Retail trade, one of the largest sectors in the world economy is passing through a period of dramatic changes. Population explosion and the explosion in information, transport and Communication technology and as a result economic change as well as changes in the consumer behaviour have made the environment of retail trade more complex and the forces of change affecting today's retail trade organisations are shifting the way the retailers do business from the way they dealt with in the last millennium. The emerging service paradigm will radically reshape the world of retail trade. The successful retailers in a market will be those who will be well conversed with the retailing approach to the new breed of customers.

Like other business, the retailer are also required to place one foot in the predictable world of the past and one foot in the unknown future. They are to operate on at least three important areas; Customers, Human resources, Technology. First, the ability of the retailer to accurately match the customer needs with the information, good and services that it offers is dependent on how well the retailers know the customers as well as their needs. Secondly, the question regarding the management of the human resources of the organisation is to be dealt with very cautiously. How will they be motivated, trained and inspired to contribute toward team as well as organisational goals? Thirdly, how the new and emerging technologies are to be utilised for making quick and right kind of decisions so as to ensure the delivery of better customer satisfaction.

Instead of selling the customers a product, why not think of the retail enterprise as part of the whole product mix the retailer delivers. The customers will salivate with all the benefits the retailers are putting into the package. The delivery of a complete package enables the customers to maintain loyalty to the store and become increasingly effective in their fulfillment of objectives. The business philosophy is different - it is not just about the retailer's monthly budget. It is everything else about the business and the retailer's continuing quest help them win the war for survival and growth.
In India, retail trade organisations are mostly owned and managed by the private individuals with the help of the family members and or with some hired persons/employees. These types of organisations constitute a major segment of the retail trade organisations. It is also interesting that tremendous variety exists among retail stores as they manage all the way from roadside garment stand to the multicrore corporate retail chain. The success of all the business ultimately depends on the selling of its products or services and this function is performed by the retailers and the performance also ultimately depends largely on the skill and abilities of the retailer. But very little is known about the persons who occupy crucial position in the channels of distribution. Who are these traders? Where do they come from? What kinds of education do they have and how do they actually manage their enterprises? Keeping these types of many questions in mind, the researcher started this study on retail trade management. As a part of an extensive study on retail trade management, a field study has been conducted on the basis of a structured questionnaire. In doing so, the researcher has deliberately worked out a detailed survey of the literature on retail trade management which is scattered in such diverse sources as books, journals, magazines, newspapers and socio-economic writings.

This work is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter is introductory in character. This will help to understand the basic objectives of study. Chapter two deals with the survey of literature on the field of retail trade management. Chapter three has been prepared considering the environment of retail trade. Chapter four gives an analysis on the consumer product markets in India. Chapter five outlines the location, methods of statistical analysis and design of the field study where the problem and its basic ramifications have been stated. In chapter six, the researcher tried to give the quantitative interpretation of the gathered biographical information of the retailers as well as the pattern of management of the retail trades. Chapter seven deals with the summary of the main study, limitations, suggestions and conclusions. In this chapter the researcher tried to develop a conceptual frame-work for managing the retail trade. In the appendices, the researcher provides the statistical data, questionnaire and the bibliography.

On the academic side, it would offer an exploration regarding the socio-economic background of the small and private entrepreneurs who are engaged in this field of business, trader-consumer relationship and above all empirical practices in this particular area of business and that my also be tested later by other researchers. For the budding traders, the
messages regarding the consumers as well as the traders expectations, frustrations and the causes of continuity will be passed on so that they can win the battle for survival with the help of the experienced outlined.

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