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ROLE OF PRODUCT AND SERVICES ON SATISFACTION OF CUSTOMERS: A CASE STUDY OF ASIAN PAINTS

PARINDA V. DOSHI ASST. PROFESSOR DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE & BUSINESS MANAGEMENT FACULTY OF COMMERCE M. S. UNIVERSITY OF BARODA VADODARA

ABSTRACT

Firms enlarge their market share through the tools which give them the competitive advantage over the other firms. The most widely adopted tools to provide competitive advantages are innovations in the product, process and services which help them to be cost effective or target the new segment of market; and the training and development of employees which help them to sustain and grow in the market. Organisations adopt varied practices to provide maximum customer satisfaction which in turn helps the firm in maintaining and increasing their market share. The present study analyse the relationship of customer satisfaction with product and services, it also examines the significance of product and services on satisfaction of the customer and thus observes overall satisfaction of the customer of Asian Paint. Relationship of product is examined by taking variables of features, durability and variety into consideration while the relationship of services is examined by taking services offered by the company and its dealer respectively. Results of the study show the positive relationship between the product and services with satisfaction of the customers. It also observes the significant effect of product and services on satisfaction of the customers of the company.

KEYWORDS

customer satisfaction, product, services.

JEL CLASSIFICATION

M30, M31, M39, L10, L19.

1. INTRODUCTION

lobalisation and Liberalisation has open up the economies of the world. The two important factors had widened the market for business organisation and had led to the cutthroat competition. Businesses in today's world are making efforts for maintain and increasing their market share by providing maximum customer satisfaction. Firms do this by product and services offered by them. Constant innovation in the product and services by the organisations helps them to satisfy the need of the larger market segment. Paint selling companies are no exclusion from the same. The present study is conducted in order to examine the relationship between the customer satisfaction and the product and services offered by one of the leading paint selling company "Asian Paints". Relationships among the variables are studied by taking samples from Vadodara city of Gujarat State. Samples of 100 respondents were collected, who had already used and avail the services of the company. Data was analysed using a statistical tool: co-relation was used to establish the relationship among the variable and the t –test was used to examine the significance of product and services on satisfaction of customers.

The study is divided into six sections. First section gives introduction of the study, followed by the literature review and concept development in the second section. Third section states objectives and hypothesis of the study, fourth section explain research methodology. Fifth section discusses the result and findings and the sixth section is of conclusion.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Customer satisfaction is the customer's subjective evaluation of a consumption experience, based on relationship between the customer's perceptions and objective attributes of the product (Klaus, 1985). It helps in repeated sales of product, positive word-of-mouth and customer loyalty which is an important aspect for the development of an organisation (Bearden and Teel, 1983; Fornell et al., 1996). Researches were carried on by different authors from time to time to measure customer satisfaction in different industries.

Johnson and Fornell (1991) took economic and psychological perspective for measuring customer satisfaction of different firms and industries in Sweden. Pizam and Ellis (1999) developed a tool for measuring customer satisfaction in hospitality and tourism industry. Research work of Athanassopoulos, Gounaris, and Stathakopoulos (2001) investigated the behavioural consequences of customer satisfaction in Service Industry. They examine the impact of customer satisfaction on the decisions - to stay with the existing service provider, engagement in word-of-mouth communications, and intentions to switch service providers. Homburg and Rudolph (2001) measure customer satisfaction in industrial market by developing a scale which contains seven different dimensions to measure customer experience. Sadeghi and Farokhian (2011) measure customer satisfaction through inclusion of customers' requirements and needs in the design of products manufactured. The study investigates the relationship of product performance on customer satisfaction and loyalty.

PRODUCT AND SATISFACTION

Johnson and Fornell (1991) examined product's perceived performance and the customer's expectations as primary antecedents of satisfaction. Anderson and Fornell (1994) consider product as a coercive source of power for an organisation. Organisation differentiating their product by means a unique product line gets the competitive advantage and the barrier for switching (Mihelis et al., 2001; Millana, 2004). Zamazalová (2008) describe product features and services as an essential component which helps the organisation to differentiate their product and enhancing customer satisfaction. Thus, the literature shows the significance of product for differentiation, getting competitive advantage, barriers for switching and providing satisfaction to the customers.

SERVICES AND SATISFACTION

Services are the intangible things that are provided by the organisation to the customer. The quality of service is assessed by consumer on actual delivery and consumption of the services. As service production and consumption go on simultaneously it become important for the organisation to deliver the services timely which help them in better consumption of the product. Services are generally offered through the employees of the comany and distributers of the products. The services offered not only help in timely and proper consumption of product but also help in attending maximum customer satisfaction and thus widening the market share (Levitt, 1983; Biong, 1993)

3. OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

The prime objective of the study is to examine the relationship and significance of product feature and services with customer satisfaction of Asian Paint. Prime objective is further bifurcated into the sub-objectives which are:

- To study the relationship between product feature and services offered by the company and its distributers on satisfaction of customers of Asian Paints
- To examine the significance of product feature on satisfaction of the customers of Asian Paints.
- To measure the significance of services offered by the company and its distributers on satisfaction of the customers of Asian Paints.
- To measure the significance of product feature and services on overall satisfaction of customers of Asian Paints.

In order to attain the above mentioned objectives, the following hypotheses have been established in the study.

H₁: Product feature significantly affect satisfaction of the customers of Asian Paints

H₂: Services offered by the company and its distributers significantly affect satisfaction of the customers of Asian Paints

H₃: Product feature and services has a affect satisfaction of the customers of Asian Paints

4. METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

A case study of the customers of "Asian Paints" one of the leading paint supping company of India was undertaken to achieve the above mention objectives. Data was collected from the customer of the company in order to understand the relationship of product feature and services offered on satisfaction of customer; and thus to know the overall satisfaction of the customer. The present section of the study provide detail, on the data employed; instrument used for data collection; reference period of the data collected; and methodology adopted for analysing data.

4.1. POPULATION AND SAMPLE

Population for the study are customers of Asian Paints in Vadodara city, who have purchased the product from the dealer of Asian Paints in Vadodara. Data was collected from 100 respondents using technique of Convenience sampling.

4.2. RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Questionnaire with closed-ended questions was used to gather demographic data. Five-point Likert-type statements ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5) were used to test respondent's satisfaction pertaining to product feature, services offered by the company and its distributers and to know the satisfaction of the customer of Asian Paints.

The impact of product feature is measured using 6 items, while the effect of services offered by the company and its distributers are measured using 3 items. Customer satisfaction for the product, services and their overall satisfaction is measured using 3 items.

4.3. DATA GATHERING

Primary data was collected through structured close ended questionnaires by undertaking personal interviews of customer of Asian Paints in Vadodara. Personal interviews were conducted from January 2015 to April 2015 for collecting responses of the customer.

4.4. METHOD OF PROCESSING AND ANALYSING DATA

In order to attend the objectives of study, data has been examined and analysed using suitable statistical tools. Correlation was used to study the relationship between product feature and services offered by the company and its distributers on satisfaction of customers of Asian Paints and the T test was used:

- to analyse the significance of product feature on satisfaction of the customer of Asian Paints,
- to examine the significance of services offered by the company and its distributers on satisfaction of the customer of Asian Paints and
- to measure the significance of product feature and services on overall satisfaction of customers of Asian Paints.

5. EMPIRICAL RESULTS

A total of 100 responses are used for interpretation and analysing the finding of the study. Reliability test were conducted to assess the internal consistency of the data. Cronbach's alpha the most widely used method to test the reliability was used in the study. It is mention that its value of Cronbach alpha varies from 0 to 1 but, satisfactory value is required to be more than 0.6 for the scale to be reliable. The Cronbach alpha was found to be 0.801 for the instrument under study, which ensures the reliability of the instrument. After checking the reliability of the scale, normality of the data was checked using P-P plot which depicts that the data was normal.

The demographic profile of the respondent consists of gender, age, occupation and Income. The detail of the profile is mention in Table – 1 given below.

Description	Responses	
	Male	43
Gender	Female	57
	Total	100
	Less than 25	41
A = 0	25-30	34
Age	30 and above	25
	Total	100
	Service	32
	Business	21
Occupation	Professional	25
	Others	22
	Total	100
	Less than 200000	30
	200000 - 400000	34
Annual Income	400000 - 600000	20
	600000 and More	16
	Total	100

TABLE 1: DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS OF RESPONDENTS

The respondents were first classified according to their gender. Out of 100 respondents, 43 respondents were male and 57 were female. According to age classification 41 percent of the respondents were found of the age less than 25 years, 34 percent were between 25 to 30 years and 25 percent were above 30 years. Occupation is classified into service, business, and profession and other. In the study 32 respondents were a salaried employee, 21 respondents were businessman, 25 were professional and 22 of them come under other category of occupation. When the respondents were further classified according to their annual Income it was found that 30 of them have income less than 2,00,000 Rupees, 34 of them earn between 2,00,000 to 4,00,000, 20 respondents were earning between 4,00,000 to 6,00,000 and the 16 respondents were earning more than 6,00,000 annually.

5.1. Effect of Product Feature on Satisfaction

In order to find out the relationship between the product feature and satisfaction correlation technique was used. Positive correlation 0.406 was found between the product feature and satisfaction. The positive correlation indicates, with the positive change in the product feature by the company satisfaction of the customer will also change positively. The P value of one tail T test came to be 1.2532E-70 which shows the significance of product feature on the satisfaction of the customer. The result support the hypothesis of the significant influence of product feature on satisfaction of the customer.

5.2. Effect of Services on Satisfaction

The correlation between the services and the satisfaction was 0.284. Positive correlation among the variable showed the positive relationship of the variable. Company undertaken for the study is the paint supplying company and so we find customer to be more emphasising on the product than the services of the company. From the correlation we find product feature to have more relation than the services offered by the company and its distributers. P value of one tail T test came to be 7.16735E-47 which helps to prove the hypothesis of the significant impact of services offered by the company and its distributers on the satisfaction of the customer of Asian Paints.

5.3. Effect of Product Feature and Services on Satisfaction

Positive correlation of 0.443 was found between the product feature and Services with satisfaction of customer of Asian Paints. Positive correlation indicates overall satisfaction of the customer is positively affected by the product feature and the services offered. P value of one tail T test was 4.3816E-74 which proves the hypothesis of the significant impact of product feature and services on overall satisfaction of customers of Asian Paints.

6. CONCLUSION

Numbers of research has been undertaken by the different authors to understand the concept of customer satisfaction and for the development of the instrument for measuring the customer satisfaction in different industries. The paper contributes for the development of the instrument which will helps in measuring the impact of product features and services on customer satisfaction of the paint supplying company. The empirical results of the study lead to the following findings:

- Product feature and the services have a positive relationship with the satisfaction of the customer of the business.
- Product features has a significant effect on the satisfaction of the customer.
- · Services offered by the company and its distributers has the significant effect on the customers of the company and
- Product features and services offered had a significant effect on the overall satisfaction of the customers of the company.

The findings enhance the understanding of how customers perceive product and services of the paint selling companies. This will help the executives to identify the critical dimensions of product and services, which eventually affects the level of competitiveness of the organisation. Present study is conducted taking product and service as variables to measure satisfaction of the customer. Responses for the study are from the customers of the single paint selling company in the paint industry. This limitation of the study restricts the general applicability and provide the future ground for further research which may be conducted by taking more variables into consideration, taking another company into consideration or doing a comparative study among different company of the same industry.

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