Chapter - 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction 27
2.2 Literature Related to Retailing & Shopping 27
2.3 Literature Related to Women Empowerment 33
2.4 Literature Related to Women & Shopping 37
2.5 Literature Related to Consumer Empowerment 40
2.6 Summary 50
Chapter 2

Literature Review

"Literature review is a critical summary and an assessment of the current state of knowledge or current state of the art in a particular field."

- Dr. Virgino Cano

2.1 Introduction

Literature provides the basis for research. By reviewing the same researchers can get a clear view on the studies, findings and innovative contributions that have happened in the different areas of research in the past. Reviewing the relevant and similar literature provides the scholars an idea to develop and focus towards building objectives.

Reviewing the literature also helps the researchers to understand and identify the scope that exists in the present and potential opportunity for their research in the near future. The gaps that are identified and the scope for the further research helps develop the problem statement. A study with a strong literature reviews itself means a half completion of the thesis. Most of the times the secondary data i.e. literature itself suffices and completes the studies which are descriptive in nature. In case of for the studies which are exploratory in nature requires the literature as the basis to build the theories.

The study undertaken is no exception to this and following are the relevant studies are reviewed and categorized. A brief introduction is followed by the complete reviews under the respective headings.

2.2 Literature related to Retailing and Shopping

In this part of the review, various national and international literatures related to retail industry and shopping are studied. Topics such as, consumer market, pricing, service convenience, upcoming retail formats, shopping centre patronage motives, classification of consumer goods, brand experience, retail service quality, online shopping services etc., are studied. The studies from the west (especially US and
Europe) provided insights to understand the mindset of the informed consumers and the various retailing activities that enhances the customer satisfaction. Following are some of the literatures reviewed in this direction.


The study shows an analytical framework, based on the concepts of households’ production on the demand side and joint costs on the supply side, is applied to describe the nature of retail activities and the evolution of retail institutions. This paper explains, ex-post, why certain institutions and how retailing forms have emerged in the past.


The article discusses on the classification of consumer goods, shopping, convenience, specialty goods, the intent was clearly to create a guide for the development of marketing strategies by manufacturers. Although the discussion involved retailers and retailing, the purpose was to show how consumer buying habits affected the type of channel distribution and promotional strategy that a manufacturer should adopt.


The study shows that offering the right product in the right place at the right time for the right price is retailing’s formula for perfection. The ideal remains elusive, but an elite rank of retailers is getting closer to it every day. There’s much to be learned from what they do. The Holy Grail of Retailing being able to offer the right product in the right place at the right time for the right price-remains frustratingly elusive. You would think we’d have captured it by now, particularly given the enormous amount of data that retailers and e-tailers can gather about points of purchase, buying patterns, and customers’ tastes. But many retailers still have a long way to go.

The article focuses on how Sears and Roebuck emerged with improved financial results by making dramatically changes in their business culture. Sears executives spent three years rebuilding the company around its customers. In rethinking what Sears was and what it wanted to become, these managers developed a business model of the company—the employee-customer-profit model—and an accompanying measurement system that tracks success from management behaviour through employee attitudes to customer satisfaction and financial performance.


The article comments on the U.S. economy and consumer spending. Article provides the observation that shares of Nike, Home Depot, eBay and Starbucks outpaced the Dow Jones Industrial average in 2004, but have fallen behind it in 2005; Sharp fall in U.S. automobile shares; Concerns about consumer spending; Impact of the Federal Reserve's interest rate changes on consumer spending; Challenges for investors; How U.S. consumerism is playing a big role in China's growth; Factors which are pushing prices, particularly for oil, higher; Decline of the U.S. dollar as a result of the growing U.S. trade deficit.


This research investigates a subject of great importance to retailers: motives for retail patronage. Specifically, it attempts to determine the relative importance of various patronage motives for shopping centers as they relate to both demographic and life-style variables of shoppers. Two important questions are explored: What are the basic motives for patronage of retail shopping centers and what is the relative importance of these motives for different shopper subgroups.


The article narrates the entry of FDI in India retail sector. The entry of FDI in India’s retail sector is inevitable. However, with the instruments of public policy in its hands, the government can slow down the process. Japan has done this quite effectively. The government can try to ensure that the domestic and foreign players are more or less on an equal footing and that the domestic traders are not a special disadvantage.
The small retailers must be given the opportunity to provide more personalized service, so that their higher costs are not taken advantage of by large supermarkets and hypermarkets.

Chakrabarti Amit Baran & Ganesh K. “Indian Retailing”, CCS.PGP.P3-28, IIMB.

The report is meant to act as a whitepaper for anyone who wants to start a retail business in India. With this objective in mind, the report has been divided into three parts. First part gives an analysis of the retail industry in India. The development, the present scenario, and the likely future of the industry are discussed. It also discuss the prominent sectors in the sector like food and grocery, apparels etc. it has a special focus on the current and future trends in the industry. The second part of the report tries to provide the business model for the retail sectors based on the study carried out in the first part. While doing so a series of decisions that are to be made by the management at the various levels at various time periods right from the strategic planning to the full scale roll out of all the stores are discussed.


The study focuses on the consumer landscape which is changing very fast. There is an exciting explosion of choices, new categories, and new shopping options etc., arising around the market. The study discusses the issues related to growing purchasing power Indian consumers along with their growing expectations for the world class products/services. The study also explains how shopping has become an exciting and engaging prospect among Indian shoppers. By providing an information on the transformation taking place in the retail formats, the study tries to portray how shoppers are ruling the retail roost.


The study focuses on the development of the mall mania in Indian context. The study tries to cover the evolution of the Mall culture of 1950s which started in US and spread to Europe, East Asia and Latin America. The study gives an overview of the budding ‘Mall Mania’ in the Indian consumer market after the liberalisation in the early 1990s. Introduction of the wide range of new household appliances, stylish apparel, and other consumer goodies etc have not yet made the Indian consumer experience the world class shopping experience. Discussing on the dominating
unorganised sector, the study sheds the light on the facts of Indian retail outlets that are lacked in providing the consumer with a pleasant store atmosphere, control over comparing prices, quality and styles to the consumers. The study concludes by saying that still the control is in the hands of the retailer or the proprietor.


The article provides an overview of the retail emergence in India. It also talks about the contribution of retailing to the Indian economy. It gives brief information about the world retail leaders and their contribution towards the growth of the nation.


The report verdict on mixed Indian retailing formats such as traditional and organized retailing. An attempt is made by the authors to endeavour to develop an analytical model to study retailing in India. The study sheds light on the effect of emerging retail formats on independent retailers and the survival strategies adopted by them and the study also outlines the functions performed by channel intermediaries and predicts how the functions will shift within the retail value chain. Also an attempt is made to apply the analytical model to five retail sectors including FMCG, apparel, consumer durables, books and music and jewellery. The present retail formats and the value chain in each of the sectors are tried to be mapped and then studied to predict the changes therein. The study concludes by identifying the trends in the Indian retailing sectors and proposes a pan India retail format by studying the five sectors.


The article focuses on the subject of service convenience and it’s important in service economies. The article tries to bring in the limitations in the literature by saying - the consumer convenience literature-strong in certain respects, underdeveloped in other respects-gives insufficient attention to service convenience. The prevailing pattern is either to treat service convenience generally or to lump services and goods together into an overall convenience construct. The authors seek to stimulate a higher level of research activity and dialogue by proposing a more comprehensive and multidimensional conceptualization of service convenience and a model delineating
its antecedents and consequences. The authors build their case by systematically examining the convenience literature, explicating the dimensions and types of service convenience, developing the overall model and related research propositions, and presenting directions for further research.


The article narrates the effect of product-specific buying experience on the mix of information sources in retail buyer decision-making was studies. Sixty retail buyers completed a decision-making task based on a fractional factorial design, composed of eight information sources varied at two levels each. The results of an individual-subject ANOVA showed the dominant information source to be the buyer’s own knowledge, followed by customers request, consumer magazines, selling history, buyers from similar stores, sales representatives, and reviews and ads in the trade news. A post hoc analysis showed that the number and relative important of information sources differed by level of product-specific buying experience.


The study focuses on the Service quality is being increasingly perceived as a tool to increase value for the consumer, and as a means of positioning in a competitive environment to ensure consumer satisfaction, retention, and patronage. Existing research indicates that consumers’ satisfaction and their loyalty associated with the stores based on the service quality offered by the retailer. However, the study addresses the issue of lack of availability of SERVQUAL scale to measure the service quality quantitatively. This study examines the Retail Service Quality Scale (RSQS) developed in the US for applicability in India. RSQS have five dimensions and six sub-dimensions and has been found appropriate in a variety of setting-across different countries such as South Africa and Singapore and across a variety of store types such as supermarkets, department stores, and hyper stores. The five dimension- Physical Aspect, Reliability, Personal Interaction, Problem Solving, and Policy-are believed to capture distinct though correlated aspects of retail service. Each of the first three
dimensions has two sub-dimensions. These six sub-dimensions, also called the first-order factors, are labelled as Appearance, Convenience, Promises, Doing-it-Right, Inspiring Confidence, and Courteousness/Helpfulness.


The study carried out by the authors tries to identify the "Is the job satisfaction of buyers more affected by the amount of salary than by other factors?" Are the chances that a buyer will be happier with his/her job more likely to occur in a large or in a small retail organization? Does the section of the country affect the buyer's attitude toward his/her job? The conclusion of this study is that buyers are pleased with their jobs, and do register a high level of job satisfaction.


The article highlights on, Liberalization has brought radical changes in the Indian market scenario-entry of Multi-National Corporations, professionalization of marketing strategies of Indian companies. Product proliferation and diversity of consumer choice, the concept of value, value of money is picking up. The challenge of the changed market environment forces the marketers to reassess their strategies in delivering value for time and value for journey and delighted shopping experience. The literature explains how the intensified competition forcing marketers to fall back on price cuts to retain the consumers.

### 2.3 Literature related to Women Empowerment

The study was carried out by considering various social science studies related to aspects of women empowerment and various issues such as women bargaining power, her status and role in the family and in the society, roles played outside the home, education and help from SHU’s to women to gain power, etc. This helped in understanding the concept of empowerment appropriately and its relevance in the marketing context. Relevant literatures related to the same are collected from various
journals, research data bases and other publications of national and international reputation.

Bisanth Savitri (2001), "Globalization, poverty and women’s empowerment", United Nations division of advancement of women (online)

The study focuses on 'the role of women folk in the globalized economy'. It also discusses issues related to poverty and women as a factor of development. It involves questions of political and economic security of women folk. It is about how relations among countries and people are to be structured. It determines whether we foster international solidarity or descend into a spiral of global friction and conflict.


The article narrates about the survey done by the World Bank. The World Bank has identified empowerment as one of the key constituent elements of poverty reduction, and as a primary development assistance goal. The Bank has also made gender mainstreaming a priority in development assistance, and is in the process of implementing an ambitious strategy to this effect. The promotion of women’s empowerment as a development goal is based on a dual argument; that social justice is an important aspect of human welfare and is intrinsically worth pursuing; and the that women’s empowerment is a means to other ends.


This article discusses the third Millennium Development Goal (MDG), on gender equality and women’s empowerment. It explores the concept of women’s empowerment and highlights ways in which the indicators associated with this Goal-on education, employment, and political participation-can contribute to it.


This article examines the extent to which home-based production in the garment sector of Ahmadabad, India, serves to empower its female participants, defining
empowerment in terms of control over enterprise income and decision-making within the household. It places this question within the literatures on resource theory and bargaining models of the household, both of which posit that improved access to resource increases women's power in the household. This study highlights why access to resources may not lead so directly to improvements in women's position in the household in the Indian context. It then discusses why home-based work may be less empowering than sources of work outside of the home.


The study focuses on how Women in India are placed in a uniquely paradoxical position. For millions who have deeply internalized their subordinate position, there are those like Indira Gandhi, who have transcended these limitations to become its most powerful premiers. At the one hand they suffer discrimination because of their being female, and on the other they worshipped as goddesses such as Durga and Kali that symbolize power (Shakti). Saraswati is the goddess of learning, yet our country is home to millions of illiterate women. The study also portrays the gender discrimination that women suffer in exercising her strategic life choices. Finally it concludes by saying how the communities can be built to empower the disempowered women by involving them in various educating activities and knowledge dissemination programs.


The article narrates that Women are no longer, confined to the four walls of home. More and more women are seeking employment outside their families. The study discusses how the families, society and economy will experience the change because of the women getting into the higher studies and employment. In this direction, the author drags the attention on the Government and the non-government agencies in promoting self-employment among women. Author suggests to bring in special training programmes and financial assistance for women to enable them to start their own ventures.

The study focuses on the empowerment of employees' in an organisation. It discusses the issues related to the ignorance in implementing the same. According to the study most of the discussions in the corporate world revolves around the topic of empowerment but when it comes to its implementation the attitude of the corporate changes towards the same. The study discusses various articles, books, consultants, and seminars that offer the practicing manager ideas, techniques, methods on empowerment and provides reasons to immediately put this new powerful employee motivation/productivity tool to work.


This paper reflects on the strengths and weaknesses of approaches taken by three NGOs in Bangladesh and one NGO based in Bihar in India. All these NGOs consider the provision of microfinance to women to be a major strategy for empowering women. Our reflections in this article draw on a review of the literature on the impacts of credit programmes, and on discussions with women's groups and NGO staff. To ensure that microfinance programmes fulfil their promise to support women's empowerment, development workers and researchers need to focus much more on strategies that support the transformation of gender relations.


This study identifies and describes questionnaires that measure empowerment in working life. Theoretical bases and empirical examination of the questionnaires are also reported. Nine questionnaires emerged from a database search including AMED, CINAHL, ERIC, MEDLINE and PSYCINFO. The main target groups were employees in general. Most authors share the same theoretical basis. Most of the questionnaires focus on intra-individual issues, while a smaller number deal with the interaction between individual and organization. Control and competence are frequently used dimensions. Cronbach’s alpha for complete questionnaires ranged between 0.62 and 0.96. No comparisons with outcome of health were reported. Spreitzer’s questionnaire [54] has undergone the most comprehensive investigation.
Research is required to achieve better understanding of the interplay between conditions at work and empowerment and health.


This paper describes work underway to enrich the present tools to measure women’s empowerment — particularly the Gender-related Development Index (GDI) and the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM). The paper discusses on gender and power concepts, and then introduces a Women’s Empowerment Matrix as a tool to help link socio-cultural, religious, political, legal, and economic spheres. It then raises some of the difficulties related to the calculation of the GDI and GEM, which the authors are taking into account in the AGDI.


The article focuses on “Measuring Empowerment: A methodological approach”. The author synthesizes the feminist and socio-economic institutional perspectives embedded in the policy and programmes that use empowerment as a way to address gender inequality and the power dynamics between women and men in their day-to-day interaction. She highlights the inadequacy of the conventional approach and measures of empowerment and suggests the techniques of data gathering of measurement variables based on lessons learned from empirical application of the framework for programming empowerment.

2.4 Literature related to Women and Shopping

This part carries the literature related to gender studies in shopping – particularly women. Various topics such as, changing role of women in purchasing, working women and time saving services, awareness and changing demand patterns, husband and wife influence in the family purchasing decisions etc., are reviewed. Following are some of the eminent literature reviewed in this direction.

The study focuses on the literature on family role structure is characterized by diverse theories about the structure of marital roles in decision making. At one extreme are those researchers who assume unidimensionality, and whose studies describe families as “matriarchal,” “patriarchal,” and “companionship.” At the other extreme is the even more highly differentiated role structure implicit in the marketing literature. Other studies suggested a further factoring of decisions for single purchases into numerous components.


The article narrates about the complexity of purchase behaviour and dissatisfaction with results obtained from analysis at the level of the individual has created a recent surge of interest in family or joint buying behaviour. Such a framework represents a more realistic approach to the study of many consumer decisions, because it explicitly recognizes the need to account for the interaction that occurs among family or household members within the processes leading to the purchase of many types of products and services.


The article defines how husbands do and wives describe their roles in making purchasing decisions and are their purchase plans different. And how well are their respective plan fulfilled. Some answers to these questions are presented here. The results from the study are based on interviews with a representative national sample of husbands and wives and re-interview over a period of two-and-a half years.


The article highlights on the usually in consumer behaviour, buyer behaviour refers to the acts of individuals directly involved in the exchange of money for economic goods and services and the decision processes that determine these acts. This research
seeks to explore the effects of gender on buyer behaviour in terms of consumers' enjoyment of shopping activity, their in-store browsing behaviour and shopping plan.


This paper explores the implications of changing roles of women for consumer research. Three groups of women – feminists, moderates and traditionalists- were included in the study. Differences and similarities among the groups were observed in selected life-style and demographic characteristics. The study focuses on sociological aspects of changing roles of women, and formally incorporates them into consumer behaviour measures.


The article discusses the difficulties of shopping and suggests that shopping as a wealthy late-19th-century matron would be the ideal. Dressing off the rack is always attended by mean shop assistants and the vagaries of self-esteem. In the past, the rich would be taken by carriage to shops, order around the attendants, and pay by credit, while the poor would wear hand-tailored clothes.


This article reports on the seminar, What Women Want: Selling Home Entertainment Systems to Benefit Her Lifestyle. The major social change of our time has to do with the lives of women; retailers must pay attention to how women wish to live, and what they want or need, or they will be left behind; the industry should acknowledge the value of the female customer; identify your customer and qualify your audience; address her needs with benefits; and build a plan of resources and develop a plan of action. The surveys have shown that 81 percent of buying decisions in this economy are made by women, in both business and consumer purchases. And she quoted U.S. Census Bureau numbers that 28 percent of all U.S. households are headed by females. There is a potential 30 percent uptick in your sales if you sell women. But to do so, Campbell said, you must provide a comfort level for female shoppers.

The major focus of this research is the relationship between a wife’s employment and expenditure on time-saving services. Multiple regression analysis of data from the 1972-1973 consumer expenditure Survey indicates that two measures of the extent of a wife’s participation in the labour force were influential in determining monetary outlay on services that are expected to be sensitive to the value of time. Other factors-such as family income, education, and stage of the family life cycle-also exert an impact on expenditure. Findings indicate that family expenditure on service is a complex process influenced by many factors besides a wife’s employment.


The article highlights on the increasing brand awareness and demand for high-end products among the growing population makes the Indian cosmetics and skin care market a growth opportunity. Retailers are ready and willing for international brands to set up shop. The Indian economy is on a high growth drive, which means that purchasing power and willingness to spend are on the rise. It also means big changes are coming to retail there. According to a recent Merrill Lynch and Capgemini’s Asia-Pacific Wealth Report, there are more millionaires coming from the emerging markets than from the developed nations. The country’s population of high-net-worth individuals (HNI) is increasing, and the report shows an increase of nearly 20% in 2005 over the previous year. India reportedly has the youngest HNI population in the Asia-Pacific region.

2.5 Literature related to Consumer Empowerment

This part of the literature review sheds light on the areas such as consumer empowerment through co-creation of value by the firms, consumer awareness about the marketing and marketing contacts, evolution of the empowered consumer, online buying tendencies consumer rights and consumer forums to protect them, understanding the role of the empowered tourists in bringing quality in tourism empowered tourists (customers) bring in potential benefits to the industry,
consumerism and consumer movement are the guarantee for the long-run viability of progressive, responsive and profitable business, technological advancements as the contributor to the consumer empowerment, consumerism in the Indian consumer market, mapping consumer power, defining consumer empowerment and its meaning, consumer empowerment across the financial, medical and legal sectors, consumer centric marketing (CCM), increased use of internet (ICT) leading to consumer empowerment, the future consumerism in retailing etc are the discussed in this part.


The article highlights on the Consumerism is by no means a new phenomenon, even though its significance seems to have intensified in recent years. Magazine headlines selected from a single point in the past, the late 1930. Although it’s innovative power has been cumulative. That is to say, through a ratchet process, the rules and the legislation tend to add up; few consumerist enactments have ever been repealed. One of the study entitled “The Woman who shops and the woman who works,” reflects a traditional sense of class distinction and noblesse oblige, even though the author hastened to assure her readers that she did not want to draw the implicit distinction.


The article narrates an oral history approach has been used to examine the evolution of the empowered consumer and brand consciousness from 1918 to 1965 as a critical analysis of mass consumer culture in Britain. The authors trace the changing experience of consumer empowerment and importantly show oral testimony (oral history) as a method able to reveal the complexities of this experience. Women locate increased choice and responsibility within changing marketing and retailing systems (including self-service, branding and media) the authors' show how increased choice and responsibility was often experienced as challenging or confusing. The study identifies that empowerment is a complex or paradoxical process. It provides empirical support for a growing number of claims that have challenged the linear benefit assumptions given to increased choice arising from classic economic theory and outlines a model of the paradox of the evolution of the empowered consumers.

The article narrates about Empowerment has become a widely used management term in the last decade or so, though in practical terms, it shares the ambiguity of its predecessors in the HRM tradition. This paper sets out to unravel the web of meaning surrounding empowerment to show what a contested concept it is, and hence why its application in organizational settings is fraught with misunderstanding and tension. It does so by taking an approach that contributes to the examination of HRM discourse and management rhetoric. To demonstrate the ambiguity of empowerment as a concept, the paper review the various ways in which the term has been used across non-management disciplines (women, minority groups, education, community care, politics), culminating with a review of the use of empowerment in contemporary management theory. The paper concludes that organizations and managers have chosen to coin a phrase which is open to different, sometimes contradictory, meanings and which, when applied, evokes both subjective attitudes and objective behaviour, means different things in varying contexts, and its affected fundamentally by individual differences in perception and experience. Unless organizations offer clear operational definitions when using empowerment, instead of purely acquiescing to a vague and seductive version of the concept, they are abdicating responsibility for the unpredictable consequences that result.


The article provides in-depth information about the marketing scale construction with respect to consumer empowerment among mental health services. Subscales of the Empowerment scale were examined to see whether they fit a model of consumer empowerment that distinguishes self- and community orientations. In addition, the relationship of these two super-ordinate factors to several psychosocial factors was examined.

The article talks about the traditional financial services industry is based on the principles that the customer is ignorant, incompetent, disinterested in money matters, and eager to delegate them to someone he or she trusts. However the psychology and behaviour of consumers and the structure and dynamics of the financial services market are starting to shift in a very fundamental way. Information and information technology are the key driving forces. This paper describes how electronic commerce is changing established patterns of influence and control in markets. The paper addresses these issues in the context of the UK financial services market, but the ideas and conclusions apply to many other markets.


The article tries to give out meaning and definition of consumer empowerment. Empowerment takes different forms from individuals making and taking decisions to groups of people articulating a belief about a product, market, organizational and political system which require, in their opinions, some dramatic change. So my definition of consumer empowerment in marketing is: a mental state usually accompanied by a physical act which enables a consumer or a group of consumers to put into effect their own choices through demonstrating their needs, wants and demands in their decision-making with other individuals or organizational bodies in the marketplace.


The study focuses on the Purpose- Much of the literature on consumer empowerment focuses on consumers’ efforts to regain control of their consumption processes from suppliers. The purpose is to argue that many suppliers achieve success by trying hard to empower consumers. The mechanism by which this takes place consists of researching and providing what consumers want. Consumers feel empowered when
they are able to enjoy the consumption process. This is of particular note in shopping, which is not simply obtaining products but also experience and enjoyment.


The study focuses on the increasing numbers of consumers are expressing concerns about reports of questionable corporate practices and are responding through boycotts and boycotts. This paper compares competing theories of consumer empowerment and details findings that examine the applicability of the theory to “ethical consumer” narratives. The nature and impact of consumer empowerment in consumer decision making is then discussed.


This paper introduces consumer empowerment as a promising research area. Going beyond lay wisdom that more control is always better, we outline several hypothesis concerning (a) the factors that influence the perception of empowerment, and (b) the consequences of greater control and the subjective experience of empowerment on consumer satisfaction and confidence. The purpose of this paper was to outline an agenda for further research around the theme of consumer empowerment. Authors believe that such research should provide a new perspective from which to generate basic insights on choice processes, while at the same time contributing to the foundations of a sound design of empowering systems.


The literature tries to provide the definition and meaning of consumer empowerment from the marketing perspective as within marketing and more broadly the social sciences these definitions do not do justice to the myriad of insights generated by writers when studying consumers and their cultural diversity. According to authors empowerment takes different forms from individuals making and taking decisions to groups of people articulating a belief about a product, market, organizational and political system which require, in their opinions, some dramatic change. Authors express that empowerment makes changes in the lives of those who have experienced
it so that they become less passive consumers in accepting whatever is offered by suppliers.


The purpose of this paper is to explain consumer centric marketing (CCM) and adopt this new technique to travel context. The paper seeks to outline the benefits and disadvantages of the CCM together with warnings of typical caveats. Customer orientation and innovative thinking have been cited as the basis for best business performance. The balance between savings from technological effectiveness and providing customer centered service atmosphere is not an easy one. Finally the article concludes by suggesting the importance of consumer by saying “it is the customer who determines what a business is” (Drucker, 1954, p.37).


The literature addresses about bringing ‘consumer empowerment’ in the health service financing industry in Germany. The study tries to identify the health system of the welfare state has basic design flaws. First, it treats citizens as recipients of entitlements that are bestowed on them rather than as sovereign customers who otherwise can choose among an array of goods and services with uniform health plans, there are no incentives to economize. Second, benefits are provided by government through monopoly schemes; their performance has been dismal when compared with other sectors of the economy that, under competition, have yielded continuous efficiency improvements. Ceaselessly rising costs for healthcare are the consequence. Applying the principles of the market economy to healthcare – and to social security in general – would unleash a vast potential of efficiency gains. The issue in such a reform is equity. Healthcare must be affordable for all. In reconciling efficiency and equity, the cornerstones of this proposal are financial empowerment and individual responsibility; to hand the individual the money required to purchase the current level of benefits – nobody loses – and to leave it to the individual, within
bounds, whether to do so. While guaranteeing that everybody can buy the current benefits, the savings from restraint will be the individual’s to keep. The reform steps would be as follows: (i) empowerment, (ii) fairness and finance, (iii) safeguard and choice, and (iv) savings to keep. This is a ‘consumer model’ of healthcare. Efficiency is achieved by privatization, individual responsibility and freedom of choice on the demand side and by competition on the supply side. Equity is guaranteed by financial empowerment of the individual and a no-loss rule; mandatory minimum insurance would preserve the safety net.


This research paper highlights the issues of power relationships between employees at the lower levels of an organizational hierarchy and customers of a service organization. Data collected from a luxury hotel in England; Current approaches to empowerment in the hotel and catering industry. A problem addressed is to examine the power relationships within organizations come from the idea that power is an elusive concept. The particular aim is to demonstrate how, in the overt production of good service and the right attitude; employees can structure some aspects of customer care to their own advantage.


The article highlights on the Purpose-Arguing that increasing use of information and communication technologies (ICT) is shifting market power from suppliers to consumers, the ensuing consumer empowerment is presented as an unintended consequences of marketing. Marketing implications arising from this consumer empowerment are examined in terms of a process where control and management by suppliers over consumer access and enablement are increasingly difficult.


The study identifies the internet as more than just a communication mechanism in empowering consumers. The role of Internet in the three stages of consumption: pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase are discussed and found that each role is a little
different, and accordingly, requires a range of input from consumer educators. In the pre-purchase stage, the emphasis is on guiding consumers to useful sources of product and service information, and possibly evaluating that information in terms of its degree of usefulness and independence. During the purchase stage, the emphasis is on locating and evaluating networks of buyer groups, so that consumers can effectively bargain for improved terms of sale. In the post-purchase phase, the emphasis is on guiding consumers to sites that can help them gain redress for unsatisfactory purchase, and possibly instructing consumers how to use such sites. In this paper, we investigate the effect of the Internet from the consumer’s perspective.


In this article, we draw on our participant observation in the virtual-technology context of Second Life to explore co-creation's prepossessing claim of consumer empowerment and its connections to contemporary forms of social organization. We conclude that while consumers are genuinely empowered by co-creation practices, this empowerment that frees the consumer in a diversity of ways also offers significant avenues for entrapping the consumer into producing for the firm. In the end, co-creation is a veneer of consumer empowerment in a world where market power, in large measure, still resides in capital. On this basis, we suggest that the seeming demise of capitalism espoused by some scholars is premature to the extent that capitalism has the uncanny ability to meld into newer social formations such as those afforded by Second Life. Thus, a more realistic vision is an interloping of the ethical and capitalist economies.


The article narrates about the production of most services depends heavily on human involvement which, by definition, implies variability. The difficulty of standardizing human behaviour during service delivery at a level expected by customers is exacerbated by the simultaneity of production and consumption. When service failure occurs, of the mishap, the difficulty in avoiding visible services failures does not have
to result in dissatisfied customers, however. Service firms can go a long way towards turning dissatisfied customers who have had a negative service experience into ones who are likely to remain loyal to the firm. That, however, requires an effective service recovery programme. This study pursued two objectives. The empirical results show that attribution (the firm accepting blame) is, relatively speaking, the dimension most important to customers in their assessment of the service recovery effort, followed by empowerment and apology. Once a service failure has occurred, customers prefer to deal with staff who are empowered to solve their problem quickly and they do not hear that someone else is to blame. An apology in person or, alternatively, by telephone is preferable. Surprisingly, pre-service failure perceptions do not influence the customer’s satisfaction with the recovery effort, suggesting that service recovery is situation-specific.


In the given literature, “consumption is defined as the most fundamental act of any living being; it is also a key factor responsible for all economic activities”. If a consumer is offered inferior products, if prices are exorbitant, if drugs are unsafe or worthless, if the consumer is unable to choose on an informed basis, then his dollar is wasted, his/her health and safety may threatened, and national interest suffers.


The article focuses on the increase in the awareness of consumer preference services among marketers in Great Britain. A survey conducted by PM/CCB Insight Marketing-GAP Tracking Study reveals that 80 percent of consumer would opt out of being phoned from loans and credit cards, 76 percent of financial services and 75 percent gym and health clubs. However, some consumer prefers not to be contacted at all by companies. The article focuses on the increase in the awareness of consumer preference services among marketers in Great Britain. A survey conducted by PM/CCB Insight Marketing-GAP Tracking Study reveals that 80 percent of consumers would opt out of being phoned from loans and credit cards, 76 percent of
financial services and 75 percent gym and health clubs. However, some consumers prefer not to be contacted at all by companies. The study shows that more and more consumers may well be opening and reading their direct mail (PM September 8) — debunking recent reports of a junk mail deluge — but at the same time they are becoming increasingly aware of their rights and the steps they can take to avoid unwanted marketing contact via all media. Rather worryingly, marketers continue to underestimate this growth of consumer empowerment, according to the latest PM/CCB Insight Marketing-GAP Tracking Study.


The article focuses on concept of the technological advancements increasingly providing marketers with the opportunity to empower consumers. Consumer empowerment is a positive subjective state evoked by consumer perceptions of increasing control. As a positive state, increasing consumer empowerment should be associated by a number of contextual variables. Knowing in what contexts empowerment has greater impact on satisfaction would help marketers decide when they could more effectively use such a strategy. This study sheds light on investigating the relationship consumer empowerment and satisfaction and in determining set of potential influences on that relationship. Marketers will be in a position to decide when to empower consumers if they have guidance on the relationships between these variables. But the study is found silent on examining the whether the state of consumer empowerment will or will not be experienced but examines the relationship of this state to consumer satisfaction with the empowering firm.


The article highlights on the Consumers play a pivotal role in the health of economy. They are the largest economic group affecting almost every economic decision. Though they are the most important agents of all economic activities, yet are the most
exploited individuals. The sellers are using different tactics to lure customers to buy their products to achieve the goal of making more and more profit. Except for a small fraction, consumers by and large are unable to know the genuineness and real prices of products being marketed. For the consumers, shopping has become a difficult task due to multi choice, pressure selling by sellers, misleading/inadequate information about the products and glut of substandard, misbranded/adulterated products in the market. In order to know the reasons for such state of affairs, the present study was conducted on women consumers of Ludhiana City of Punjab.

2.6 Summary

This chapter provides an in-depth review of literature from social sciences and interdisciplinary areas such as management, marketing, retailing and consumer behaviour. The major focus of the review was on 'consumer empowerment' in the retailing context. Accordingly, diverse studies on services industries such as tourism, healthcare, banking and insurance, hotel etc., from both West and European retailing are reviewed to arrive at the operational definition of Consumer Empowerment.