CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Creating a superior customer experience has been gaining increasing attention from the retailers. However, there has been a shortage of academic research on this topic. This research has tried to provide a complete picture of the customer experience and its determinants. The domain of customer experience offers huge opportunities for future research. Research-based answers to the various hypotheses will add significantly to retailing theory and offer practical insights for developing and implementing effective experience-based marketing strategies for the retailers. A very few studies has addressed the determinants of customer experience issues across different retail store formats and that too in a dynamic and changing market like India. The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of the different determinants of customer experience in different retail formats. A total of 1056 respondents participated in the study which was conducted in the city of Chennai. This chapter provides a summary of research findings, implications of the research both theoretical and managerial implications along with the limitations of the study and the future research directions.

5.2 SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The results of the study are divided into three sections. In the first section, the demographic characteristics of the retail customers are discussed
for the different retail formats. In the second section, the relationship between the demographic characteristics and customer experience are discussed. In the third section, the regression results of the determinants and the customer experience along with the influence of the moderators on the determinants and the customer experience for the various retail formats are shown.

The summary of the demographic characteristics of the respondents is given below:

1. **Demographic profile of the respondents**

   Female customers outnumber the male customers. Most of the customers are predominantly in the age group of 30 to 39 years and customers above the age of 50 years seem to be fewer when compared to the rest of the categories. It can be seen that this category of the population patronises the organised retail formats.

   Majority of the customers are married. The customers on the whole are well educated with a good number of them being either graduates or post graduates.

   On the whole, a sizeable number of customers draw a salary of more than 50000 rupees per month (upper middle class). Smaller family size was noticed for the most part and this shrinkage in the size of the family can be attributed to the movement towards nuclear family.

   The number of earning members is predominantly less than or equal to two. The customers were mainly employees in private companies or were business people.
2. Preference towards retail formats

In general, supermarket seemed to be the preferred retail format in comparison with the others.

A majority of men visit branded stores and a majority of women visit supermarkets, hypermarkets and specialty stores. The other retail formats such as department stores and malls are visited equally by both men and women.

Respondents in the age group of 19-29 years visit malls next only to supermarket. Respondents in the age group of 30-39 mainly visit malls, respondents between 40-49 years patronise malls as well as branded stores and respondents between 50-59 years shop at hypermarket. Respondents in the age group of 60-69 go to both specialty stores and malls.

Both married and unmarried respondents favour supermarket and it can be seen that malls and hypermarket are chosen next to supermarket.

A majority of the respondents across all the formats are well educated being graduates or post graduates.

Customers with a monthly income of less than 10000 up to 40000 rupees favour supermarkets. Customers with monthly income more than 40000 rupee prefer malls, hypermarket and branded stores.

Respondents with both small and large family size favour supermarket and it can be seen that malls and hypermarket are chosen next to supermarket.

Families with single and double earning members favour supermarket and multiple earning members favour malls, hypermarket and supermarket.
Professional practitioners, unemployed, private employees and others favour supermarket. Government employees patronise hyper markets. Malls are preferred by student communities. Speciality stores are preferred by both professional practitioners and retired people. Business men favour branded stores.

3. Other traits of respondents

A majority of the respondents visit the retail formats once a month. A majority of the respondents have been visiting the corresponding retail format between one to two years. This may be due to their long term association with the friendly neighbourhood unorganised retail outlet. The respondents are associated with supermarkets, hypermarkets, malls, speciality stores and branded stores for a duration of one to two years. In the case of department stores, it is less than 1 year.

It can be seen that a majority of the respondents visit the retail formats along with family members. Shopping alone is the second highest preference for all the retail formats except malls where the second highest choice of companion is friends.

A sizeable number of customers visit these organised retail formats whenever it is necessary and also when discount offers are given by these formats. In the case of branded stores the festive season is the foremost reason of visit.

Respondents spend roughly about an hour at each of these retail formats whereas in the case of hypermarkets and malls customers spend more time. This may be attributed to finding different entertainment options available in these formats.
Respondents usually prefer to visit supermarkets, department stores, hypermarket, malls and branded stores on weekends. In the case of speciality stores, they prefer to visit on both weekends and holidays.

4. **Customer experience and demographic characteristics**

Significant differences in customer experience were found across age categories, marital status and occupation.

Customer experience is found to vary across different age groups. Based on the mean values for the different age groups it can be seen that as age increases the customer experience decreases.

Customer experience is found to vary based on marital status of the respondent. Based on the mean values of the different groups it can be seen that unmarried customers have better experience than married customers and those of the others have the lowest experience.

Significant difference exists in customer experience based on the occupation of the respondent. Based on the mean values of the different groups, it can be seen that professional practitioners have better experience followed by businessmen and students. Customers who have retired from the service have the lowest customer experience.

5.3 **RESULT OF CONTRIBUTORS TO CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE IN DIFFERENT RETAIL FORMATS**

In this section the results of testing the hypotheses are reviewed and tabulated with respect to the corresponding retail store format.

The regression results for the various determinants on customer experience showed support for many hypotheses in the various retail store
formats. The effects of the various determinants namely social environment, service interface, retail atmosphere, assortment, price, retail brand, previous customer experience and experience in the alternate channels were examined using linear regression. The results of the regression model for customer experience across the different retail formats are encapsulated in Table 5.1.

The regression model and its related $\beta$ estimates indicate that in case of supermarket, social environment, atmosphere, price, alternate channel experience and previous experience play a major role in creating a superior customer experience. Therefore, for the supermarket, hypotheses $H_1$, $H_3$, $H_5$, $H_6$, $H_8$ are all supported.

The regression model and its related $\beta$ estimates indicate that in the case of department store social environment, retail atmosphere and price have significant effect on customer experience. Hence, it can be concluded that in the case of department stores, hypotheses: $H_1$, $H_3$ and $H_5$ are all supported.

Table 5.1 Result of regression for customer experience across various retail formats.

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According to the regression model and the corresponding estimates of β indicate that in the case of hypermarket social environment, assortment, alternate channel experience and past experience play a major role in creating a superior customer experience. Therefore, for hypermarket hypotheses H₁, H₄, H₆, H₈ are all supported.

In the case of malls the model has a good fit as the p value is significant at 5% level of significance. The adjusted R² value depicts that 59% variation in the dependent variable, customer experience, is accounted by the determinants namely social environment, retail atmosphere, price, retail brand and past experience. Thus it can be concluded that in the case of mall, hypotheses: H₁, H₃, H₅, H₇ and H₈ are all supported.

In the case of speciality stores the regression model and the corresponding β estimates indicate that social environment, service interface, retail atmosphere, price, alternate channel experience and past experience have significant effect on customer experience. Thus it can be concluded that in the case of speciality stores, hypotheses: H₁, H₂, H₃, H₅, H₆ and H₈ are all supported.

In the case of branded stores the model has a good fit as the p value is significant at 5% level of significance. The adjusted R² depicts that 68% variation in the dependent variable customer experience is accounted by social environment, service interface, retail atmosphere, price and past experience. Hence it can be said that in the case of branded stores, hypotheses: H₁, H₂, H₃, H₅ and H₈ are all supported.

In all the formats social environment plays a prominent role and this stresses the need for retailers to closely look into the components of social environment namely crowding, influence of friends/peers, the influence of parents and also that of the fellow customers. Previous studies have shown that the presence of co-customers can make or ruin the experience of the other
customers. There are many studies showing that customers may affect one another indirectly by being part of the environment or more directly through specific interaction incidents (Baker 1987; Bitner 1992). Such an interactive incident may be an upside experience, or more likely a distressing experience. Therefore, customers are likely to be influenced by the perception of these customer-to-customer interaction incidents. Hence the retailer should make it a point to attract similar customers so that the experience of every customer is enriched. This would create a positive influence in the minds of the customer and enable them to further act as ambassadors by positive word of mouth. The retailer can thus take charge by attracting similar customers.

Service interface plays a major role in the case of only two retail formats namely speciality store and branded store. Prior research suggests that salespeople play a critical role in influencing consumers’ moods and satisfaction (Grewal and Sharma 1991). According to Lovelock and Young (1979) in the retail industry, customers are increasingly given the option of scanning their own items, paying for it and bagging their food without assistance from a sales clerk. This option has revolutionized the typical interface between the customer and the service provider as well as the behaviours required of customers in the retail industry. Hence the retailer should make it a point that at the stores service people are knowledgeable, helpful and should be able to assist the customers on the use of self service technologies. This would create a positive experience for the customer. This is in tune with the previous research which claims that the service person has a critical role to play in delivering quality service and thereby providing a satisfactory experience to the customers (Beatty et al 1996).

In the case of all the formats except hypermarket atmosphere plays a significant role since the customer may feel that he has solely selected this format over the other local stores due to the fact that the space is designed more appropriately with facilities such as proper lighting, design, layout and
music which may naturally lend a pleasant experience and this atmosphere has a huge impact on customer experience. The significant influence of design on the shopping experience suggests the need for retailers to give careful consideration to store design features. These features have a great potential to influence the shopping experience and store patronage behaviour of customers (Baker et al 2002).

Assortment of goods actively contributes to the overall experience in hypermarkets. On comparison with the other retail formats customers expect a wider range of products of several brands and better quality. The hypermarkets also store their own store brands along with several popular brands which gives a lot of choice to the customers. The customer experience is better shaped by a wide variety of choices at relatively lower prices.

Price perception which mainly deals with the promotions, discounts and loyalty schemes of the retailer is another determinant which significantly contributes to the customer experience in all the formats other than hypermarket. It can be seen that the customers look forward to such deals. Various features such as club cards, frequent shopper programs and loyalty coupons and the other promotional deals are actively looked upon by the customers and hence the retailers should concentrate on these deals and differentiate themselves from the other retailers. Store loyalty programs that encourage repeat visits become barriers to switching (Dholakia et al 2005). Loyalty programs offered by the retailers have an effect on the store perception and help to establish a deeper relationship with the customer thereby increasing spending at the store and also positively impacting customer experience.

The demographic profile shows that the customers of supermarkets, hypermarkets and speciality stores are relatively younger, well educated, with a good income at their disposal, this clearly paves the way for their exposure
to the other alternate ways of shopping, namely the internet for gathering information and also for shopping. The results clearly show that alternate channel shopping experience is a significant determinant in these three different formats. This emphasises the need for the retailer to significantly increase their offering through the internet to capture more customers and also to provide a better online experience. This is necessary since the experience of the customers in this channel directly influences the in store experience. In India the level of internet usage is gradually increasing and it is necessary to focus on the rapidly growing importance of online shopping experience. Multichannel retailers stand to capture the most value from the internet because of the advantages of having an existing brand, marketing leverage, merchandising skills, multiple points of customer contact and distribution expertise (Hutchinson 2001). Multichannel retailing fosters long term loyalty by providing customers with shopping options for their convenience and ultimately long term business success (Dholakia et al 2005).

Retail brands which are familiar and trustworthy to the customer can significantly impact their experience since it communicates the product quality and the various features associated with it. As a result it can be seen that retail brand is an important determinant of customer experience in the case of retail store. Stores apparently have a number of brands thereby presenting a wider array of choices to the customer. Presence of popular brands and variety of choice can significantly shape the experience of the customer.

In all the formats other than department store previous experience has a significant role in determining customer experience which clearly reiterates the fact that over a period of interactions the customers learn more about the retail store and they become more efficient users of it and that efficiency directly may affect the level of satisfaction they experience (Mittal et al 1999). Therefore, customer experience is significantly shaped or reiterated in the minds of the customer every time and this makes it necessary
for the retailer to provide a positive experience every time the customer comes in contact with the retail format.

5.4 RESULT OF MODERATORS EFFECT ON THE DETERMINANTS OF CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE FOR VARIOUS FORMATS

To examine the effect of both situational and consumer moderators on customer experience the method designed by Baron and Kenny (1986) has been used. The results of location as moderator on customer experience are summarised in Table 5.2. The results of goal as moderator on customer experience are summarised in Table 5.3. The results of involvement as moderator on customer experience are summarised in Table 5.4.

Table 5.2 Result of the situation moderator location on customer experience for the various retail formats

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From Table 5.2 it can be seen that in the case of supermarket the interaction effects retail atmosphere and alternate channels experience are significant. The results of department stores project that the main and interaction effects of retail atmosphere, price, alternate channel experience and retail brand are supported whereas only main effect is supported in the case of social environment. The main and interaction effects of social environment, retail atmosphere, assortment are supported in the case of hypermarkets whereas only main effects are supported in the case of price and retail brand. In the case of mall only interaction effect of price is not supported. In the case of speciality stores both main and interaction effects are supported for social environment, assortment, price, alternate channel experience and retail brand whereas only interaction effect is supported for service interface and retail atmosphere. However, in the case of branded stores only interaction effect is supported for service interface and main effect is supported for assortment.

Table 5.3 Result of the consumer moderator goal on customer experience for the various retail formats

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The results of moderating effect of goal on the relationship between customer experience and the determinants are presented in table 5.3. In the case of supermarkets and malls, it can be seen that significant main and interaction effect exists between goal and price. This may be attributed to the fact that when the customer is experientially oriented loyalty programmes, discounts, coupons and other price promotions invariably contribute to a better customer experience.

In the case of department stores, it is seen that significant main as well as interaction effect exists between goal and all other determinants other than social environment and experience in the alternate channel. The interaction effect highlights the importance of catering to experientially oriented customers. In the case of hypermarket significant main and interaction effect exists between goal and retail atmosphere. For an experientially oriented customer the various retail atmosphere elements such as design, temperature and music become important contributors to the experience of the customer in that particular format.

In the case of speciality stores, it is seen that significant main and interaction effect exists between goal and alternate channel experience. In the case of branded stores, significant main and interaction effect exists between goal and all the determinants other than service interface. When the customer is experientially oriented the various determinants such as social environment, service interface, retail atmosphere, assortment, price, alternate channel experience and retail brand all contribute towards an enhanced customer experience.
The results of moderating effect of involvement on the relationship between customer experience and the determinants are presented in table 5.4. In the case of supermarket the interaction effect of service interface and assortment are significant. For a highly involved customer service interface and assortment comprising of variety, uniqueness and quality play a vital role towards better experience.

In the case of department store, the main and interaction effects exist between involvement and social environment, assortment and retail brand and only interaction effect exists for alternate channel experience.
In the case of hypermarket interaction effect exists for retail atmosphere. Only main effects are supported for service interface, assortment, price and alternate channel experience.

In the case of malls the main and interaction effect exists between involvement and social environment, assortment, alternate channel experience and retail brand. Only main effect is supported in the case of price.

In the case of speciality stores, the main and interaction effect exists between involvement and social environment, service interface and assortment. Main effects alone are supported in the case of retail atmosphere and retail brand.

In the case of branded stores, the main and interaction effect exists between involvement and all the determinants of customer experience.

### 5.5 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The results of the study have significant theoretical and managerial contributions. The study will enable retailers, managers, salespersons and researchers to gain a better understanding of the factors that lead to creating a superior customer experience for the customers which in turn will create a positive business outcome. In the current scenario, it is seen that merely customer satisfaction is not enough since the retail landscape offers the customers with unlimited choices and the intensity of competition is very strong among the numerous players in the market. In this situation the basic expectation of the customer is to be satisfied. This clearly forces the retailers to not just understand and satisfy the customers but also to create a superior customer experience (Schmitt 1999), which will act as the differentiator in the retail industry.
A complete understanding of the various determinants that are used in this study would enable the retailer to create a memorable experience for the customer.

5.5.1 Theoretical Implications

The study has significant theoretical contributions:

The study has used the conceptual model of customer experience creation proposed by Verhoef et al (2009) in the context of different types of retail formats that are seen in the Indian retail scenario namely supermarkets, department stores, hypermarkets, malls, speciality stores and branded stores. According to the outcomes, the model is valid and the results of the regression analysis are in agreement with the previous studies. Hence, the model can be used for studying customer experience in the retailing context.

The study has also incorporated the moderators such as location, goals of the customer and involvement and their influence on the determinants for the different retail formats. On examination of the interacting effect of the situational and consumer variables, the study reveals that the effect of the various determinants on customer experience is moderated by these variables.

The study is focussed on understanding the antecedents of customer experience with respect to the different retail formats. The findings of the study show that across different retail formats, there are variations in the determinants which contribute to the customer experience. These variations are also observed when the moderators are incorporated to the model.

Organised retailing in India has been spreading its roots in the Indian market for the past decade and is gradually making a mark on all
sections of the society. This study explores the experience of the consumer. Till now, the focus was mainly on customer satisfaction. The study contributes to this volume of literature in the Indian scenario.

5.5.2 Managerial Implications

The study has significant managerial contributions:

The present study provides a comprehensive knowledge about the determinants of the customer experience for the various retail formats in India. This helps the managers to design strategies to attract and retain customers by providing a superior experience. Information about the demographics of customers for each format would reveal areas for offering customised and targeted marketing programmes.

Social environment is a key element for consideration since this determinant has been preferred by customers of all the retail formats under consideration. Eroglu et al (2005) looked at the relationship between perceived retail crowding, shopping value and satisfaction and found that perceived retail crowding had a negative effect on shopping value and, in turn, satisfaction. If the shopping experience is valued by the customer, satisfaction with the store is likely to result. Virtual communities are a major platform for the retailers since a large amount of likeminded consumers exchange information. This could be viewed as an excellent opportunity for the retailers to participate and foster such relationships so that the overall perception about the retail format can be enhanced. Fostering such exchanges can, therefore, be rewarding for the company. The retailers can use customers as partial employees, not in helping to produce the product or service but in disseminating useful customer knowledge that can influence the customer’s experience.
Service interface has been considered to be important mainly in the case of speciality and branded stores. The other stores being self service formats usually customers may feel that they require very less intervention from the salesperson. In the case of speciality and branded stores a knowledgeable salesperson would be essential to guide the customer in making a choice, this may impact their experience. Knowledgeable and helpful salesclerks are viewed as the strongest determinant of store patronage among specialty store shoppers, considerably higher than department store and mass merchandiser shoppers (King and Ring 1980). The results confirm previous work (Gagliano and Hathcote 1994) which found that sales associates played a critical role in customer patronage and satisfaction with specialty stores. Further, the results support studies which found less emphasis on service for shoppers at larger store formats, such as department stores (Lumpkin and McConkey 1984). The retailers can train the service personnel to provide better experience. The retailers can use cutting edge technology for changing both the operations and the environment of a store. Centralized checkout stations, availability of wireless network infrastructure, self-checkout terminals, kiosks, and radio frequency identification tags or other devices can be used to give a whole new meaning to store layout and functionality, design and social environment of a store.

All formats other than hypermarket support atmosphere of the retail outlet which emphasises the fact that similar to Bellenger et al (1977), the results support the importance of the physical environment. A consumer's first impression (initial level of excitement) is partly generated by the physical environment to which they are exposed. This suggests that retailers should pay close attention to all aspects of the retail environment (i.e., architectural design, layout, music, interior decor) not only during the design stages, but also periodically by surveying customers about their perceptions and repatronage intentions. Music when matched with the interests of customers
and the type of products and brands can add to customer experience. Music is an environmental variable that is easily controlled and relatively inexpensive to change. Lighting and temperature are environmental elements that are not noticed by consumers unless they exist at unpleasant levels (Baker 1986). For example, temperatures that are unpleasantly high or low may be noticed, while comfortable temperatures will not be noticed. This suggests that retailers ensure that lighting and temperature levels are kept within the zone of comfort for consumers.

Customers feel that a richer assortment of products would certainly add to their customer experience in the case of hypermarket. Product assortment is of critical importance to customers. Retailers should take care to understand what types of products their customers are looking for and ensure that the right merchandise is available and well-stocked. Understanding the choice of the customer enables the retailer to avoid situations that may negatively impact customer experience. Huddleston et al (2004) found that a wide variety of products, consistently fresh produce, a good store brand, and carrying general merchandise along with food have an impact on satisfaction. Therefore, hypermarkets should carry a wide variety of products at relatively lower prices to capture and sustain customer attention.

Price is one of the important contributors to customer experience in all the formats other than hypermarket. Promotions are an important element of competition among retailers with many of them using varied techniques to attract consumers. Some commonly used techniques are the typical price promotions, “loss leader” promotions (deep discount deals), feature advertising (store flyers), and in-store displays. It can be seen that the customers look forward to such deals. Various features such as club cards, frequent shopper programs and loyalty coupons and the other promotional deals are actively looked upon by the customers and hence the retailers should
concentrate on these deals and differentiate themselves from the other retailers. Store loyalty programs that encourage repeat visits become barriers to switching (Dholakia et al 2005).

Retailers should build their presence in the online platform where customers can co-create their own unique personalized experience. It is not enough to offer multiple channels; retailers have to make sure that the customer experience is consistent across those channels. Customers are comfortable with technology and will select the channel that is most convenient at a specific time. This means that they may call in or initiate a chat session online, then follow-up by e-mail or a text message in response, but their overall customer experience should remain consistent. Research shows that most retailers today interact with customers in person in a storefront, over the phone, or perhaps by e-mail. Retailers can differentiate themselves, and better serve the customer base, by extending their customer interaction environment to support Internet and multimedia channels, and to let the customer choose which channel to use.

Brands have an important role in the shopping environment. Retailers also create their brand images in different ways, e.g., by attaching unique associations to the quality of their service, their product assortment and merchandising, pricing and credit policy, etc. Private label products of the retailers can have their own unique brand names or be branded under the name of the retailer. It allows the retailer to differentiate their offerings from competing retailers, sometimes even without the support of manufacturers brands.

Retailers should concentrate on the various phases of shopping namely access, search, transaction and possession. Ensuring that consumers can get to the store quickly and easily, that the search for desired products is convenient, that the checkout process is efficient, and that consumers can
quickly and easily leave with their purchase are important. By developing a strategy that focuses on saving consumers time and effort during these different phases of the shopping experience, a retailer can enhance the experience of the customer. This provides a strong basis for differentiation and positioning. A retailer who is perceived as different from competitors and who occupies a unique place in the minds of consumers can outperform competitors.

The location of a store and the distance that the consumer must travel to shop are the basic criteria in any store choice decisions. Customers consider convenience to be the major criterion. Hence retailers should locate their stores at central locations which are easily accessible from different places, well connected by public transport facilities, have parking facilities and without concerns of congestion and security. In summary, location is a key component in consumer’s assessment of total shopping costs and is important for retailers to ideally situate their stores at vantage points to enhance customer experience.

The managerial contribution of the study provides a base for the retailers who want to understand what the key drivers of customer experience. By providing a study on the impact of the various determinants for the different retail formats it enables the managers to understand the contributors and modify their retail strategies accordingly to provide a better experience.

5.6 LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study attempts to measure whether the various determinants assist in creating a better customer experience across different retail store formats. The findings of this study have limitations. Since limitations of a
study can be viewed as directions for future research in the field, it is important to list limitations and future research opportunities simultaneously.

Limitation of this study is the non-probability sampling technique used to collect data from the respondents. Usage of a non-probability sample compromises the external validity of a study to a large extent. Therefore, it is advisable to repeat this study with a probability sampling technique.

The study focussed on the different retail formats that are widely seen in the Indian retail market but was not specific with respect to the type of products, i.e., the study did no concentrate on jewellery stores, apparel stores, electronic stores or foot wear stores.

The influence of moderators such as location, goal and involvement are considered in this study. Future studies can incorporate other moderators such as attitude of customers - price sensitivity, innovativeness etc.

The study focussed only on studying in store experience of the customers. Online retailing is a relatively new phenomenon in India and hence research is required to understand the determinants of e-retailing that would help the retailers to comprehend the customers and in turn would be beneficial for the organisations also.

The study was conducted in Chennai and hence the study reflects the perceptions of the urban population. There may be variations in the perceptions of the customers belonging to the tier-II cities which are emerging as the favourable destinations for the organised retailers.

5.7 CONCLUSION

Traditional marketing has provided a valuable set of strategies, implementation tools and methodologies for the industrial age. Now that we
have entered a new era, it is necessary to shift attention from the features-and-benefits approach advocated by traditional marketing to customer experiences. Retailers need to consider new concepts and approaches, and most of all, new approaches within the organization to capitalize on the new opportunities offered by experiential marketing.

Yelkur (2000) argues that creating memorable experiences is critical to retaining current customers and attracting new ones. Improving overall experience, without the risk of raising unrealistic consumer expectations, holds enormous promise for both goods and services retailers.

Today’s firms are competing with experiences (Berry et al 2002). Organizations must strive to orchestrate or to stimulate positive experience to be successful (Haeckel et al 2003). The present study has indicated the need for managers to focus on the various antecedents to create positive experiences. In summary, customers’ experiences resulting in positive emotional reactions are increasingly being seen as real and sustainable differentiators between competing retailers.

The aim of the study has been to contribute to the knowledge of customer experience by studying the various determinants. This study has shown the influence of various determinants of customer experience and also identified the key variables for the various organised retail store formats. The role of the moderators on the relationship between the determinants and customer experience is discussed for each format. The insight provided by the study about the various contributors and the suggested measures to improve customer experience enable the retailer to frame marketing strategies which in turn may create a deeper bond towards the retail outlet and will directly impact the purchase behaviour of the customer.