CHAPTER V
FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The current study titled “A STUDY ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION TOWARDS SERVICE QUALITY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO DEPARTMENTAL STORES IN COIMBATORE REGION” was done to identify the various factors which influence the level of customer satisfaction with regard to service quality rendered by the departmental stores. The level of satisfaction was measured based on the five dimensions service quality such as Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy.

A questionnaire was framed to collect the data, then the collected data was tabulated and analysed by using a software package called SPSS. The analysis was done for all the five dimensions by using various tools such as correlation analysis, Chi-Square, MANOVA, Multiple Regression and factor analysis. The significance difference and association between various variables were analysed. The main factors which influence the satisfaction level for all the five dimensions were identified. Some of the important findings from the study are described briefly in this chapter.
5.2 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The following are the findings of the personal and demographic information, shopping habits and preferences of the respondents.

5.2.1. Personal and Demographic Information using percentage analysis

1. A majority of (45%) of the respondents belonged to the age group of 21-30 yrs and the least of (4.1%) of them were above 51 yrs.

2. It was interesting to note that (67%) of the respondents were male whereas the remaining (33%) of them were female.

3. It is observed that majorities (77.7%) of the respondents were married and the remaining (22.3%) of them were single.

4. Out of 600 respondents, a high (50%) of the respondents have the family members of 2-4 and the least of (2.4%) have only one member in the family.

5. It is found from the analysis that majority (36.4%) of the respondents were graduates whereas, the least of (4.6%) of them were below 10th.

6. Out of 1200 respondents, the majority of (31.9%) of the respondents were house wives and the least of (7.5%) of the respondents belong to the other category.

7. The study revealed that (31.3%) of the respondents were earning the income of 10001-15000 and the least of (11%) of the respondents were earning above 25001.
8. It is interesting to note that majority of (66.4%) of the customers stated the satisfaction level as ‘Good’ and the least of (10%) of the respondents stated as ‘Poor’

5.2.2. Findings of shopping habits of the customers by using percentage analysis

1. The study showed that 38.3% (460) of the respondents go with their family, 18.1% (217) of the respondents used to go alone for shopping, 14.7% (176) of them go with their friends, 15% (180) of them go with others and the remaining 13.9% (167) of the respondents would go with their spouse.

2. The reason for choosing a particular store was analysed, the majority of (37.1%) of the respondents preferred because of the reasonable price fixed by the store and the vary less respondents of 8% had preferred for the large variety of the products.

3. Out of 1200 respondents, (41.8%) of the respondents used to visit the store twice in the month, (38.2%) of them visit once in a month, (14.6%) of the respondents visit thrice in the month and the remaining (5.4%) of them visit frequently in the month.

4. The majority of (39.3%) of the respondents used to spend Rs.500-1000 per visit, (28.5%) of them spend below Rs.500 per month, (16.7%) of them spend Rs.1500-2000 and the remaining (15.5%) of them spend Rs.1000-1500
5. Out of 1200 respondents, the majority of (30.5%) of the respondents know about the store through their Neighbours / Colleagues, (22.4%) of the respondents came to know through advertisements, (18.8%) of them through relatives, 15.8% of them through their friends and the remaining (12.4%) of them came to know through others.

6. With regard to the mode of payment, a majority of (36.2%) of the customers preferred to make the payment by means of debit cards, (24.1%) of them preferred cash payment, and (15.7%) of the respondents need to purchase on credit basis, (14.2%) of them chose other mode and the remaining (9.9%) of them preferred through credit cards.

7. The majority of the respondents (35.1%) have an idea to recommend strongly about the store to others, (25.1%) of them would like to recommend somewhat, (21.8%) of them would like to recommend, (14.2%) of the don’t want to recommend the store to others and the remaining (3.8%) of the respondents strongly don’t want to recommend the store to others.

8. Out of 1200 respondents, the majority of 52.6% (631/1200) have planned not to switch over to other departmental store and the remaining (47.4%) of the respondents have planned to switch over the departmental store.
5.2.3 Findings of the customer satisfaction by using technical tools

1. With the help of Chi-Square analysis, it was found that there is no significant difference between age of the customers and their level of satisfaction towards departmental stores.

2. From the analysis, it was inferred that good level of customer satisfaction towards departmental stores was the highest of (66.67%) among the male respondents and the same was lowest of (65.91%) among the female respondents. Chi-Square analysis was done and found that there is no significant difference between gender of the customers and their level of satisfaction towards departmental stores.

3. It was found that good level of customer satisfaction towards departmental stores was the highest of (66.52%) among single respondents and the same was lowest of (66.04%) among the married respondents. With the help of Chi-Square analysis, it was found that there is no significant difference between marital status of the customers and their level of satisfaction towards departmental stores.

4. There is no significant difference between number of members in a family of the customers and their level of satisfaction towards departmental stores

5. There is no significant difference between educational qualification of the customers and their level of satisfaction towards departmental stores.
6. It is found from the analysis, that there is no significant difference between occupation of the customers and their level of satisfaction towards departmental stores.

7. From the analysis, it was inferred that there is no significant difference between persons accompanying for shopping with the customers and their level of satisfaction towards departmental stores.

8. From the analysis, it was an evident that there is no significant difference between frequency of visiting the customers for purchase and their level of satisfaction towards departmental stores.

9. With regard to Chi-Square analysis, it was found that there is no significant difference between amount spent for purchase per visit and their level of satisfaction towards departmental stores.

10. From the Chi-Square analysis, it was clear that the there is no significant difference between person through which got introduced about the store and their level of satisfaction towards departmental stores.

11. With the help of MANOVA test, it was found that there is a significant difference between tangibility satisfaction versus gender and mode of payment.

12. With the help of MANOVA test, it was found that there is a significant difference between reliability satisfaction versus gender and mode of payment.
13. With regard to MANOVA test, it was found that there is a significant difference between responsiveness satisfaction versus gender and mode of payment.

14. With regard to MANOVA test, it was found that there is a significant difference between assurance satisfaction versus gender and mode of payment.

15. With regard to MANOVA test, it was found that there is a significant difference between empathy satisfaction versus gender and mode of payment.

16. It was inferred that among the selected sixteen independent variables, age and mode of payment are statistically significant at 5% and the variables such as Gender, Marital Status, Educational Qualification, Occupation, Monthly Income, Person accompanying for shopping, Reason for choosing the particular store, Frequency of visiting the store in the month, Amount spent on purchase per visit and Recommending to others are statistically significant at 1%.

17. From the Multiple Regression Analysis, it was found that the coefficient of gender, marital status, educational qualification, occupation and monthly income are positively associated with the level of satisfaction of the customers with regard to the departmental stores.
18. The factor analysis showed that the variables such as appearance of the store, The store has clean, attractive and convenient physical facilities (rest rooms and fitting rooms), The store and its physical facilities are visually attractive, Decoration of this store attracts me to do my shopping here, The departmental store atmosphere makes me feel good and welcoming and Materials associated with this store’s service (such as shopping bags, loyalty cards and catalogues) are visually appealing accounts for a highest variance of (23.649%).

19. The factor analysis showed that the variables consisting the primary factors are the store keeps on improving the service right from the first time; the Store has more payment counters favoring speedy clearance of customers, the customers don’t have to wait for a long time for the service that they asked for, the store has all the goods available according to the customers need, Bills for the products are promptly given with regard to reliability and it accounts for a variance of 24.303%.

20. According to the factor analysis, the variables such as Employees in this store are consistently well-mannered with customers, Employees in this store answer the customers courteously while enquiring over the telephone, Employees are readily helpful to the customers enabling to do good shopping and Employees in this store are co-
operative and customer friendly and it accounts for the variances of 
(31.529%).

21. The factor analysis showed that the variables such as the store entertain return and exchange of commodities, Whenever the customer has a problem, this store shows sincere interest in solving it, Employees in this store are capable to handle customers complaints directly and immediately and Goods/products are easily exchanged if defects are found in the quality and it accounts the variance of (41.546%).

22. From the factor analysis, the respondents gave priority to the variables such as this store offers light quality products, this store provides adequate space for vehicle parking, this store’s operating hours is convenient to the customer, this store accepts all the major credit cards and this store offers its own credit cards and it accounts for the variance of (33.440%).

23. The majority of the respondents preferred the particular store for its “Price, Quality and its better service” with the Garrett Score of 60153, 51719 and 50420 points.
5.3. SUGGESTIONS OF THE STUDY

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher has come out with suggestions to concentrate much on the customer satisfaction with regard to all the dimensions of the service quality.

5.3.1 Suggestions with regard to demographic information and shopping habits of the respondents

1. A high of respondents belong to the age group of 21-40 years, thus the departmental stores understand the expectations of the customers and thus it can come up with marketing strategies to fulfill their needs and requirements.

2. With regard to the gender, majority of them were male, thus, effective steps can be taken to attract the female respondents to increase the satisfaction level of them by providing more offers, discounts and free home delivery facilities.

3. Majority of the respondents belong to the low and middle income group. Very less respondents belong to high income group. Thus, the store may concentrate much on prices and quality of the products consistently to attract more.

4. The majority of the respondents were living with family members of 2-4 and 5-7. Thus, the store may concentrate much on other type of families by providing high quality products to attract and satisfy them.
5. The most of the customers used to go for shopping with their families or alone. Thus, the products can be kept neatly and displayed properly to choose the products according to the convenience of the customers.

6. Large numbers of respondent’s were satisfied due to the reasonable price fixed by the store. Keeping this in the mind, the price can be fixed below the MRP to attract more rather than thinking about the profits.

7. Usually, the customers used to visit the store for purchase either twice or once in a month. Hence, care must be taken to fulfill the needs of the customers and make available of the products whenever they visit to avoid disappointment of the customers and to sustain them for a longer period.

8. Majority of the customers used to spend below Rs.1000/- per visit. Thus, the retail shops concentrate much on the prices and make available of low cost products.

9. Majority of the customers had got introduced to the store through neighbours / colleagues and advertisements. Thus, the customers believe their words, the owners of the retail shops much steps can be taken in promotional activities. Some credits can be given for referring the customers to make them more interest in introducing the new customers.
10. Comparatively, the majority of the customers don’t have an idea to switch over to other store but then around (47%) of the customers have an idea to switch over. The feedback can be collected from those customers and the necessary steps can be taken to provide better customer satisfaction and make them to change their mind to continue shopping in the same particular store.

5.3.2. Suggestions with regard to tangibility of the store

1. The stores have to concentrate on the physical facilities in an attractive manner. The atmosphere may be created pleasantly and the products may be displayed promptly for proper identification of the products.

2. The layout of the store may be designed properly by differentiating with others and the store may be arranged in such a manner to access easily and make the customers to feel comfort.

3. The transactions may affect due to the failure of the power, the store may provide uninterrupted power supply to avoid the inconveniences.

4. The customers may be attracted by providing some physical facilities like illumination, location, appearance, etc.,
5.3.3. Suggestions with regard to reliability of the store

1. It may be appreciated if the store fix the reasonable price i.e., below the MRP of the product to attract the customers.

2. The stores have to concentrate much on availability of the products to meet the customer needs and wants.

3. The customers are not ready to wait for a longer period for billing. Thus, the departmental stores can have more counters for billing especially during the weekends and 1st week of every month.

4. While fixing the price and billing much care to be taken to provide better service to the customers.

5. The store may pay attention to attract the female customers by extending the facilities like free door delivery, taking orders through phone, SMS, e-mail etc., to sustain the customers.

5.3.4. Suggestions with regard to responsiveness of the store

1. The employees may be trained properly and make them knowledgeable to handle and manage the customers.

2. They have to make the customers to feel secured and create a confidence to do purchase in the same store by providing quality products with reasonable price.

3. The customers may not know the proper layout of the store. The employees have to guide them properly and handle the customers politely and patiently by answering their questions.
5.3.5. Suggestions with regard to assurance of the store

1. During the peak hours, the number of customers would be more rather compare with other timings; the cashier must be efficient and should know how to manage the customers in that crowd.

2. Personal care may be taken to handle the customers individually, so that they may feel more comfortable to shop.

3. Sometimes, the customer may get defected items, to avoid such inconvenience; they may keep a separate quality control department. Also, the defected products may be exchanged without any hesitation.

4. The employees have to show much interest in handling the queries of the customers and the problem to be solved immediately if exist any.

5. Sometimes, the customer may get defected products. Thus, the store may keep quality control department to identify the defected products. Even though, it happens the store may exchange the defected products without any hesitation.

6. The customers may face some problems during the purchase, the employees should be knowledgeable to solve the problems within the stipulated time.

7. The store may collect the feedback and suggestions from the customers to identify the expectations of the customers and steps can be taken to satisfy the customers.
5.3.6. Suggestions with regard to empathy of the store

1. A proper and good quality packaging can be done for the products to make customers comfortable as well as it would be a source of advertisement to create awareness to others.

2. The customers may be much attracted by providing more offers, discounts, gifts, complimentary, etc., during the festival seasons, special occasions, weekends, birthdays, wedding days, etc.,

3. The store may encourage the various mode of payment like accepting credit cards, credit basis purchase and so on. The customers may feel comfort by making payment instead of carrying the cash.

4. The store may be extended more for one stop shopping by keeping restaurants, play area for children, readymade showrooms and so on. It will be much useful for the customers to spend in a single place instead of wandering here and there.

5. On holidays, weekends, other special occasions, etc., the store may make the operating hours based on the convenient of the customers.
5.4 CONCLUSION

Now a days, the departmental stores in Coimbatore region was evolved a lot by providing better quality service to the customers by introducing and promoting new schemes. The dimensions of service quality such as tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy were used to understand the various factors which are influencing the level of customer satisfaction. The current study has included the general profile of the respondents, shopping habits of the respondents and the dimensions of the service quality. The customers have given much priority to responsiveness i.e., the respondents feel secure to shop in that particular store. The customers prefer a particular store for the facilities provided by the store, reasonable price fixed by the store, one-stop shopping, quick response, answering properly to the customers, solving the problems of the customers, exchanging the defected goods and so on. Thus, the retailers have to concentrate much on tangibility and reliability. By the way of collecting the feedback, the retailers may expand and develop their business also can meet the requirements of the customers.

The retail industry consists of diverse business needs and service requirements. In traditional retail model, forces of globalization, customization and consolidation has changed significantly. To increase sales and achieve profit targets, these multiple challenges has to be analysed seriously by the retailers and effective stop has to be taken accordingly. The
departmental stores have to increase the space, layout of the store. The quality can be improved and large variety of products has to be provided and much personal care and attention to taken to attract and satisfy the customers.

5.5 SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

An in-depth study has been made and it was found that there is an opportunity to do a further research. The other dimensions may be considered to measure SERVQUAL in detail and appropriate suggestions may be given for further improvement. This study covered the Coimbatore region, thus the impact of SERVQUAL may be measured with regard to customer satisfaction in other regions. This study was done from the point view of the customers, so it can also be done from the retailer’s point of view to understand the perception of the retailers about the customers.