of the retailers about customer behaviour is significantly related to number of retail outlets owned in the study region.

35. The customers are more likely to purchase low price products followed by more quantity products and rich quality products. It is also found that the customer have given little attention to advertised products as well as to retailer recommended products.

36. The customers with good expectation, attitude and relationship with salesmen have never purchased low priced products rather the customers whose behaviours towards all aspects are moderate tend to buy low priced products from retail outlets.

37. The customers who have highly good expectation and good knowledge on selecting products tend to buy the rich quality products.

38. The customers with good perception behaviour of retailers and customers with moderate knowledge on selecting products are highly likely to buy more quantity products.

39. The customers with good attitude, good perception about their retail outlets and good post purchase behaviour is likely to concentrate on advertised products while the customers with good expectation and good knowledge on product selection are unlikely to concentrate on advertised products.
(40) It is found that buying retailer recommended products among customers is significantly related to their behaviour towards making queries.

(41) The frequency of purchase from retail outlets is mostly daily and to certain extent monthly among retail outlet customers in the study region.

(42) The customers who make purchase mostly on daily basis are less likely to buy retailer recommended products while the customer who makes purchase on monthly basis is more likely to buy more quantity products of low price levels that are not rich in quality.

(43) The cash is major payment mode and making purchase on credit comes only next to it.

(44) It is found with 95 per cent confidence level that the CRM activities, such as giving price discount, free gifts, seasons offers, offer at product introduction stage, giving samples and free coupons are high in organized retail outlets in Puducherry region according to retailers.

(45) The CRM activities are not at same level and differ significantly by years of business experience of organized retail outlets in Puducherry region.

(46) The retail outlets where the CRM activities in respect of giving samples and free gifts are more but seasons offers are little are likely to be in the business for more than 10 years whereas the retail outlets where CRM activities in terms of issuing free coupons and giving price discount is higher and giving an offer at product introduction stage is less are likely to be in the business for 6-10 years.

(47) There is significant relationship between CRM activities and number of shops owned by the retailers in the study region.
The retailers owning three and more shops are more in giving samples and price discount but their activities of giving offer at product introduction stage is little and this respondent group differ from other two groups in this regard.

It is found with 95 per cent confidence internal that extent of attending to customer queries regarding availability of new products, procedure for using the product and discount / offers is high while extent of attending to customer queries about product usage rate and produce life cycle is medium among retailers in the region.

There is significant relationship between extent of attending to customer queries and business experience of the retailers in the study region.

It is found attending to customer queries on availability of new product and discount / offers among retailers with more than 10 years of business experience is less extent and this group differ from other two retailer group in this regard. At the same time, the retailers with business experience up to 6 years and above 10 years tend to attend the customer queries on product life cycle and procedure for using new product at high extent.

It is found that extent of attending to customer queries by retailers is significantly related to the number of retail outlets owned by them.

The extent of attending to customer queries on product life cycle is more among the retailers who own three or more number of shops as well as among those who own two shops. Also, the extent of attending to customer queries on discount / offer is more among the retailer group owning two retail outlets.

More than two-thirds of the total retailers in the sample are found to have been maintaining customer database in the study region.
7.3 SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings from discussion of the results, the following suggestions are put forth.

(1) The organized retail outlets have been focussing more on developing relationship with urban customers. They should also give more focus on rural customers also to create goodwill and improve business.

(2) The customers have perceived that the retailer outlets have never exchanged the defected product with another produce of same kind but not with product of another kind. So, the retail outlets should consider exchanging the customer demanded product with defected one to attract and retain the customer base.

(3) The retail outlets should respond to customer queries and complaints in addition to ensuring the availability of variety of products and delivery them with stylish manner in order to make the customers come to their shop again and again.

(4) The customers have stated that they are not used to recommend the retail outlets to others if providing information on purchased is insufficient. Therefore, the retailers should improve this CRM practice to develop good relationship with customers and create good impression about them.

(5) The retailers who are new to the business should adopt various promotional strategies like price discount, free gifts, seasonal offers and giving offer at introduction of new products to attract the customers. They should also be keen on attending to customer queries and provide necessary information about the products as and when needed by the customers.
(6) The retail outlets can undertake a survey on their customers to measure their expectation and level of satisfaction in order to devise appropriate CRM strategies.

7.4 CONCLUSION

In the present research, a focus is made to empirically evaluate various aspects of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) practices in organized retail outlets based on the opinion retail outlet customer population in Puducherry region. The opinion of the customers about response of retail outlet management on defective items and methods adopted by the retailers to develop relationship with existing customers is analyzed along with analyzing their perception on their willingness for going to same shop again and recommending the shop to others apart from evaluating the relationship between perceived CRM practices and customer perceived retailers’ responses on defective items as well as the relationship between CRM practices and methods adopted by the retail outlets to develop relationship with customers. The effect of perceived CRM practices on customers’ intention of going to same shop again and recommending the shop to others is also analyzed.

An attempt is also made to analyze the retailers’ views on their CRM activities as well as extent of attending to various customer queries along with their views on customer behavior and type of product purchased.

It is understood that CRM in organized retail outlets are practices in five different ways viz., “Responding to queries and customers’ complaint”, “Providing information on purchased products”, “payment and delivery system”, “price discount and seasonal offers” and “Ensuring the availability of variety products and delivering them with stylish packing”.
It is concluded that CRM practice of retail outlets in respect of payment and delivery system as well as in terms of “Ensuring the availability of variety products and delivering them with stylish packing” is good and practicing other CRM components tend to vary between moderate to good level in the region. However, the above status of CRM practices in retail outlets were found to be inconsistent when compared across different categories of customers by gender, age levels, educational status, occupational status, family income levels, marital status, family size and area of residence. The highly educated married customers have high perception over retail outlets’ practice of responding to queries / customer complaint and also over their practice regarding payment / delivery system as well as about “ensuring the availability of variety products and delivering them with stylish packing”. Moreover, urban respondents are more likely to have high perception about retail outlets’ practice of providing information on purchased products.

Regarding retail outlets’ response on defective items, it is concluded that the organized retail outlets tend to change the defected product with another one of same kind but they do not either give another product of different kind, repay the money or repair the product and give it back. At the same time, a significant relationship between CRM practices and “giving another product” of different kind against defective item in organized retail outlets. Further, the retail outlets who are ensuring the availability of variety products and delivering them with stylish packing and those who do not respond much to the queries and customer complaint but whose practice of payment and delivery system is more are unlikely to give another product of different type against defected product.
It is concluded that the retail outlets that do not change the defective product with another one of similar type tend to practice more on payment and delivery system whereas the retail outlets that change the defective product with another one of similar type, practice more on providing information on purchased products. Also, the CRM practice in terms of price discount and seasonable offers and payment / delivery system is more in retail outlets who repay the money for defective items whereas CRM practice of “responding to queries and customers complaint” and “providing information on purchased products” is higher in retail outlets that do not repay the money for defective product. The practice of payment / delivery system is high in retail outlets that do not repair the defective product and give it back to customers whereas the practice of price discount / seasonal offers is more in retail outlets who repair the defective product and give it back to customers.

The organized retail outlets develop the relationship with customers mostly by sending seasonal greetings followed by providing information about new products through mail and sending sales representative to home. Sending seasonal greetings is more in the organized retail outlets where giving price discount / seasonal offers as part of promoting CRM is more. The retail outlets that practice payment and delivery system in better way, is more likely to provide information on new products through email to develop customer relationship. At the same time, method of sending sales representative to home to develop customer relationship is little among retail outlets that are ensuring the availability of variety products and delivering them with stylish packing and responding to queries and customer complaints.

Majority of customers tend to go for same shop again and this attitude is affected only by educational status of the customers. Going for same shop again is also related to CRM practices of the organized retail outlets. The customers are highly
likely to go for the same retail outlet (shop) again and again if CRM practices in “responding to queries and customers complaints” and “ensuring the availability of variety products and delivering them with stylish” is higher.

Regarding recommending the shop (retail outlets) to others, it is ascertained that two-thirds of the respondents are willing to recommend their shops to others but such behaviour of customers is determined educational levels and area of residence of the customers. The customers tend to recommend the retail shops (to others) where CRM practice in terms of payment and delivery system as well as in terms of responding to queries and customer complaint” is more. On the other hand, the customers do not like to recommend the retail shops where CRM practice of providing information on purchased products is less.

Regarding customer behaviours, the retailers have observed that the customers are good in expectation, attitude, perception towards retail outlets, knowledge on selecting products, relationship with salesman, making complaint and also their behaviour after making purchase. However, above perception of the retailers becomes inconsistent when compared by their business experience and number of outlets owned. About type of products purchased by the customers, it is concluded from the views of the retailers that customers are more likely to purchase low price products followed by more quantity products and rich quality products and given little attention to advertised products as well as retailer recommended products.

The customers with good expectation, attitude and relationship with salesmen have never purchased low priced products rather the customers whose behaviours towards all aspects are moderate tend to buy low priced products from retail outlets. Further, the customers who have highly good expectation and good knowledge on selecting products tend to buy the rich quality products whereas the customers with
good perception behaviour and customers with moderate knowledge on selecting products are highly likely to buy more quantity products.

It is also understood from the retailers’ perception that the customers with good attitude, good perception about their retail outlets and good post purchase behaviour is likely to concentrate on advertised products while the customers with good expectation and good knowledge on product selection are unlikely to concentrate on advertised products. Buying retailer recommended products among customers is significantly related to their behaviour towards making queries.

It is concluded that the frequency of purchase from retail outlets is mostly daily and to certain extent monthly. A relationship between frequency of purchase and type of product purchased is also observed in the region.

That is, the customers who make purchase mostly on daily basis are less likely to buy retailer recommended products. Similarly, the customer who makes purchase on monthly basis is more likely to buy more quantity products of low price levels that are not rich in quality.

Regarding mode of payment, it is understood from the retailers’ perception that the mode of payment is cash for more than 98 per cent of the customers while making purchase on credit is found with nearly 50 per cent of the customers. As far as CRM activities of the retailers are concerned, it is concluded with 95 per cent confidence interval from the opinion of the retailers that the overall CRM activities, such as giving price discount, free gifts, seasons offers, offer at product introduction stage, giving samples and free coupons are high. But these CRM activities become inconsistent when compared by years of business experience and number of shops owned by the retailers.
Attending to customer queries regarding availability of new products, procedure for using the product and discount / offers is high while extent of attending to customer queries about product usage rate and produce life cycle is medium among retailers. At the same time, the business experience and number of shops owned are the important factors in determining the extent of attending to customer queries.

7.5 SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The study of similar research can be carried out in other regions of Union Territory of Puducherry.

Both organised & unorganised retail outlet can be considered together in respect of CRM.

Within organised retail outlet study can be undertaken with various categories like superstore, malls and hypermarket etc.

The study of similar nature can be done across different states.

The study of similar kind can be extended by including organized retail outlets of all sizes. The present study is confined to Puducherry region and the future research of this nature can be extended to other regions of the State.