CHAPTER – VI

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION
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6.1 INTRODUCTION

The study aims at measuring the factors influencing customers towards the departmental stores. An attempt has been made to find out the opinion of 750 respondents in Salem District. Field survey method and personal interview technique have been employed to collect information. The data thus, collected have been subdued into suitable tabular forms for drawing inferences. Quantitative techniques like average, percentage, range, two-way tables, chi-square tests, Friedman $t$ test and Discriminant Function are applied wherever necessary. In this chapter, an attempt has been made to recapitulate the key findings and based on these findings, a few suggestions are also made.

6.2 FINDINGS

- It is found from the analysis that 46.3 Per cent of the respondents in rural area and urban area belong to young age group.
- It is identified that the 61.6 Per cent of the respondents are male.
- 67.6 Per cent are married.
- 82.3 Per cent of the respondents in rural and urban areas are employed.
➢ It is found that 34.4 Per cent of the respondent’s family income in rural area and 23.2 Per cent in urban area is in the range of Rs.5001 to Rs.10000.

➢ It is found from the analysis that respondents in both the study areas have a family size of 4-6 members.

➢ It is understood that in both the study areas 31.7 per cent of the respondent have assigned rank one for product display, rank two regarding the customer care and rank three for discount offer.

➢ 21.6 Per cent of the respondents in rural area have assigned rank five and 24.2 Per cent in urban area have assigned rank one for cheap and best quality products.

➢ 22.5 per cent of the respondents from rural and urban areas assigned rank five for the variety of products offered by the departmental stores.

➢ 37.5 per cent of the respondents from rural and urban areas assigned rank six for the fastest service rendered by the departmental stores.

➢ Based on the analysis, rural area customers purchase monthly twice (37.6 per cent) whereas majority of the respondents from urban area (31.8 per cent) purchase weekly once.
- Majority of the respondents from rural and urban area purchase on cash basis but the percentage of credit purchase is more in rural area (21.6 per cent) than urban area (13.4 per cent).
- 14.4 per cent of respondents in rural areas avail credit for two months while it is 2 per cent for urban consumers.
- Average monthly purchase is in the range of Rs.1000 to Rs.3000 both in rural and urban areas.
- Both rural and urban area respondents accept that damaged products are being replaced by the departmental stores.
- It is observed that majority of the respondents from rural and urban areas accept that products can be bought at their convenient time.
- The distance between residence and departmental stores are less than 3 K.m in rural and urban areas.
- For majority of the respondents in rural and urban areas, purchase decision is taken by themselves.
- It is also found that 57.9 per cent of the respondents have previously purchased from the nearest grocery shop.
- There is switch over from their previous purchase to the departmental stores due to the availability of good quality products.
- Advertisement through local cable network has been effective in promoting sales in the departmental stores.
• 46 per cent of the respondents have been influenced in their purchase decision by advertisement.

• 68.4 percent in rural area and 83.2 per cent in urban area have recommended the departmental stores from which they purchase to others.

• Major problems faced by the customers both in urban and rural area are lack of parking facility and huge crowd.

• Majority of the respondents in urban and rural areas face the problem of non-availability of products.

• 60 per cent of the consumers are not aware of their protection and right.

• Chi-square test has been used to analyse the relation between the dependent variable viz., level of awareness and independent factors viz., area, age, sex, marital status, educational qualification, occupation, family income and size of the family. It reveals a close relation between the level of awareness and area, sex, education, occupation, family income and size of the family but there is no relation between level of awareness with age and marital status.

• Average score analysis has been used to measure the level of satisfaction of the consumers by utilising the departmental stores. This analysis brings to light the existence of a close relation between level of satisfaction and age, area and occupation. In contrast there is
no relation between the level of satisfaction and sex, marital status, education, income and size of the family.

Friedman’s test has been applied to find out the factors which influence the awareness of the sample respondents. Accordingly, product display, customer care and cheap and best quality have been ranked as first, second and third factors influencing the customer awareness. It also shows that quality, availability and price of the product influence the attitude of the consumers towards departmental stores.

Discriminant function has been used to find out the factors which significantly discriminate the rural respondents from urban respondents. Out of the variables only five viz., availability, space, product display, age and awareness score contribute to discrimination. Further nearly 67% of the variation in the Discriminant Function is due to awareness score, which contributes maximally, in discriminating between rural and urban people in their opinion towards influencing measures.

Discriminant Function has predicted 44 per cent of the cases correctly in the rural group and 94.5 per cent of the cases in the urban group and on the whole classified 81.1 per cent of the cases correctly.
6.3 SUGGESTIONS

"All the human beings have been acting as consumers, whereas all the human beings have not been acting as manufacturer".

Humanity is facing new challenges and threats in spite of all its advancement in science and technology. The gap between the rich and the poor is ever widening. The life style and attitude of the people have so quickly changed. The majority of the human population is quite ready to wholeheartedly welcome a materialistic and consumerist world.

The departmental stores are widely recognized by the consumers in this study area. The present situation of the departmental stores can be improved if the efforts are made to implement the following suggestions towards the consumers' tendency on departmental stores.

➢ Departmental stores in urban areas should provide adequate parking facilities for the vehicles of the consumers.

➢ Door delivery (whether free or at cost) is the important point to be taken into account also for the better services to the consumers.

➢ Adequate space facilities inside the departmental stores with good free air circulation should be made.

➢ Advertisement should be made explicit that departmental stores are meant for all classes of consumers.

➢ Installation of free offer hoardings can be put at the entrance of the stores.
➢ Sales personnel should be trained in large numbers in order to have effective supervision and control over customer services.
➢ These stores may concentrate to provide various brands of different varieties of products.
➢ Customers’ security and safety measures (eg. Fire protection equipment, emergency exit way etc.) should be provided for consumers and their vehicles.
➢ Computerised information relating to product availability and other needs should be provided to avoid disappointment among consumers.
➢ Creating awareness about consumer’s rights and protection among consumers is another welcoming suggestion which may be implemented.
➢ Educating the consumers about the significance, need and development of departmental stores by way of short films, taped speeches etc. may be undertaken.
➢ Instead of giving credit points at every time of purchase, these stores can provide cash discount to the consumers based on the previous purchase of that particular customer. This will pave the way for retaining the existing customers.
➤ Proper care and arrangements should be made by these stores for more offers, discount, timely supply and after sales services etc.

➤ Rural Knowledge Centre should be created by utilizing new technologies to satisfy the rural customers based on the principle of reaching the unreached and voicing the voiceless.

➤ The business people should follow business ethics and value of human being by avoiding malpractices such as adulteration, duplication and substandard products.

➤ Many worthless products have been sold in by way of heavy advertisement. This creates an ill feeling in the society. By emphasizing ethics in advertising practices and moral responsibility among advertising agency to protect the society.

➤ Out of 1.12 billion Indians, nearly 700 million live in 6 lacks villages across rural India. As pointed out by our former President Dr.A.P.J.Abdul Kalam, rural development is the key to overall development of the country. We must Provide Urban facilities to Rual Areas (PURA). In this regard there is a greater necessity in creating awareness for an improved quality of rural life among the youth.

➤ Generally consumers in urban areas have adequate knowledge and information about their rights and privileges. But most of the rural
consumers are unaware of the fact. Lack of consumer awareness is one of the major reasons for the exploitation in rural society. Hence we must create awareness among rural people to increase consumer rights and privileges.

➢ To accomplish the major goals and rural education, the rural institutions must work closely and effectively with Rural Administrators, National and State Level Rural Educationist Agencies, Rural Unions, Community Organisations, Politicians and other important stack-holders in the Rural educational System.

➢ Nowadays, consumer is the supreme authority in modern marketing. They utilize all types of products and services. They have the right to get the clear information about the products and services. Most of them do not get because of lack of awareness about their rights and does not utilize the adequate services. Hence, every one in rural areas must be educated about their rights and the ways to redress their problems.
6.4 CONCLUSION

The study is a rewarding exercise in the sense that, in addition to identifying the factors which influence the respondents, it has also brought out the problems encountered by the respondents from various angle. Retailing, one of the largest sectors in the global economy, is going through a transition phase not only in India but the world over. For a long time, their corner departmental store was the only choice available to the consumer, especially in the urban areas. This is slowly giving way to international formats of retailing. The traditional food and grocery segment has seen the emergence of departmental stores. In order to appeal to all classes of the society, retail stores would have to identify with different life styles. Hence, the emergence of new sectors has been accompanied by changes in existing formats as well as the beginning of new formats. This has enabled the researcher to give certain practical solutions to the problems encountered by the respondents.

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