Chapter V

Findings, Suggestions & Conclusion
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5.1 FINDINGS

In this section the objective wise findings of the study “Influence of retail store attributes and retail staff attributes on customers shopping behavior” is presented.

Descriptive statistics to analyze the personal factors, behavioral factors, retail store attributes and retail staff attributes

Percentage analysis was applied to determine the demographic/ personal factors of the respondents. Female was high at 77.4% of the respondents selected for the study. The respondents selected for the study is in the age group of between 36-50 years are 64.4%. The respondents selected for the study has education at college level are 62.5% and occupations in private sector are 43.2%. Most of the respondents of 75.7% have family size of 4-5 members. About 81.8% of the respondents were married and 39.1% of the respondents have 2 earning members in their family. The respondents of 46.4% have their monthly family income of Rs.45000 and above and nearly 61.2% are in nuclear family. Nearly 47.7% have visited the store for 3 and above times.

The respondents of 47.8% are visiting the outlet during weekends and 38% are visiting the outlet in the evening. 58.8% have spent time of 1 to 2 hours on shopping in the outlet per trip.

The respondents of 48% strongly agree towards store decoration is an important factor in customers’ purchase relating to store ambience. 45.3% strongly agree towards ‘store and its arrangements to facilitate customers’ to find the products in the store’ relating to merchandise attributes. 46.9% strongly agree towards ‘Employees approach towards customers is comfortable’ relating to service procedures. 51.2% strongly agree towards ‘Convenient shopping hours’ relating to Convenience and Satisfaction. 44.1% strongly agree towards ‘Discount sale offers are provided by the store’ relating to promotion.
The respondents of 49.8% strongly agree towards customers’ taking their advice with information seeking tendencies, when salesperson in the store is approaching to help them. 72.3% strongly agree towards there is no noticeable behaviour variations exists in customers due to presence of sales persons, while they purchase relating to behavioral variations as perceived by customers on staff. 63.8% respondents disagree and 20.9% strongly disagree towards When shopping, customers’ would rather make the decision on their own before talking to any salesperson’ relating to avoidance by customers of retail staff. 70.2% strongly agree towards prior experience of making good purchases based on influential inputs of salesperson relating to Convinceability as perceived by customers.

**Chi-square analysis to ascertain the significance of personal factors and its influence on behavioral factors of store and staff attributes**

**Behavioral factors**

Except gender all the personal factors considered to have significant influence on the behavioral factors.

**Store attribute factors**

Gender, age, family size, marital status, monthly family income and family type have no significant influence on store ambience. Age and marital status have no significant influence on merchandise attributes. All the personal factors considered to have no significant influence on the service procedures, convenience and satisfaction and promotion.

**Staff attributes factors**

Gender and age have no significant influence on information seeking tendencies of respondents. Gender, family size and marital status have no significant influence on behavioral variations as perceived by customers on staff. All the personal factors considered to have significant influence on the avoidance by customers of retail staff. Gender, family size and marital status have no significant influence on Convinceability as perceived by customers.
Average score method to enumerate level of agreeability of respondents and their personal factors on various factors of retail store attributes

The respondents irrespective of their personal classification have high level of agreeability towards “Lighting facility equips the customers in buying items” in store ambience, Price of the products and the influence of price on purchase decision than other factors of merchandise attributes, “employees approach towards customers is comfortable” in service procedures, “accessibility of store location ” in convenience and satisfaction and “Special sales promotions that are made by the stores” in promotion attribute when compare to other factors.

Average score method to enumerate level of agreeability of respondents and their personal factors on various factors of retail staff attributes

The respondents irrespective of their personal classification have high level of agreeability towards “When a salesperson is helping, customers’ usually take his/her advice” in information seeking tendencies of respondents, “customers’ complain if something goes wrong from the part of salesperson service” in behavioral variations as perceived by customers on staff, “wish salesperson only to answer their questions instead of trying to convince to buy something” in avoidance by customers of retail staff and “prior experience of making good purchases based on influential inputs of salesperson” in Convinceability as perceived by customers attribute when compare to other factors.

Analysis of variance to ascertain the agreeability of respondents on retail store attributes based on the respondents personal factors

There is no significant difference between gender on the level of agreeability towards store ambience and service procedures. There is significant difference between personal factors of respondents such as gender, age, education, occupation, family size, marital status, number of earning members in the family, monthly family income, family type and number of visits to the store on the level of agreeability towards merchandise attributes. There is no significant difference between age on the level of agreeability towards convenience and satisfaction. There is no significant difference between gender, age and number of visit to the store on the level of agreeability towards promotion.
Analysis of variance to ascertain the agreeability of respondents on retail staff attributes based on the respondents personal factors

There is no significant difference between gender and marital status on the level of agreeability towards information seeking tendencies of respondents. There is no significant difference between gender and family size on the level of agreeability towards behavioral variations as perceived by customers on staff. There is no significant difference between age and occupation on the level of agreeability towards avoidance by customers of retail staff. There is no significant difference between age on the level of agreeability towards Convinceability as perceived by customers.

Correlation analysis to envisage the inter-relationship between and among retail store attributes and retail staff attributes

The retail store attribute convenience and Satisfaction has significant inter correlation with the other retail store attributes namely store ambience, merchandise attributes, service procedures and promotion. All the retail staff attributes have significant inter-relationship with all the attributes namely information seeking tendencies of respondents, behavioral variations as perceived by customers on staff, avoidance by customers of retail staff and Convinceability as perceived by customers.

Multiple regression analysis to analyze the relationship between total retail store attributes and its influence on the store ambience, merchandise attributes, service procedures, convenience and satisfaction and promotion

Service procedures explains the maximum of 55.8% on the variations on the dependent variable retail store attributes when compared to store ambience, merchandise attributes, convenience and satisfaction and promotion. The respondents stress the need for better services during and after sales.

Multiple regression analysis to analyze the relationship between total retail staff attributes and its influence on the information seeking, behavioral variations based on salesperson, avoidance and Convinceability

Convinceability as perceived by customers explains the maximum of 31.4% on the variations on the dependent variable retail staff influence attributes when compared to
information seeking tendencies of respondents, behavioral variations as perceived by the customers on staff and Avoidance by customers of retail staff. The respondents feel that Staff should provide necessary information about the products when they do shopping.

**Structural equation modeling to study and analyze the influence of store attributes and staff influence on customer shopping behavior there by arriving at a confirmation on the attributes and variables that have significant influence on customer shopping behaviour**

H1: Since the absolute t values is less than 2 we can say that the independent variable store attributes does not significantly influence the customers shopping behavior.

H2: The absolute t values are greater than 2 (t value = -2.2856) the independent variable staff influence attributes significantly influence customer shopping behavior.

H3: Since absolute t values are greater than 2 (4.1259, 4.1003, 4.5482> 2.00), H3 is supported by the variables service procedures, convenience & Satisfaction and promotions. There are three variables significantly contributing to store attributes 95.8% \( (R^2 = 0.958) \)

H4: Since absolute t values are greater than 2 (-4.3008, 15.6296, -10.6474), the variables information seeking tendencies of respondents, avoidance by respondents of retail staff and Convinceability as perceived by respondents significantly contributes to staff influence attributes 97% \( (R^2 = 0.970) \). The negative symbol in the regression coefficient and t- values is because of the negatively worded questions in the overall staff influence attributes. Individually other variables do not have significant influence on the purchasing outcome.

It is observed that in overall 23.0% \( (R^2=0.230) \) of the customer shopping behavior is determined by all constructs of **Retail Staff Influence attributes than Retail store attributes** and the rest 77% is from various factors such as customers expectation for various independent variable in both store and staff attributes may vary for different segments.
5.2 SUGGESTIONS

Maintaining and nurturing good relationships with existing clientele is more imperative than ever before for firms to thrive in a developing economy. This is particularly being relevant to the retail industry as the competition gets tougher along with the expansion of retail channels such as multi-channel retailing. They should realize that customers are becoming more discerning and that they view the store image is more crucial as the retailer assumes.

The following suggestions are provided to improve the store attribute and staff attributes in the retail outlets to enhance the shopping behavior of the customers.

Shopping experience was incongruent. Store ambience influences the customers greatly and much needs to be done to enhance the customers’ shopping experience. It is essential for the retailer to concentrate on the variety and quality of the products which calls for a good collection of brands and products.

The service of the Sales person is identified to have an overriding importance to customers especially when they are in service seeing that they attribute the procedures. Retail managers can also give importance to the refund policies when customers would have it in mind to exchange products, so that it will set aside the customers to come for repeat purchase. The customers feel that though the store is accessible yet they ought to hit upon convenient shopping hours. The vendor should provide extra space for the parking facilities so that the customers would find it convenient for shopping. The promotions offered by the store may be passable but the customers may get a feel that window display should be more eye-catching as it persuades the customers for shopping.

The dimensions of Information seeking and avoidance require a careful balancing act for many managers. Salesperson are desired to aid the purchase decisions of those high on Information seeking, but the presence of too many sales people will keep high avoidance consumers out of the store or out of the market. In markets where consumers have less information, the size of sales force will be larger, but high-avoidance consumers may still be longing for sales-free purchasing in such markets. By giving
better information through enough sales force without sideling the avoidance consumers, these markets have to be balanced delicately.

Consumers high on convinceability are prone to bump into sales situations that could end with them making unwanted purchases. Salespersons who encounter highly convincible consumers often have little incentive to not take advantage of the tendency. Even when the consumer can be expected to make repeat purchases based on high-ranking inputs, salespersons still have a strong incentive to oversell consumers if future purchases from the consumers are not guaranteed to go through the same salesperson. Since the customers have prior experience based on the influential inputs of salesperson the customers are easily persuaded by them. The managers can ensure and motivate the salesperson for better results.

From the model it is evident from retail store attributes that more attention and importance could be given to store ambience and merchandise attributes. The store should have a pleasant environment with adequate lighting, easily maneuverable and good display of products. The store must ensure sufficient collection of quality products and brands in various prices suitable for different customers. The store must also ensure that the customers are able to locate the products easily through an array of product showcasing.

The model developed in this research provides more insight on retail staff attributes for customers shopping behavior. The presence of salesperson in a retail outlet engenders an atmosphere where purchase is an obscure requirement. More over consumers demand exceptional service from salesperson for the products in a store. They were not even bothered what salesperson will think and never mind to switch to other stores. The presence of salesperson in a store will increase sales from consumers even without pushing the sales or providing useful assistance to the consumer. Of course, sales augments further, once consumers obligate themselves to the salesperson by accepting his sales assistance. The managers may be able to encourage better sales behavior from their sales staff by ensuring that salesperson gets to keep past customers.
5.3 CONCLUSION

The main objective behind this present research is to understand the conceptual framework of the retail store attributes, staff attributes and customer shopping behavior prevailing among the customers of retail stores in Coimbatore District. A survey methodology was employed in this study based on the objectives framed. The retail segments in Coimbatore were 11 segments. Therefore 11 strata’s were formed and 4 strata’s were selected based on the criterion that the strata represented with 10 and above number of retail outlets that are having an operational area of 10000 square feet only. From each stratum proportionate stratified random sampling was applied to select the retail outlets. Therefore 27 retail outlets were selected out of 94 retail outlets derived from four identified strata’s. For the Purpose of collection of data all the 1096 customers were selected from the retail stores accounting to 18, 27,155 population of the age group above 18 at Coimbatore district. The research tools used in this study are descriptive statistics, chi-square, average score analysis, correlation, multiple regression, ANOVA and structural equation modeling.

It is observed that in overall 23.0% ($R^2=0.230$) of the customer shopping behavior is determined by all constructs of retail staff influence attributes than retail store attributes. Retail store should have a pleasant environment with adequate lighting, easily maneuverable and good display of quality products and brands in various prices and help the customers to locate the products easily for purchasing. Consumer heterogeneity in salesperson orientation can have drastic impacts on the market. Marketers need to develop a better understanding of the dimensions of consumer heterogeneity in the realm of salesperson orientation so they can better manage the customer-salesperson interaction.

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5.4 SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research is recommended to explore a broader range of potential respondents by surveying all retail segments and compare the assessments of store image components with staff influence on customers. A possible direction for future research is to conduct a similar study in other districts, or states to discover similarities and differences.

Further research is recommended to determine the effect of influence of sales staff on post-sales. Those scoring high on the Convinceability dimension have likely come to recognize this talent in them due to past experiences wherein they have been convinced to purchase items they came to regret. Obviously, a retailer would be very prejudiced to encourage the sales staff to take advantage of these consumers, as they would never likely become repeat customers.

A thorough review of literature is required to understand the different retail segments with the objective of categorization of review of literature under diverse segments.