# CHAPTER-II

## BUSINESS AND DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF SILCHAR

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CHAPTER -II

BUSINESS & DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF SILCHAR

This chapter on business and demographic profile touches the various issues relating to the factors constituting this profile here in Silchar. It includes business profile, infrastructure, business environment and demography etc. as the core issues surrounding the business and demographic environment of retailing business in Silchar town.

2.3 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF SILCHAR TOWN

Silchar is the districts headquarter of Cachar district in the state of Assam in India. It is the economic gateway to the state of Mizoram and part of Manipur. It is 343 kilometers (213 miles) south east of Guwahati and on the left bank of river Barak in 24.82°N and 92.8°E. The city of Silchar is the second largest city of Assam after Guwahati in terms of population and municipal area. The town of Silchar has tremendous commercial importance. It consequently witnesses the settlement of a sizeable population of traders from distant parts of India. The city has an airport and lies on both a rail head and national highways connecting Guwahati, Assam; Agartala, Tripura; Imphal, Manipur; and Aizawl in Mizoram state. Silchar is the most thickly populated town of South Assam in the Barak Valley. The total population of this town was merely 34 thousands in the year 1951 which increased to 1.15 lakhs in 1991 thereby showing an annual average growth rate of 6 percent over a period of 40 years. The population of the town increased to 1.42 lakhs and 1.72 lakhs in the year 2001 and 2011 showing an average growth rate of 2.3% and 2.1% respectively. An unprecedented annual growth rate of 10.5 percent was noticed only during the decade 1941-1951 mainly due to partition of the country. Even after 1951, immigration continued at varying rates. Added to the problem of refugee influx from the erstwhile East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) was the problem of migration from other parts of the North Eastern Region owing to social unrest. These factors together contributed rapid demographic change of Silchar. The area under Silchar Municipal Board (SMB) was only 10 sq. km. in 1971 with a density of 5260 per sq. km. in 1991 the area was increased to 15.75 sq. km. with the increased density of 7301 per sq. km. (Dey and Nayak, 1998) . The number of holdings assessed to tax rose from 5137 in 1971-72 to 13,358 in 1994-95 and it is increased to 19563 till the year 2010 (Silchar Municipal Board, 2010). The tools and methods of data collection identified earlier were employed to gather data on traditional retail business. The primary data has been collected with the help of structured schedule,
The data thus gathered and analyzed. The data then scrutinized and relevant interpretation are drawn.

**Table-2.1: Demographic Profile of Consumer**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic</th>
<th>No. of Respondent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENDER</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age Group</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-28</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28-38</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38-48</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48-58</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58-68</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below HSCL</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below Graduate</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.G &amp; Above</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Responded</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Occupation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaried job</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Employ</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rs.5000 -Rs.15000</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rs.15000-Rs.30000</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rs.30000 -Rs.50000</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Responded</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** primary data

The data collection plan, including procedures, instruments was designed and pre-tested to maximize accuracy.

The demographic characteristics of the consumers (Table no 2.1) show that majority of respondents (61%) were female. It is further revealed that most of the respondents (42%) belonged to the 18-28 age group, with 30% of the respondents falling in the age group 28-38 years, 11% indicated that their age fell in the age group of 38-48, 9% indicated that their age fell in the age group of 48-58 and 8% of the respondents falling in the age group of 58-68.
Consumers were asked to indicate their education. The object of this question is to understand the literacy level of the population under study. From the above table, the distribution of the population under study is evident of the 100 consumers who answered the schedule. 17 no. of respondents are below HSLC, 44 no. of respondents were below graduate level, 34 respondents belong to P.G and above and 5 no. of respondents did not mention their education. The question is aimed at analyzing the distribution of literacy level of the population that visit the traditional store under the study. The highest no. of respondents falls in the category below graduate and PG level.

Out of 100 respondents who answered the schedule, 13 indicate that their occupation relate to the business category, 30 indicated the category of salaried job, only 7 respondents indicated that they are self employed. Of the 100 respondents 50 indicate that their category fall in the other groups.

The questions were aimed at identifying the distribution of income among the three income groups. Respondents were asked to choose among three income categories. (Rs.5000/-–Rs.15000/-) this accounts for 62 % of the respondents. Out of 100 respondents only 10 no. of respondents fell in the category (Rs.30000/-–Rs.50000/-) and 17 no. of respondents fell in the category (Rs.15000/-–Rs.30000/-) income groups. It is evident from the respondents that consumers who fell in the category (Rs.5000/-–Rs.15000/-) were higher than other two income groups.

**Table-2.2: Demographic Profile of Retailers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GENDER</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-28</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28-38</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38-48</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48-58</td>
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<td>30</td>
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<td>58-68</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below HSLC</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below Graduate</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.G &amp; Above</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* primary data
The demographic characteristics of the traditional retailers (Table no.2.2) show that majority of the respondents (93%) were male. It is further revealed that most of the respondents (79%) belonged to the 38-68, age group. Only, 21% of the respondents falling in the age group 18-38 year. It indicates that youth are not interested in continuing their ancestral business.

Retailers were also asked to indicate their level of education. The objective of this question is to understand the literacy level of the retailers under the study. From the above table, the distribution of the population under the study, 100 consumers who answered the schedule, 15% no. of the respondents are below HSLC, 68% are below graduate level and 17% of respondents belong to P.G and higher level. The question is aimed at analyzing the distribution of literacy level of the traditional retailers running the traditional retail stores. The highest no. of respondents falls in the category below graduate level.

2.2 RETAIL IN SILCHAR
In Silchar, un-organized retail plays an important role in the Economy of Silchar. Starting and operating a business includes a possibility of success as well as failure. Small size, poor management, lack of planning, improper financing, poor service, inferior quality of goods, lack of variety, untrained staff, are the main cause of failure of traditional retail in Silchar. Proximity, location of shop is a major comparative advantage of unorganized retail. Unorganized retail has significant competitive strength that includes credit sales, amenability to bargaining, ability to sell loose items, convenient timings, familiar relation and home delivery. Nonetheless, the unorganized sector still dominates the retail business in Silchar.

Silchar retail is dominated by a large number of small retailers consisting of kirana shops, chemists, footwear shops, apparel shops, paan and beedi shops, hand cart hawkers, pavement vendors etc. which together make up so called “unorganized retail or traditional retail”. The last 4-5 years have witnessed the entry of organized retailers in Silchar in form of the entry of Vishal Megamart in 2007 and Big Bazaar in 2012.

In the case of unorganized retail-selling expired products is the major problem. Secondly adulteration, lack knowledge, poor reply to queries’ and poor cooperation felt by the consumers from the retailers were major problems. Consumers face followed by-
unavailability of variety of goods, branded products, no home delivery, poor after sales service, inconvenient parking facility, and improper space management, lack of quality assortment, inconvenient location and poor in store ambience.

Silchar is a land of many caste, religion and culture. Almost all the major religions of the India are present here. As many as various different religious groups- Assemese, Bengali, Budhist, Christians, Cachari, Dimasa, Manipuris, Marwaris, Nagamese, Sikhs, Jains- live in Silchar in sizeable numbers. The language scenario is even more diverse, there are 11-12 languages spoken. However Assemese, Bengali and Hindi are the official languages.

In Silchar, it has been seen that, the women are not engaged in office jobs or businesses in good numbers. But in recent times, lots of changes have taken place in the culture arena. For example in the cultural arena, increased exposure to new lifestyle, impact of media, women’s education and process of globalization.

Due to above reasons customers are now more aware than earlier days regarding price, quality, brand, variety, advertisement, store reputation etc. Each and every customer wants to buy more and more benefits at cheapest value. At present consumer awareness is a big challenge for the organized as well as unorganized retailers and making the retailers bound to understand or to study the wants of consumer, tests of consumer, consumers' perception, consumers philosophy, customers profile, and culture, & current fashion trend etc. Most of the customers are concerned with their own convenience and value proposition.

In order to build a more successful business for tomorrow and to compete with organized retailing, small organizations need to understand what do consumers prefer .At present consumers in Silchar feel dissatisfied and seek more value. Understanding the consumer preferences and offerings customers control over where, when and how of business will help to build successful business.

In Silchar there is a larger concentration of unorganized retail market. More than 99 % retailers function in less than 300 square feet of shopping space. Purchasing power of Silcharian is growing and branded merchandise is in categories like Apparels, Cosmetics, Shoes, watches, Beverages, Food and even jewelry, are slowly becoming lifestyles products. Now days consumers are time-starved, value-driven, frustrated by inconsistent shopping experiences. Still organized retail is covering space very fast but it fails in providing consumers their perceived value. However, the consumers of Silchar are not yet satisfied quite well.
Vishal Megamart is the sole organized retail in Cachar district till 2012 and unable to satisfy the consumers with respect to quality, price, variety and services etc. Though it has got good location, enough number of staff, well educated and trained manager and staffs and enough space for Silcharian and no one is there to compete with it except small shop i.e. (unorganized retailing). So, there are more chances available to the small shops to target the market segment according to their existing capability and specialty.

2.3 ORGANIZED RETAIL’S IMPACT ON CONSUMERS OF SILCHAR
No doubt, consumers have received benefits in form of variety in goods and services and no doubt bad experiences also from organized retail in multiple counts. It is found that consumer spending has increased with the entry of organized retail. The study reveals that lower income group consumers are saving more from organized retail because of one stop shopping, variety and also from various day-to-day offers. However, expectations for quality product, neatness and cleanliness, clear information of each department, more counters for payment, trendy products, good service, parking space, variety of modes payment, better shopping environment etc. are not fully addressed.

Every coin has two sides so with that of people experiences in this respect. In the case of organized retail, people faced some problems, first poor cooperation from the retailers and their employees followed by lack of knowledge, poor reply on enquiry, selling expired products and adulteration. Secondly, poor after sales service is another problem faced by the consumers, no home delivery, unavailability of goods and branded products. Third, in terms of physical appearance, inconvenient location is other major difficulties including lack of parking facility.

2.4 UNORGANISED RETAIL SECTOR IN INDIA
Undeniably, around 96% of Indian retail sector is unorganized and hence majority of sales take place through unorganized stores popularly known as kirana or mom-and-pop stores. (Vidushi & Navneet 2012)

The unorganized retail sector is expected to grow at about 10% per annum with sales rising from 309 billion in 2006-07 to reach US $ 496 billion in 2011-12. Despite the steady expansion of organized retailers. Though organized sector is growing a faster rate, unorganized sector is still preferred by the customers as they are more convenient and easy to approach. The kirana shop owner knows that the buyer buys place first. They offer that
utility. Total number of traditional retailers is estimated to be 13 million by Technopak Advisers Pvt. Ltd. The classification of the unorganized retail universe by category is shown below:

2.4.1 CATEGORIES OF TRADITIONAL RETAILERS

- Fruit & vegetable sellers – Sells fruits and vegetables.
- Food stores - Result of bakery products. Also sells dairy and processed food and beverages.
- Non-Vegetable Store - Sells chicken and mutton.
- Kirana I - Sells bakery products, dairy and processed food, home and personal care and beverages.
- Kirana II - Sells categories available at a kirana – I store plus cereals, pulses, spices and edible oils.
- Apparel - Sells men’s wear, women’s wear, innerwear, kinds & infant wear
- Footwear - Sells men’s wear, women’s wear, kid’s wear
- Customer durables & IT- Sells electronics, durables & IT products.
- Furnishing - Sells home lines & upholstery.
- Hardware - Sells sanitary ware, door fitting, and tiles.
- General mechanize - Includes lighting, stationery, toys, gifts & crockery.

2.4.2 IMPACT OF ORGANISED SECTOR ON OTHER SECTORS

Impact on Consumers.

1. Consumer spending has increased with the entry of organized retail.
2. Consumers are provided with wider variety under one roof at competitive prices.
3. All income groups have gained through organized retail purchases but the lower income consumers saved more.

Impact on Unorganized Sector

The unorganized sector is affected in the following manner:-

- Unorganized sector has not lost due to entry of organized sector. It has rather gained in terms of business as the overall retail economy is growing.
- It has also gained in terms of its quality enhancement due to competition given by organized sector.
Some businesses have closed. The closure rate is 4.2% p.a. which is much lower than international rate of closure of small business, out of which only 1.7% closure is due to organized sector.

Small retailers have adopted the policy of extending more credit to customers to attract and retain customers.

They have become competitive by adopting improved business practices & technology upgradation.

2.4.3 CHALLENGES BEFORE ORGANIZED RETAIL SECTOR

- Talent shortage & lack of trained manpower.
- Supply chains are not yet so efficient and the kind of quality that customers demand is not being provided yet.
- There are too many intermediaries. These long intermediaries’ chains are in turn driving up their costs.
- A plethora of clearances are required for setting up retail outlet. It limits the expansion of retail outlets at a faster pace.
- Inadequate infrastructure, such as roads, electricity, cord chains and posts, hampers going for a pan-India network of supplies. Due to this, retailers have to resort to multiple vendors for their requirements which is raising their costs and prices.
- Organized sector does not have industry status. It is further making it difficult for the players to raise funds for their expansion plans.
- Government restrictions on FDI limit are resulting in limited exposure to international best practices.

2.4.4 FUTURE TRENDS OF UNORGANISED SECTOR

- The unorganized sector will grow @10% per annum but given the relatively weak financial of the unorganized sector and the space constraints on their companion prospects, this sector alone will not be able to meet the growing demand.
- 2. The unorganized sector will expand further due to its proximity, goodwill, credit sales, bargaining, loose items, convenient timings and home delivery.

(Vidushi and Navneet 2012)

2.5 BUSINESS INFRASTRUCTURE

The basic physical systems of a business or nation. Transportation, communication, sewage, water and electric systems are all examples of infrastructure. These systems tend to be high-cost investments; however, they are vital to a country's economic development.
and prosperity. Infrastructure projects may be funded publicly, privately or through public-private partnerships. (http://www.investopedia.com/terms/i/infrastructure.asp)

Infrastructure of road, rail, water and air, transport, power, telecommunication and finance are crucial for development in general and industrial development in particular. The development of infrastructure, roads, railway, power and telecommunication in Assam has also not kept speed with that in the rest of the country. Though Assam’s infrastructure has improved in recent years it is still inadequate. More needs to be done. Yet it only recently reached a state where industrial development can be somewhat accelerated. In the new liberalized economy where government is getting out of industrial activities, government’s role is that of a facilitator. It should create an environment where private industries are attracted and can flourish. Government can also provide special incentives to offset some disadvantage.

2.6 CHALLENGES WITH INFRASTRUCTURE IN NORTHEAST REGION

The lack of proper infrastructure and distribution channels in Silchar results in inefficient processes. This is a major hindrance for retailers as a non efficient distribution channel is very difficult to handle and can result in huge loss. Infrastructure does not have a strong base in Silchar. Urbanisation and globalisation are competing companies to develop infrastructure facilities. Transportation, including railway system has to be more efficient. More road connectivity, airport and highways required to meet national and global standard. Airport capabilities and power supply have to be enhanced. Warehouse facilities, cold store facilities and timely distribution are other crucial areas of challenges in Silchar.

To fully utilise Silchar’s potential in retail sector these major obstacles to be removed.

The Transport Disadvantage

1. The Partition of the country imposed on Assam and the North-East a huge transport and access disadvantage. As the Shukla Committee put it, “Partition further isolated an already isolated geo-politically sequestered region. It was left with over 4500 km of external frontier with Bhutan, China, Myanmar and Bangladesh but no more than a slender 22 km connection with Indian hinterland through the tenuous Siliguri corridor, the Gateway to the North-East. The very considerable market disruption, socio-economic distancing and retardation that resulted has not been adequately appreciated and compensated.” Once goods have to be transported around Bangladesh through the
Siliguri “chicken neck” and cannot go through Bangladesh, Kolkata becomes a far off city. The distance between Kolkata and Agartala is 300-odd km through Bangladesh but is 1700 km via the “chicken neck”. Even for Guwahati, Kolkata has receded by 500 km. This transport disadvantage discourages industry from locating in Assam. Only those industries that are based on special raw materials available in the North-East are likely to locate here. If a firm has to import raw materials from India over the large distance that it involves and transport the finished products back to India, its costs mount and the firm may not remain competitive. To move a 9-ton truck from Guwahati to Kolkata, a distance of 1100 km, today costs around Rs 20,000. A truck going from Chennai to Kolkata, a distance of 1600 km, costs only Rs 16,000. This also reflects on the quality of road connecting the North-East with the rest of the country. In the pre-partition days, boats laden with tea, coal and timber reached Kolkata from Dibrugarh in 8 days. But now Kolkata-Guwahati takes more than 25 days due customs formalities at various points. The transport cost has increased. The net effect has been that people pay higher prices for goods imported from the rest of the country and Assam’s producers do not get right prices for their products.

2. Of course, one could have developed industries to supply the North-East market itself. The high transport cost would have provided some protection. This did not take place. This suffered from lack of infrastructure within the North-East in the early decades after Independence. This led to a much slower growth of industries and incomes in North-East and Assam than in the rest of the country. Once industrial growth stagnated so did income growth and the growth of demand for manufactured goods slowed down in turn. Thus, even industries to serve North-East demand did not grow. A vicious circle developed.

3. While significant progress in infrastructure development has been made in recent years, other developments have overtaken it and cancel whatever cost advantage infrastructure development may have given. How much of a burden corruption of all kinds and extortion by different underground groups impose on transport cost even within the region has been documented by Sachdeva (2000). A moving truck load of goods from Moreh to Dimapur, a distance of 316 km, costs Rs 50,000. Part of these charges may be due to the fact that the truck was carrying illegally traded goods. Yet the numbers of “tax collectors” are likely to collect something from trucks carrying legally traded goods too. These “taxes” must act as a significant disincentive to anyone thinking of setting up an industry in the North-East to meet North-East demand. This
refers to Manipur and Nagaland. The situation in Assam is much better. We have noted that carrying a truck from Guwahati to Kolkata over a distance of 1100 km costs Rs 22,000. Yet the high transport costs in other NE States restrict market reach of industries located in Assam. Traders claim that to move a truck from Imphal to Guwahati (487 km) costs Rs 35,000.

4. The transport disadvantage is not just for movement of goods and raw materials. It also makes movement of people expensive too. Business men who have to visit Kolkata for meeting suppliers, customers, etc. suffer a big handicap. To travel by train takes time and requires advance planning that is not always possible. It costs more to fly and since convenient flights for returning the same day are not available, a trip to Kolkata requires spending a night in a hotel adding to the cost. Small businessmen could hardly afford this.

5. The army and the railways demand significant goods in the North-East. Some industries could have been developed to meet these demands. Unfortunately, products have to be tested and certified for their quality. This, however, is done in Kolkata. A supplier may have to make few trips to Kolkata, the cost of which small entrepreneurs could ill afford. Of course, if testing and certification facilities are set up on Guwahati, this disadvantage could be overcome.

POWER
Per capita electricity consumption in Assam is only one-fourth of the All India consumption reflecting the poor quality of life and low level of economic activity. If all the projects that were under implementation in March 1996 were to be completed, the NE would have a total installed generating capacity of 3396 MW, enough to meet its demand for some years. The work on these projects proceeded at a slow pace due to lack of funds. The gap between the average cost of supply and the average tariff is a phenomenal figure of Rs 4.50 per unit. Power sector reforms have become critical to improve the financial position of ASEB and should be steadfastly pursued.

Power-In the Barak valley region itself; two gas based power projects (one at Adamtila in Karimganj district and another at Baskandi in Cachar district) have already started generating power. There is also a proposal for construction of the Barak Dam Hydro-Electric power project at Tipaimukh on Cachar-Manipur border, which is likely to be under-taken by the Government of India immediately. If these projects be materialized, the existing power crisis in the region will be solved to a great extent and the additional
amount can be supplied to other part of the state. (Assam development report of planning commission)

COMMUNICATION

Next to transport and communication power is the other basic infrastructure which is essential for economic growth. Of the total villages in the district 90 percent are reported to have power supply (Statistical handbook Assam, 2006) with domestic connection for lighting available in all the electrified villages. Consumption of electricity for commercial and industrial purpose is not available while only one percent of the villages have electricity connection for agricultural use. The district has a total demand of 34 mw of power of which 23 mw is available. (District report Cachar-Indian Council of Social Science)

Silchar is well connected by road, rail and air to the rest of the country. Silchar is connected through meter gauge rail network with Lumding and Agartala and this is currently being updated to broad gauge lines. The railways station is located at Tarapur, Silchar. There are regular bus services connecting Silchar with Guwahati, Shillong, Aizawl, Agartala and other places. The airport is located at Kumbhirgram, about 22 km from Silchar and there are regular flights connecting Silchar with Kolkata, Guwahati, Tezpur, Agartala, Imphal & Aizawl. The airport is being modernized and is considered as the second busiest in Assam in terms of passenger foot-fall and cargo, after Guwahati airport. In December 1985, Air India operated the first all-woman crew flight in the world from Kolkata to Silchar which was commanded by Captain Saudamini Deshmukh on a Fokker F-27 Friendship aircraft. (Silchar District Industrial Profile)

RAILWAY LINK

The Assam Bengal Railway brought Silchar into the Indian railway map in 1899. The railway line from Lumding to Silchar is hailed as one of the most exciting pristine railway tracks of India. Built by the British during the colonial rule, the Meter Gauge line stands testimony to the grandiose of what was once a highly popular city in the North-East. (www.msmedi-guwahati.gov.in/dip_silchar.htm)

At present, people sought for broad gauge in Silchar, which is still pending for long time. The matter of broad gauge may change the scenario of not only Silchar, but other city of Cachar, Hailakandi and Karimganj and others state like Tripura, Mizoram etc. Every one may have realized that majority of the goods we buy in higher rate than other city like Kolkata, Delhi, and Mumbai etc. Due to lack of industrialization and question is that, why
industrialist take interest in Cachar, Karimganj or Hailakandi. None is going to bear lose, if future is that. Because, industrialization need material, it is not necessary that all the material will be found in Silchar. Another fact of high price is maximum of the goods comes from the other state like Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai, Surat etc. these are too far from Silchar city, it includes cost like high transportation charges, VAT, entry tax etc. these tax are directly or indirectly collected by the customers. Most important, people of Silchar are not enjoying safe journey.

Road Infrastructure and Connectivity
Availability and access to infrastructure is one of the major inducing factors for economic and social growths across space and communities. The transport connectivity of the district comprises of roads, railway and air services. The total road length in the district is 951.64 km, of which only 25.65 percent is surfaced. The district has a total of 75 km of state highways besides 707 km. of rural roads. The total road length of the national highways in the district is 77.14 kilometers. Three national highways viz. NH-44, NH-53 and NH-54 pass through Cachar. The road density in the district which was 25.5 km. per sq.km area in 1996 has decreased to 23 km per sq. km. in 2006. This indicates that access and availability to good road connectivity in the district is not only low but has worsened over the years. As per the estimates of 2001 census only 39 percent of the villages have paved approach road and 37 percent of the villages have bus connectivity which indicates that 61-63 percent of the villages have no availability or access to faster modes of transportation in the district. Railway and Water transport the nearest railway station to the district headquarter of Cachar is Silchar. The Lumding, Badarpur section of NF is the most vital link of Cachar Mizoram and Tripura with the rest of the country. The total railway route length in the district is 201 kilometers of BG route length from Lumding to Silchar and 215 kilometers of meter gauge route length from Lumding to Silchar. The district has no steamer service as there is no demand for the same. However ferry services are available. The district also has air connectivity and the airport is located at a distance of 30 km away from Silchar, the district headquarters. (District Report Cachar-Indian Council of Social Science)

TELECOMMUNICATION
In respect of telecommunication, rural coverage of the facility is low. Only 31 percent of the villages in the district have P&T facilities. Although the villages have VPT facilities, often, access to VPTS is not available as most of the VPTs are found to be used as
personal telephones by the village headman. (District Report Cachar-Indian Council of Social Science)

MARKET PLACE
Silchar have many market places like Fatak bazaar, new market, Ghaniyala bazaar, Sadarghat bazaar, Tarapur bazaar, National highway bazaar, Rangirkhadi bazaar etc. These markets have been suffering for years. An overwhelming stench greets a visitor as soon as he or she steps into the market and it is difficult to ignore the shabby look all around. Everybody — from the fish seller to the vegetable vendor and the beetle-chewing meat shop owner seems to be struggling for space. Nearly two lakh residents of the town buy vegetables and other food items from the market. According to a data compiled by the Silchar Retail Vegetable Traders’ Society, on any given day a wholesaler purchases about 150 tones of seasonal vegetables from the market. The 300-odd vendors are anything but happy at the proposed makeover of the market as it means selling their wares under the open sky till such time construction is completed. After a devastating fire gutted the market on a May afternoon in 1980, the then chairman of the Silchar Municipal Board Sontosh Mohan Dev, approached Dispur for funds to build a concrete stalls. However, the amount sanctioned fell much short of every body’s expectations. Not many stalls could be constructed and only the cloth merchants benefited. (Silchar Market Plan raises a Stink—the Telegraph, 2012)

PARKING SPACE
Parking is one of the most irritated commodities in modern life. A family needs a place to park their car when they’re home, but that space goes empty whenever they’re at work. Workers need a place to park their car when they’re at the office, but nobody is at the office most of the time. Business man needs a place for parking their vehicle in business hour. For all this parking, it often seems that there’s never anywhere to park—at least not where you want to go. Mostly in the town area, peoples are facing more problems. The mix of massive excess capacity and chronic shortage is one of the biggest, most persistent, and least examined failures of the Indian economy. Fixing it is going to require better policies, but it also needs a healthy boost from the private sector. Silchar started developing as a town in the fifties and since then the roads have remained more or less same, the number of vehicles has increase manifold. This has led to immense congestion and severe need of new roads, as well as that of parking areas.
At present Silchar city is overcrowded city with lots of residence, restaurant, shops etc. Just after entry in town, one can understand very easily, that there is a great need of parking facility in the heart of the Silchar town and other areas.

A four-storied supermarket the first in the Barak Valley — has come up at Goldighirpar near Nazirpatty Road, the commercial hub of the town. Was built at a cost of Rs 16 crore, the complex have number of stalls. It will also have a sprawling parking lot on the ground floor, to accommodate 150 cars and 40 motorbikes at a time.

2.7 BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Economic Condition
The economy of Barak valley, a constituent part of Assam, is predominantly agrarian in character. More than 58 percent of the total working populations in the valley are either cultivators or agricultural labourers and 70.7 percent of its workers earn their livelihood from the primary sector activities (Census Report, 1991). The agriculture is overcrowded and the average yield of rice per hectre in the valley is as low as 1447 kg, as against India’s figure of 1745 kg (P.R. Bhatt. & Nayak, 2003). Significantly, the most fertile region of Assam is only 1131 kg, which is lower than that of Barak Valley. The industrial base of Barak valley has also remained extremely narrow even after 62 years of independence. Out of 17 industrial estates in Assam with 320 functioning sheds, only one estate in Barak Valley with only 22 functioning sheds. (Statistical Hand Book, Assam, 2006). The number of small scale industries (SSI) registered under the Directorate of Industries and Commerce in Assam is 50694 as on December 2005, and out of these, the share of Barak valley as only 3767. Tea plantation is the prime organized industry of Barak Valley but this sector is also in a state of sickness and neglect. This is mainly because of low investment out of the surplus earned by the tea planters. (Bhattacharjee & Nayak, 2003).

Industry
The industrialization is the key to economic development and an answer to the mounting unemployment problem of the valley. The local availability of raw materials, long tradition in handicrafts, weaving, carpentry, boat making and also in the manufacture of a variety of consumer goods, availability of cheap skilled and semi-skilled labour, and the prevalence of a favourable law and order situation in the valley offer favourable environment for growth of small and medium industrial units, particularly the forest and agro-based industries. However, the development of communication network and the improvement of power sector should get priority to facilitate industrial growth of the valley. The appropriate infrastructure is also likely to attract investment from outside.
The viable industries in the district based on local resources like cane, bamboo, pineapple & other agro based and fruit processing industries have potential for growth. The total industrial area in the district is spread across 38.68 acres of land. The district has 1984 SSI units of which 295 have been registered after the announcement of N.E. Industrial Policy in 1997. The major manufacturing units in the district comprise of food products and beverages and non metallic mineral products. (District Report Cachar-Indian Council of Social Science)

**Table: 2.3 Industrial Areas, 2008-09:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Industrial Area</th>
<th>Total Area (in Sq. M.)</th>
<th>No. of Sheds Constructed</th>
<th>No. of Sheds Allotted</th>
<th>No. of Sheds Occupied</th>
<th>No. of Unit functioning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Malinibeel</td>
<td>43151</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Statistical Handbook Assam 2009

**Table 2.4 Integrated Infrastructure Development Project (IID), 2008-09:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of IID</th>
<th>Total Area (In Sq. M.)</th>
<th>No. of Sheds Constructed</th>
<th>No. of Sheds Allotted</th>
<th>No. of Sheds Occupied</th>
<th>No. of Unit functioning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>120402</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Statistical Handbook Assam 2009

In case of Cachar people the source of economy of different sector are like as 69.04% in agriculture, 0.40% in allied industries, 3.37 % manufacturing (non household), 0.55% in household industry, 2.02% in construction and 24.63 in service sectors.

The Industrial scenario of the State is mainly confined within the growth of employment oriented Small Scale Sector, which comprises of manufacturing and processing industries. The contribution of manufacturing sector to Gross State Domestic Product is estimated at 7.0 percent during 2010-11 which is not encouraging. However, the Industries and Commerce Department of the State Government as well as some other agencies have been making efforts for implementation of various promotional schemes for sustainable growth and development in the industrial sector of the State. To achieve the goal of development, the State Government has been increasing its Budget allocation every year. At present there are 16 Industrial Estates, 4 Industrial growth centers, 11 Integrated Infrastructure Development (IID) Projects, 17 Industrial Areas, 11 Growth Centers, 6 minis Industrial Estate, One Export Promotional Park, one Food Processing Industrial Park spread over the
different parts of the State, and these are the major infrastructural support and facilities to
the entrepreneurs of the State. (Economic Survey, Assam 2011-2012)
The total SSI/MSME units in the State numbered 34327 are providing employment to
178054 persons till the year 2010-11. In 2009-10, the value of produced goods of 1214
number SSI units was worth 916.79 crores. During the year the number of factories
registered was 4262 and provided employment to 150485 persons. The growth of
Manufacturing Sector is estimated at 3.8 percent at constant (2004-05) prices and 9.0
percent at current prices in 2010-11 over previous year. The growth observed in the
manufacturing sector was the result of benefit achieved in the production of some selected
industrial items like Tea, Wheat Flour, Jute textiles, Cement, etc. over the level of
production of the previous year. The General Index of Industrial Production of the State
has shown upliftment to 157.37 in 2010-11 (Base 1999-2000) from 155.83 2009-10.
The Tea Industry of Assam, playing a vital role in the State as well as in the national
economy. The Assam’s Tea industry also possesses a significant reputation in the global
economy. The total area under tea cultivation is accounting for more than half of the
country’s total area under tea and the Tea Industry of Assam provides average daily
employment to more than six lakh persons in the State which is around 50 percent of the
total average daily number of labour employed in the country. The Tea Gardens in the
State are covering land of 322000 Hectares out of 578000 Hectares of land in the country
as a whole. (The Economic Survey, Assam, 2011-12) Estimated tea production of the State
was 4875 lakh kg. As against 9808 lakh kg. Total tea produced in the country during the
year 2008 as per report of Tea Board of India. The tea production in Assam constitutes
more than 50 percent of the total production of the country.
Among the Plantation crops, Rubber cultivation is also gaining its popularity in the State
due to congenial agro climate as well as its eco-friendly activity. The 10213 MT rubber
productions covered an area of 27083 Hectares and employment generated of 2767450
man days in the year 2010-11.
Assam has ample scope for Bamboo based industry like Paper manufacturing industry,
since this region has highest concentration of bamboo i.e., around 60% of the total
Bamboo of the country. In viewing of the potentialities, The Ministry of Agriculture, Govt
of India, has recently launched the National Bamboo Mission and under this Mission it is
proposed for plantation of selected species of Bamboo in the State, in an area of 176000
Hectare, as a raw material for Bamboo based industry.
Traditionally, Sericulture, a major cottage industry of the State, is practiced in more than 10532 villages and provided employment to more than 2.5 lakh of family. Assam has the monopoly in production of Muga, the Golden Silk in the world and 99% of Muga Silk produced in Assam. Assam has also achieved the right of “Geographical Indication” in Muga Silk. (The Economic Survey, Assam, 2011-12)

Business and Economy of Silchar
Silchar, located on the southern bank of the Barak River is an important commercial hub of the state. Silchar acts as a gateway to Mizoram, Tripura and Manipur. The town plays a pivotal role in the supply of essential commodities to these states. Several organizations like medical college, NIT, Assam University, Polytechnic, All India radio station, TV station has helped the city grow in importance. Lakhipur the richest pine-apple growing area in the country is located again on the bank of Barak.

Economy of Silchar
Factors like poor communication, geographical remoteness, lack of proper infrastructural facilities are some of the causes behind the low level of economic growth of Silchar. However, the town, over the past few years, has seen an influx of people from neighbouring places due to increase in prospects and other developments in the field of healthcare, and job opportunities. Recently, the town is getting over crowded due to the booming real estate market and other commercial enterprises. On the other hand horticulture, agriculture, forestry is forming the important economic sectors of Silchar.

Agriculture contributes largely to the economy of Silchar. Majority of the people of the area are dependent upon agriculture. The tribal people of the area practice a distinctive feature of agriculture known as the Jhum Cultivation. During the autumn season the cultivation is normally done either as a single crop or as mixed crop along with ginger, Maize, chillies, turmeric and other vegetables. Some horticultural crops cultivation, such as orange, pineapple, banana and papaya occupy an important role in the agricultural economy of the area.

The agro climatic conditions of Silchar are favorable for different agricultural activities such as development of the plantation crops like rubber, tea, coffee, cashew, coconut, Areca nut and also aromatic plant like patchouli.

Livestock and poultry also contribute to the economic growth of Silchar. They hold a important position in the rural economy. The most common livestock animals are Buffalo
and pig while duck and hen consists the poultry birds. The Forest products comprises of bamboo, cane and timber.

**Industry in Silchar**

Silchar, in the recent year have seen development of some small scale industries. Coal, Tea and Lac consists of the main industry of the region. Since the time immemorial, many cottage industries have existed among the people of the area. Small Scale industry includes:

- Weaving Industry
- Eri silk Industry
- Cane and Bamboo Industry
- Metal Industry
- Saw mills Industry

Newly Grown up Industry in Silchar are as highlighted below:

- Agricultural Industries
- Rice and Flour Milling
- Chemical Industry
- Brick making Industry

**Shopping in Silchar**

Shopping is one thing that that every individual is very much fond of. Every individual has a unique taste and style in shopping. Silchar is able to satisfy everyone when it comes to shopping. Shopping in Silchar is always a fun being it local market or mall. People coming to Silchar can shop in the busy Janiganj Bazar and Vishal Mega Mart. There are few shopping complex in Silchar which includes Goldighi Shopping Complex and Suresh Paul Shopping Complex. The Goldighee Shopping Mall in Silchar is a prominent entertainment and shopping arcade which consists of a number of eateries as well as supermarket chain Big Bazaar, Senco Gold etc.

**Local Bazaars in Silchar**

There is nothing like shopping in local bazaars. Silchar local markets offers some unique things but at a much more reasonable rate. The Sadarghat area of Silchar is famous cane furniture like sofa, chairs, tables, trays, shelves, mirror frames, flower vases etc. The furniture found here are very good and unique. The Tula patty area in Silchar also has a good number of shop which sells Manipuri handloom like Salwar Kameez material, sarees, dupattas (stoll), pillow covers, bedcovers etc. The shops in these area are good and worth
visiting. Although the items are very colorful, everything found there are worth buying. Nagaland handlooms like housecoats, woolen shawls, waistcoats, are found in the Tulapatty area of Silchar.

**Following are the local bazaars in Silchar:**

- Srikona Bara Bazaar
- Kanakpur Bazaar
- Foreign Market
- College Road Market
- Chincoorie Trinali Market
- Arunachal Market
- Fatak Bazar
- Sadarghat Bazar,
- Tarapur bazaar
- National highway Bazar
- Rangirkhari Bazar

**Culture at A play in Silchar**

Silchar has a composite culture born from the convergence of different traditions. Any tourist who visits the city would be completely mesmerized to witness its rich cultural heritage. The dance and music, festivals and fairs, art and food depicts the rich culture of the city.

**Dance and Music of Silchar**

Assam has been a land of dance and music. The dance and music of the Silchar is very well defined the culture. When it comes to dance and music the people of the place actively take part to showcase its rich culture. The Bihu dance is the main folk dance of the people of Assam including Silchar. Sattriya Nritya or Sattriya dance is another beautiful dance form of Assam. The Bihu songs define love and yearning. Some of the other dance forms include Jhumur Dance, Ojapali Dance and many more.

**Festivals of Silchar**

Silchar also witness a lot of fairs and festivals of different tribes throughout the year. The main festival is Bihu. The Festival of Bihu is celebrated in three forms namely the Bohag bihu, Magh Bihu, and Kati Bihu. Bohag Bihu marks the Assamese New Year and generally celebrated in the month of April. Bohag bihu also known as Rongali Bihu defines joy and mirth. Magh Bihu or Bhogali Bihu is celebrated in the month of January. It is the harvest festival that features huge bonfire and feast. Lastly Kati Bihu
or Kongali Bihu is celebrated in the month of January. Apart from Bihu other festivals celebrated in Silchar are Durga Puja, Saraswati Puja, Viswakarma puja, Christmas, Id etc.

**Art and Culture of Silchar**

The people of Silchar have a keen liking towards art and culture from the time immemorial. From the ancient times weavers, artists, sculptors, craftsmen, artisans of bamboo, cane, ivory wood have flourished in the city. The people of the city is also fond of weaving and people there produce silk and cotton clothes of exquisite design.

**Food of Silchar**

The food of Silchar offers its people with various kinds of dishes. Although the staple diet in this city is rice with interestingly cooked fish and meat dishes yet one can enjoy both Assamese and Bengali food. Fast food like Burgers, Pizzas and pasta are also popular in Silchar especially among the youth. Some of the food items include patot diya mas, Duck with Hil kumura, Bhapa, Chorchori, Chicken with koldil etc. (Silchar city guide, silchar profile, information on silchar, www.silcharonline.in/about/)

**Banking**

Access to credit and banking facilities is an important indicator for socio-economic development. The total number of reporting offices in the district stands at 72 as per the RBI Quarterly statistics, December 2007. The population coverage of banking services is estimated to be 20,068 persons per bank office. The credit deposit (CD) ratio in the district which stands at 41.66 percent is much lower than the stipulated norm of 60 percent. The rural CD ratio is 41 percent. The share of rural deposit in the total deposits of the district (28.05 percent) is marginally lower than the rural credit share (28.59 percent). The sectoral credit deployment shows that personal loans have the highest (42 percent) credit share. The share of agriculture in total credit in the district is 8.19 percent and share of investment credit in agriculture was 14 percent of total agriculture credit (as per the RBI BSR, RBI, 2006). With low investment financing in agriculture, it is obvious that farm productivity will be low and non remunerative for absorption of workforce. (District Report Cachar)

If we exclude tea and refinery industry the Assam has only few industries of significance. In comparison to other state of India, industrial development of Assam is not in a good condition due to its physical and political isolation from neighbouring countries such as china and Bangladesh and from other Southeast Asian countries. The present scenario of Assam is seen as ignorance by the central government regarding the industrial development.
In another aspect, if we see the picture of Barak Valley and Cachar district, there is no difference into the working population such as workers, marginal workers and non workers compare to the total population, both in the case of rural and urban in the region. It is found that majority of percentage of the workforce are engaged in primary sector that agriculture and allied activities, only about 7 % of the work force engaged in the secondary sector.

**Price situation**

Price situation in the State was not satisfactory during the period under report. During the last couple of years the price level, in the State as well as country as a whole, more or less remained in the high trend. The behavior of price level can be observed from the movement of Consumer Price Index Number (CPI) for the Working Class Population and the Wholesale Price Index Number for Agricultural Commodities. The average Consumer Price Index Number for the Working Class Population (Base 1982=100) for the State revealed a price rise of around 7.41 percent in 2011 till the month of October over the corresponding period of 2010. The annual average Wholesale Price Index Number for Agricultural Commodities (Base 1993-94=100) stood at 272 in 2010-11 as against 249 in 2009-10 and 221 in 2008-09 and there by recorded an increase of price of 9.24 percent, 12.67 percent, and 8.33 percent respectively over the respective previous years for Agricultural commodities of the State. During 2011 the annual average of Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers for Assam has shown a rise of 6.21 percent over 2010 as against 9.09 percent increase has recorded at all India.

**Consumer Co-operatives**

There are 36 Urban Wholesale Consumer Stores with 474 affiliated Primary Consumer Stores and 640 Tea Garden Consumer Stores in the State. These Cooperative Societies extended yeoman service to the urban population and in maintaining price line. During the financial year 2008-09, an amount of 40.00 lakh was released @1.00 lakh each to 40 nos. of such Cooperative Consumers Societies. It was decided to provide financial assistance to six nos. of such Consumer Cooperative Societies during the year 2009-10. Now it is proposed to provide 23.00 lakh as financial assistance to these Societies in 2011-12.

**Public Distribution System**

Under the Public Distribution System the State has a network of 34,536 Fair Price Shops as on March 2011, out of which 30,506 are located in rural areas and 4030, in urban areas. On an average, each shop covers 898 persons. The State has achieved target of selecting 19.06 lakh beneficiaries from BPL families by providing BPL PDS item at subsidized rate.
Employment Situation

The traditional involvement in the agricultural sector has been declining day by day among the present generation of the youths of the State which implies attribution of shift of employment to the other sectors. The other sectors of the economy could not solve the unemployment problem among the youths of the State as it has revealed by the Live Register of Employment Exchanges. The number of un-employed person as per Live Register is 191,1431 number in 2010. Acute unemployment specially educated unemployment continues to be a serious problem in the State. As per data available from the Employment Exchanges of the State it is revealed that the number of educated job-seekers on the Live Register of Employment Exchanges has stood at 14 lakh in 2010. The registration during the year was 181,743 from different disciplines of education. The previous year’s registration of educated job seekers was 15,4999. The number of persons employed in organized economic activity (comprising both Public and Private Sectors) was 11.14 lakh in the year 2010. The employment of women in the organised sector of the State was 366.7 thousand at the end of 2010 which was around 32.9 percent of the total employment. (Economic Survey Assam-2011-2012)

As usual, not only in Silchar but whole country is suffering from this major problem i.e. unemployment. Earlier majority of the Indian maintained their livelihood from agriculture, but now circumstances have been changed and Indian peoples’ interest in agriculture day by day decreasing. People migrated from rural to urban and get job according to their ability. Other states of India have some good infrastructure and due to industrialization and manufacturing companies are in more numbers and it little bit helpful in unemployment. But in Silchar due to lack of infrastructure and industrialization is in very less number and jobless people are more. Questions arises how to deal with this unemployment. Government is not incompetent to provide job to jobless people. But by allowing foreign players in India, government can erase this problem or not can been in future.

Workforce and its Occupational Pattern:

The classification of the population of the Barak valley into the workers, marginal workers and non-workers shows that there is no difference in the working population to total population both in case of rural and urban in the region. As per 2001 census, 89.2% of total population lives in rural areas and only 10.8% in urban areas. Of the total male population in rural area, 48.4% are workers and the figure for urban areas stood at 48%. Similarly, 7% are female workers both in rural and urban areas. About 13.55% of total
female population is workers and 49% of male population is non-workers. This also clearly speaks the grim state of unemployment scenario in the region. The 2001 Census returned about 70% of the total working force of the Barak Valley region as engaged in primary sector (agriculture and allied activities), 7% in secondary sector and 23% in tertiary sector. Thus agriculture and allied activities are still the predominant source of livelihood of the population.

Income
It is only natural to start the discussion with income levels. The per capita income of Assam was a little higher than the all-India level in the early 1950s. It has not grown as fast as the per capita income in rest of India since then and consequently slipped down to remain substantially lower than the national average in recent decades. Further, the gap between the state’s average level of living and that of the national average has been increasing in recent years. The average per capita income of Assam stood at Rs 1374 for the triennium 1980-81 to 1982-83 at 1980-81 prices. It was about 18 per cent lower than the corresponding national estimate of Rs 1672 for India as a whole. The difference widened to more than 45 per cent in recent years when average per capita income of Assam and all-India stood at Rs 1702 and Rs 3211 respectively at 1980-81 prices for the triennium 1999-00 to 2001-02. (Assam Development report of Planning Commission)

Education
The growth of literacy in Assam has shown an encouraging sign. The literacy rate for Assam as per Census 2011 increased to 73 percent with 79 percent for males and 67 percent for females. The literacy rates for rural and urban areas found at 70.44 percent and 88.88 percent respectively. The literacy rate for country as a whole increased to 74 percent from 65 percent with male and female literate 79 percent and 67 percent respectively. Some State highlights in 2011 census, such as highest and lowest population, percentage of growth, literacy rate, sex ratio and density among the districts of Assam may be seen in the following.

Silchar has some of the best educational institutes in the whole of North East India. One of the 20 National Institutes of Technology (formerly known as Regional Engineering Colleges), NIT Silchar is one of the oldest engineering colleges in the Northeastern region. REC Silchar, as it was known previously, is now an Institute of National Importance in India.
After several years of continual efforts, Silchar got its own university Assam University, a central university, which imparts education in both the general as well as professional streams. The university, which came into existence in 1994, has 16 schools and 34 Post-Graduate departments under them. The university also has 51 affiliated colleges under it.[5]

Some reputed schools in Silchar include Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Cachar High School, Adhar Chand H.S. School, Holy Cross School, Silchar Collegiate School, Narsing School, Govt. Boys School, Govt. Girls school, Muktashree High School, Pranabananda Holy Child School, South Point School, Oriental High School, Daffodils School, Maharishi Vidya Mandir, Pranabananda Vidya Mandir, a couple of Kendriya Vidyalayas, Saint capitanio, Don Bosco School amongst others. Among the colleges, the best known ones are Guru Charan College, Cachar College, Ramanuj College, Radhamadhab College, and Cachar College etc. Guru Charan College is one of the most respected and reputed colleges in the whole of Assam.

The city has a medical college, Silchar Medical College and Hospital, established in 1968, serving the southern regions of Assam[6] There is also a Polytechnic Institute, B.Ed colleges, two Law colleges and one Industrial Training Institute (ITI). (www.msmedi-guwahati.gov.in/dip_silchar.html)

In education section, total literates in Silchar city are 144,255 of which 74,082 are males while 70,173 are females. Average literacy rate of Silchar city is 91.74 percent of which male and female literacy was 93.97 and 89.50 percent.

Population

As per provisional reports of Census India, population of Silchar in 2011 is 172,709; of which male and female are 86,812 and 85,897 respectively. Although Silchar city has population of 172,709; its urban / metropolitan population is 228,985 of which 115,443 are males and 113,542 are females. (Census of India, 2001).

2.8 REVENUE OF SILCHAR MUNICIPALITY

Silchar Municipality as a non-profit organization collects its revenue under the Municipal Act, 1956 from various sources. Some of the important revenues are in the form of property tax, license fees for trades, carts, carriage and animals, market revenue, water tax, government grants, etc. As far as collection of property tax is concerned, it has increased considerably over the years. Total collection under this head has increased from Rs.6.28 lakh in 1980-81 to Rs.12.74 lakh in 1990-91 and subsequently to Rs.20.49 lakh in 1994-95 (Table 1). It is observed with great concern that due to lack of appointment of full-time assessors and poor performance of part time assessors’ quinquennial re-assessment of
properties in the town is not done properly and some newly constructed holdings are left out of assessment. It is a fact that reassessment of work is long overdue which has been suspended since 1985. Besides these, the municipal authorities have not taken any effective steps to reduce the outstanding arrear on property tax. There is an outstanding arrear of Rs.22.4 lakh as against the collection of Rs.20.49 lakh in the year 1994-95 showing a poor collection of 47.8 percent of the total property tax. License fee for trade, cart, carriage and animals is another important source of revenue of Silchar Municipality. The collection of revenue under this head increased from Rs.0.79 lakh in 1980-81 to Rs.9.08 lakh in 1994-95 in 1994-95. But the striking feature was that the outstanding arrear on trade license fee stood at Rs.3.33 lakh as on 1st April 1995. It was also observed that due to lack of regular checking on trading activities and cumbersome procedural formalities in issuing license the municipality had to face a huge loss of revenue. At present, market revenue is the most important revenue collected from the tenants of its six market complexes located at Fatak Bazar, New Market, Itkhola Market, Satsang Road Market, Central Road Market and Rangirkhari Market including 1851 stalls at different places in the town. The collection of stall rents and lease value of markets was only to the tune of Rs.6.16 lakh in the year 1980-81. There has been an appreciable increase in the collection of market revenue over the years and it has reached the figure to Rs.27.59 lakh in the year 1994-95. However, the problem of outstanding arrear persists and it has gone to the extent of Rs.8.53 lakh under this head as on 1st April 1995. Besides poor collection, there are other numerous problems associated with the market such as poor maintenance of market stalls, non-completion of Central Road Market, no occupation of Rangirkhari Market etc. As far as revenue from water supply was concerned, it had two different phases. From 1990-91 onwards a good amount of revenue had been collected though it was not showing a rising trend. Before 1990-91 the collection was very meager because there was no betterment fee during the period. The most striking feature was that the outstanding arrear exceeded the total collection and the figure stood at Rs.18.72 lakh.
### Table-2.5: Trends of Major Revenues of Silchar Municipality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Year</th>
<th>Property tax (in Rs Lakh)</th>
<th>License fee (in Rs Lakh)</th>
<th>Market tax (in Rs Lakh)</th>
<th>Water tax (in Rs Lakh)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>6.28</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>6.16</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985-86</td>
<td>11.15</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>8.31</td>
<td>1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-91</td>
<td>12.75</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>14.86</td>
<td>15.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992-93</td>
<td>17.03</td>
<td>8.62</td>
<td>25.61</td>
<td>15.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994-95</td>
<td>20.49 (22.40)</td>
<td>9.08 (3.33)</td>
<td>27.59 (8.53)</td>
<td>18.26 (18.72)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Office of Silchar Municipal Board.

On the basis of above mentioned studies it can be said that there is a need to develop a composite model describing various factors responsible for shopping experience in traditional retail. These factors have been considered by various researchers separately in different states of India but not in Silchar. So, to fill these gaps there is a sought to develop composite business model for best shopping experience in traditional retail in Silchar.

**Business Model:** The concept of business model in this study is confined to the commercial aspect of retailing business. Here, objective is to make mutually beneficial/fruitful exchange of goods and services to the final customers/consumers and with whole sellers. Working as an intermediary point in the chain of manufacturing to the final consumption of goods and services.

In the nutshell, it is the creation of value for the customers/consumers in return of the value from the customers to their own favour.

### Table-2.6: Registered Under Municipal Board of Silchar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl No</th>
<th>SEGMENT</th>
<th>No of Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Food &amp; Grocery</td>
<td>2852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Clothing &amp; Accessories</td>
<td>673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Footwear</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Electronics</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Catering Services</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Home &amp; Office Improvement</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Jewelry</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Books ,Music &amp; Gifts</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Pharmaceuticals</td>
<td>566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Beauty &amp; Wellness</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>5503</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Office of Silchar Municipal Board.
From the above (table 2.6) we find it is the number of only those shops which pay trade license fee. But excluding that if we physically count the number of unregistered shop or not paying any kind of tax than unregistered shops will be greater in number than 5503. The footpath of Silchar is not for the people, it is business place of daily earner people comes from rural area and purchase goods like clothes, toys, stationary items etc from local wholesaler or retailer. Sometimes government discard them from foot path but they have also no other option, just after some days they continue again and again. In Silchar, no doubt we found each and every product, and traditional retailers doing this job from very beginning. Almost, traditional retailers can be seen in each and every lane of Silchar and even rural areas also. This city is playing a big role for shopping for Hailakandi, Karimganj district, and state like Mizoram. From pin to Car can be shopped in Silchar.

Trends of traditional retail in Silchar is lane wise product business, each lane is famous for a specific product, for example N N Dutta road is famous for jewelry shop, Jani Ganj is famous for Clothes, crockery and crackers items, Tula patty for grocery items, Central road for clothes. Only Fatak Bazar is a market place which has covered big areas of Silchar town and people can buy day-to-day goods in one place and at reasonable price. Because, Fatak Bazar includes both wholesaler and retailers and they maintain their shops at minimum cost with their family and minimum worker. So, they are able to fix price at reasonable rate.

Only matter is that to compete with the organized retail, trends of traditional retail of Silchar should be changed. Time has gone that people had enough time and enough family members to go to market and there was no time limit. At present, Customers wants availability of each and every product under one roof and this is not a new concept for Indians. If we see the history of shopping, we found that there was festival crowd, fair systems, saptahik bazaar along with crowd and confusion. So, organized retail is giving all these things in a systematic way at a place. Traditional retailers can also provide such shopping experiences by enriching each lane by providing with all types of goods and services to the extent possible at a particular business place spread over different area of the Silchar town. All these can be achieved by united efforts and providing quality shopping experience, options besides entertainment and time pass facilities. It includes, therefore, jewelry shop, grocery shop, restaurant, apparels shop, crockery, vegetable and fruits along with entertainment in a particular place. Such shopping experiences can only be provided when the retailers organized their business on cooperative line.
Food and Grocery Retail

The food business in Silchar is largely unorganized i.e. 2852 no of unit deal in food items in different category. Generally the grocery shop of Silchar is in real sense a store room for customers. Customers need not to maintain store room for them. Corner shop is always ready to provide the needs of customers and also ready for home delivery. Earlier grocery shop means only basic consumable items were available to them. But now along with consumable goods also they can provide stationary items and many other things. It means that they are trying to provide maximum goods under one roof. However, what they want they cannot do it easily due to lack of space, finance, trained staff etc. It’s very interesting to say that some retailers have capital for purchase of land but are not getting a single square foot space in town to extend their existing firm or for new firm.

The All India food consumption is close to Rs.9,000 billion, with the total urban consumption being around Rs.3, 300 billion. This means that aggregate revenues of large food players is currently only 5 per cent of the total Indian market, and around 15-20 per cent of total urban food consumption. Most food is sold in the local ‘wet’ market, vendors, roadside push cart sellers or tiny kirana stores. According to McKinsey report, the share of an Indian household's spending on food is one of the highest in the world, with 48 per cent of income being spent on food and beverages. (Cooperate catalyst India-A report on Indian retail industry)

Apparel Retail

The Indian Apparel Industry has an overpowering presence in the economic life of the country. It is one of the earliest industries to come into existence in the country. The sector has a unique position as a self-dependent industry, from the production of raw materials to the delivery of end products, with considerable value addition at every stage of processing. Apart from providing one of the basic necessities of life, the apparel industry also plays a crucial role through its contribution to industrial output, employment generation, and the export earnings of the country. Currently, it contributes about 14 percent to industrial production, 4 percent to the GDP, and 17 percent to the country’s export earnings. It provides direct employment to over 35 million people.

The Indian apparel industry is projected to be worth Rs. 3,270 billion in 2011’12 and is expected to grow at a compounded annual growth rate of 8.7 per cent till 2016. The growth would primarily be driven by the surge in demand for readymade apparels in semi-urban areas, rising income levels and youth population and increasing preference for branded apparel. (Rakesh Kumar 2011)
After grocery, customer’s engagement is on apparel. In Silchar, apparel retail has covered large area of market. In each lane of Silchar town we can see cloth shop. Generally heart of the city i.e. central road, Janiganj, Nazirpatty and Fatak bazaar full of cloth shop. The apparel retail sector is experiencing the huge development in comparison to grocery retail. It is our observation that current fashion cloths are not available in Silchar town. It comes in Silchar just when it is out of fashion. So, during interacting with girls customers also we got the information that they are not satisfying regarding current fashion products. They see one thing in television or advertisement but they buy another due to not availability of current fashion products.

Footwear
In 2007, the footwear segment had a 1.1% share in the total retail market and was valued at Rs 160 billion while it had a 9.9% share in the organized market and was valued at Rs 77.5 billion. In the same year the organized footwear market recorded a fantastic growth of 49% over 2006 while the overall retail market grew by just 16.4%. The changes in consumer behaviour and attitudes reflected in the increasing demand for newer styles and different types of footwear. The market currently offers many brands that cater to every target segment. The Indian footwear market is moving at a brisk pace presently to cater to the domestic demand. Moreover, the influx of international brands is inducing the otherwise price-conscious customers to shell out more bucks for their favorite brands. The footwear market is experiencing a changing consumer preference for casual and younger style due to media penetration and due to the increasing awareness about international trends and lifestyle. There already are a large number of players, both domestic and international, in the semi-formal, formal and casual segment but the casual segment dominates the Indian footwear market with a 75% share. Branded sportswear is also growing at a faster rate than the other segments and the key players in this segment are Adidas, Reebok, Nike, Puma et al.

Jewelry Retail
Jewelry market is the key emerging area; accounting for a high proportion of retail spends. India is the largest consumer of gold in the world with an estimated annual consumption of 1000 tones, considering actual imports and recycled gold. The market for jewelry is estimated as upwards of Rs. 650 billion.
**Music Retail**

The size of the Indian music industry, as per this Images-KSA Study, is estimated at Rs.11 billion of which about 36 percent is consumed by the pirated market and organized music retailing constitutes about 14 percent, equivalent to Rs.1.5 billion.

**Book Retail**

The book industry is estimated at over Rs. 30 billion out of which organized retail accounts for only 7 per cent (at Rs.2.10 billion). This segment is seen to be emerging with text and curriculum books accounting to about 50 per cent of the total sales. The gifting habit in India is catching on fast with books enjoying a significant share, thus expecting this sector to grow by 15 per cent annually.

**Consumer Durables Retail**

The consumer durables market can be stratified into consumer electronics comprising of TV sets, audio systems, VCD players and others; and appliances like washing machines, microwave ovens, air conditioners(A/Cs). The existing size of this sector stands at an estimated US$ 4.5 Billion with organized retailing being at 5 per cent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CIRCLE</th>
<th>NO. OF REGISTERED SHOPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C-1</td>
<td>1324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-2</td>
<td>1810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-3</td>
<td>1515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-4</td>
<td>1430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-5</td>
<td>837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>6916</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table: 2.7: List of Registered Shops**

**Table: 2.8: Revenue Collection**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>Revenue (Rs. In Lakh)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>16383.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>14108.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>12376.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>10101.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>7827.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Office of Assistant tax Commissioner, Silchar

By seeing the table no 2.7 and 2.8 any one can understand the matter as to why day by day organized retail is going to cover space very fast and reason behind increasing number of
malls in Silchar town. It is seen that number of traditional shops covering not only the urban but rural area as huge number. Great opportunity avails for both organized and traditional retail in Silchar. Because, in financial year 2009-2010 business volume was 7821.76 lakhs and in 2013-2014 it is 16383.89 lakhs. The above data proves that Silcharian people have enough purchasing power.

As we know success of Retail depends upon the long term desire to please customers.

1. Customer orientation. The retailer determines the attributes and needs of its customers and endeavors to satisfy these needs to the fullest.
2. Coordinated effort. The retailer integrates all plans and activities to maximize efficiency
3. Value-driven. The retailer offers good value to customers, whether it is upscale or discount. This means having prices appropriate for the level of products and customer service.
4. Goal orientation. The retailer sets goals and then uses its strategy to attain them.

Unfortunately, this concept is not grasped by every retailer. Some are indifferent, uncaring to customer needs, plan unsystematically, have prices that do not reflect the value offered, and have unclear goals. Some are not interested to change, or they blindly follow strategies followed by competitors. Some do not get response from customers; they rely on their own past sales trends. The retailing concept is fairly easy to adopt.

Three issues that relate to a retailer’s performance in terms of the retailing concept:

- The total retail experience,
- Customer service, and
- Relationship retailing.

2.9 RETAIL EXPERIENCE OF CUSTOMERS.

While one consumer may shop at a Vishal, another at a neighborhood store, and a third at a full-service firm, these different customers all have something important in common: each enjoy a total retail experience (including everything from parking to the checkout counter) in making a purchase. The total retail experience includes all the elements in a retail offering that encourage or slow down consumers during their contact with a retailer. Many elements (such as the number of salespeople, displays, prices, and brands carried, and inventory on hand) are controllable by a retailer; others (such as the parking facility and sales taxes) are not controllable.
If some part of the total retail experience is unsatisfactory to the consumer, consumers may not make a purchase—they may even decide not to shop at a retailer again. Everyone consumer has stories to tell about disrespectful retailing. We are in an electronics store, looking for assistance to buy a laptop. We spot a couple of employees but they were in deep conversation. They glance in our direction but continue to ignore us. After a while, we walk out, never to return.

In planning traditional retailer’s strategy, a retailer must be sure that all strategic elements are in place. For the shopper segment to which it appeals, the total retail experience must be aimed at fulfilling that segment’s expectations.

A big challenge for today’s retailers is generating customer excitement because many people are bored with shopping or have little time for it.

To remove boredom of customer’s retailers can utilize their physical space as a environment to interact with the customers. Let the customer come into store, make them feel that retailers are welcoming / inviting by their face, assist them in selecting their goods, show to the customers substitute of that goods etc. The appeal of this type of environment is that customers can experience the product, they can see, touch, can interact with the brand. In this way retailers can personalize their experience and create an emotional attachment with its customers.

**Customer Service**

Customer service refers to the identifiable, intangible, activities undertaken by a retailer in combination with the basic goods and services it sells. It has a strong impact on the total retail experience. Among the factors composing a customer service strategy are store hours, parking, shopper-friendliness of the store layout, credit acceptance, salespeople, such amenities as gift wrapping, rest rooms, employee politeness, delivery policies, the time shoppers spend in checkout lines, and customer follow-up. This lists not all complete, and it differs in terms of the retail strategy undertaken.

Service varies widely from one retailer to another and from one shopping channel to another. The challenge for traditional retailers is to ask consumers what they expect in the way of service, listen to what they say, and then make every attempt to satisfy them interestingly.

In Silchar traditional retailers are not as much aware about customer service. If we compare with organized retail i.e. Vishal and Big Bazar, than we found that organized retailers are more competitive and aware than traditional retailers. But traditional retailers have the capability to compete with organized retail only they have to change their mind.
setup, strategy and more understandings about the current trends in retail. More understandings towards the needs of their customers rather than only selling goods to the customers.

**Relationship Retailing**

At present successful retailers recognize that they should engage in relationship retailing, whereby, they look for establishing and maintaining long-term bonds with customers, rather than making sales transaction is a completely new meet. This means concentrating on the total retail experience, monitoring satisfaction with customer service, and staying in touch with customers. In Silchar traditional retailers are quite competitive in relationship retailing. They try to make loyal customer rather than one time customer.

**Customer Orientation or Traditional Selling Approach**

A group of actions taken by a business to support its sales and service staff in considering consumers/ customers needs and satisfaction their major priorities. Business strategies that tend to reflect a customer orientation might include: developing a quality product appreciate by consumers; responding promptly and respectfully to consumer complaints and queries; and dealing sensitively with community issues. (Business dictionary.com, UKessay.com)

In Silchar traditional retailers are applying customer centric approach. Generally, traditional retailers approach relied maximum on making that a customer should come again and again in his store. In other words we can say that traditional retailers are interested in making loyal customer. For making loyal customer they apply many business strategy like understanding deeply the needs of consumer, taking care of their likings and disliking, security, parking facility, ease and comfort ability, familiar behaviour etc. But only a few number of traditional retailers approach relied highly on one sided, the managers or sales person don’t have much time to give attention to their customers, not interested in understanding the prospect and do not care about his or her needs. Instead of understanding the needs of consumers they themselves create needs. At present consumers resist from buying products who are applying traditional approach.

Traditional retailers have dozens of ways of overcoming that resistance. Today, selling goods is more about relationship, about relation with people, consumers are very choosy. They don’t waste a lot of time on un-displayed sales racks, unfashionable goods, and old fashioned notions. They like to develop relationship with sales people or managers who can help them in solving their problems and satisfy them about products with full information.
Traditional retailers of Silchar are very much aware about customer centric approach not by dictate but by their experience and understanding. They must understand that old days gone and if they fail to understand the needs of consumers, consumers may avail options to satisfy their needs from Vishal or Big Bazar.

However, retailers of Silchar town have in recent times modified their store by many ways like addition of furniture, giving more space, sitting arrangement, more light and decoration, giving discount, coupon etc. But, still there are some firms running their business unsystematically. They have space, capital, good location but not modifying their shop and business model to attain a better sale number.

**Increasing Market Share or Going with the Given Opportunity**

Retailing is flourishing sector of the Indian economy. Organized retail is to grow at a rate 35% while traditional retail only at the rate of 6% (V Prem, Jain Akshay, Raj Prateek, 2010) In Silchar, Organized retail occupies a very small percentage of the retail sector, with 98% of the total business being carried out by traditional/unorganized trade outlets. Vast majority of traditional retail shops employ family members, do not have enough financial facilities, do not have the scale to obtain or transport product at high volume, no quality control and have no training on safe and hygiene storage, packaging. Thus traditional retail does not give any offer, any service or support after sales. So, traditional retailers are not increasing market share. Simply running the business for their survivability.

**ROI Approach or Carrying Cost plus Approach.**

Our report is based on the interview with the member of merchant association, traditional retailers of Silchar. We found that there are two types of traditional retailers. First category is very much clear about their goal and returns on investment and is quite competitive to understand financial matters of their shop. Maintains their accounts in a systematic way. Hire educated employee and calculate their income time to time. Not only finance, time cost, energy cost etc. They have taken loan from financial institutions and utilizing each opportunity provided by the government. These scenario is seen only when proprietor himself is a literate person and is able to understand financial matter like ROI (Return on Investment).

Second category of traditional retailers has no concept on financial matters and ROI. They purchase from wholesaler or manufacturer and resale them to the final consumer. They do not maintain their accounts systematically. These people run their business with minimum
knowledge and have no idea about the simple accounts and financial stake. They are running their business for their survival purpose only.

**Whether Traditional Retailers are going with changing trend in consumer behavior is the question being examined here after.**

We found during interaction with the customers, retailers, cost accountant, and chartered accountant that some changes in Silchar retail environment are leading challenges on the long term feasibility of the traditional retail model and have observed various demands on traditional retailers.

First, consumers spending levels will remain weak due to increasing rate of inflation, rising prices of petrol and high unemployment problem. Secondly, business cost keep on increasing not only variable cost but also fixed central costs. Retailers will be knocked by increasing business cost, including higher commodity prices, devaluation of the pound and rise in VAT. Thirdly, developed technology and an ever increasing number of interactive devices is extremely changing consumer shopping behavior. Now customer is more dynamic and more interactive, majority of the consumers using their mobile or smart phone for internet access on a daily or weekly basis. Forth, increasing competition through organized market and an increasing number of players converging from other sectors. Lastly, retailer’s sustainability agenda and policies will significantly contribute to commercial performance.

The face of consumer is changing. This changing consumer’s taste and lifestyle, somewhere automatically give some advantage to organized sector. This makes very important for traditional retail sector to reform itself in order to withstand the increasing competition and to meet consumer expectations by moving with trends. Urbanization is taking place in Silchar at a dramatic speed and is influencing the life style and buying behavior of the consumers. The working people have no time to waste a lot in their regular store, if goods are not displayed in a systematic way, they may not ask to any one simply move to another store to satisfy their demand. At present consumers make bulk purchases; they take less pain in searching goods.

In Silchar, traditional retailers are going with the current trends, after interpretation of data we found that traditional retailers are trying to restructure their business model by adding glow signboard, utilizing space effectively, display of products, decoration and lighting, and home delivery etc.

Keeping watch on competition or avoiding competition?
Though they are not blind towards upcoming competition and challenges in the market place but vagueness surrounds their outlook for attaining competitive attitudes.

**Profit orientation or long term consumer equity.**

In majority of the cases profit orientation in more dominant a case here in the long term then catching long term consumer’s equity.

**2.10 CONCLUSION:**

Shopping is one thing that every person is very much fond of. Every person has a unique taste and style in shopping. Someone prefer organized, some are to traditional retail and some prefer both. Silchar is able to satisfy everyone when it comes to shopping. That who loves Shopping for them in shopping is always a fun and entertainment being it local market or shopping mall.

People coming to Silchar can shop in the busy Janiganj Bazar and Vishal Mega Mart, Big Bazar etc. There are few shopping complex in Silchar which includes **Goldighi Shopping Complex** and **Suresh Paul Shopping Complex**. The Goldighee Shopping Mall in Silchar is a famous entertainment & shopping mall which consists of a number of eateries as well as supermarket chain Big Bazaar, Senco Gold, VLCC, etc.

There is nothing like shopping in local bazars. Silchar local markets offers things and at a much more reasonable rate. The Sadarghat area of Silchar is famous for cane furniture like sofa, chairs, tables, trays, shelves, mirror frames, flower vases etc. The furniture found here are very good and unique. The Tulapatty area in Silchar also has a good number of shop which sells Manipuri handloom like Salwar Kameez material, sarees, dupattas (stoll), pillow covers, bedcovers etc. The shops in these area are good and worth visiting. Although the items are very colorful. Everything found there are worth buying. Nagaland handlooms like housecoats, woolen shawls, waistcoats, are found in the Tulapatty area of Silchar.
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