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vii

# RECOGNISING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND CUSTOMER LOYALTY: AN ILLUSTRATION FROM ORGANISED RETAIL SECTOR

*DR. R. R. CHAVAN*
*ASST. PROFESSOR*
*SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES*
*NORTH MAHARASHTRA UNIVERSITY*
*JALGAON*


*ANIL DONGRE*
*PROFESSOR & HEAD*
*UG DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT*
*SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES*
*NORTH MAHARASHTRA UNIVERSITY*
*JALGAON*

## ABSTRACT

*The retail sector is highly competitive industry and one can gain competitive advantage is to ensure that the customers are satisfied all the time every time. It is also a fact that, having loyal customers is a great asset to ensure long term growth of a company. The literature on marketing has recognised customer satisfaction as a significant antecedent to customer loyalty. The aim of this paper is to study the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty with reference to organised retail sector. Customer satisfaction is widely recognized as a key pressure in the formation of consumers' future purchase intentions. The satisfied customers are also likely to tell others of their favourable experiences and thus engage in positive word of mouth publicity. The filled survey has been undertaken and the frequent shopper at retail store has been considered for sampling. Their satisfaction and loyalty have been assessed by engaging structured questionnaire. The relationship between satisfaction and loyalty is analysed by with the help of correlation coefficient. The results indicate that there is significant association between satisfaction and loyalty, which is companionable with the traditional view.*

## KEYWORDS
Customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, retail store, organised retail.

## JEL CODE
L81, L84.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

In India retailing is progressively moving towards becoming the next fastest growing industry. According to A.T. Kearney, retailing accounts for $410 billion and organized retailing accounts for only 5% of the above market. According to the Global Retail Development Index 2012, India ranks on 5th among the top 30 emerging retail markets. The recent announcement by the Indian government with Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in retail, especially allowing 100% FDI in single brands and multi-brand FDI has created positive attitudes in this sector.

Customers are most likely to appreciate the goods and services they buy, provided if they are made to feel special. This occurs when they feel that the goods and services that they buy have been specially produced for them or for people like them. It should be always keep measuring in order to get feedback for the products and services in order to develop it further with wide customization. Customer satisfaction levels can be measured using survey techniques and questionnaires. Gaining high levels of customer satisfaction is very important to a business because satisfied customers are most likely to be loyal, place repeated orders and use a wide range of services offered by a business. The paper examines the connection between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in retail sector.

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION
Customer satisfaction is mainly consequential from the physiological response with the perceptual difference gap between expectation before consumption and practical experience after consumption of service or products. It implies an accumulated temporary and sensory response. Therefore, under such a specific consumption setting, it frequently influences the overall attitude and decision-making when customers purchase products or service (Lee et al., 2010). Anderson and Srinivasan (2003) assessed consumer satisfaction categorized into five dimensions of overall satisfaction, customer favourite, customer loyalty, customer recommendation and priority option. Understanding customer satisfaction will facilitate companies to maintain customer satisfaction to products or services. As such, inferior products or services can be improved to allow customers with wonderful impression. (Anderson and Srinivasan, 2003)

### 2.2 CUSTOMER LOYALTY
Loyalty has been defined as repeat purchase behaviour led by favourable attitudes or as a consistent purchase behaviour resulting from the psychological decision-making and evaluative process. According to Walsh et al. (2008), three popular conceptualizations of loyalty exist as an attitude that leads to a relationship with the brand; as expressed in terms of revealed behaviour, and as buying moderated by individual characteristics, circumstances, and/or the purchase situation. Oliver (1997), proposed loyalty as a deeply held commitment to re-buy or re-patronize a preferred product or service consistently in the future, which causes repetitive same-brand or same-brand set purchasing, despite any situational influences and marketing efforts that might cause switching behavior. Customer loyalty has been defined as a construct that measures the probability that the customer will return and is ready to perform partnering activities such as referrals (Cater and Cater, 2009). Sudhahar et al. (2006) addressed the SERVLOYAL constructs into seven dimensions for scale construction process as behavioral dimension; attitudinal dimension; cognitive dimension; conative dimension; affective dimension; trust dimension; and commitment dimension.

### 2.3 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SATISFACTION AND LOYALTY
According to literature review, is derived from service management and study on the satisfaction and loyalty relationship is performed generally and in organizational level. The satisfaction is the experience of loyalty that impacts on profitability of organization. It is evident that loyalty is affected by satisfaction even if their relationship is not logical. The findings of the study indicate a weak or unimportant relationship between repeated buying behavior (loyalty) and satisfaction (Bodet, 2008). Davis et al. (2007) suggest that the behavioral relationship between satisfaction and loyalty is not a linear one and has two levels of crises threshold. It also shows that when satisfaction reaches above the level of certain threshold (trust zone), buying behavior increases rapidly. When

satisfaction decreases to lower threshold (defection zone), buying behavior decreases rapidly. Between threshold levels (consideration zone), buying behavior is constant. They believe that satisfaction should be high enough to stimulate behavioral loyalty, or it should be low enough to reduce it.

The hypothesis is been derived from the literature

**H0: There is no significant relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in organised retail sector**

## 3.0 METHODOLOGY

The researcher has obtained primary research findings through collecting primary data by conducting survey predominately.

A total of 200 consumers from four parts of Nashik city were surveyed for this research study. The survey is based on interviewing retail store consumers at various retail stores in city. The questionnaire and personal Interview method used for primary data collection is been employed.

The sampling method chosen is simple random sampling which is a type of probability sampling. The total 200 samples selected using a random sampling for the present study. The questionnaire was designed keeping in mind the objectives of the study. The literature survey and pre study consultation with industry and academician experts were taken into account. The questionnaire comprises Likert type of 7 point scale. The secondary data was collected through research papers, newspapers, journals, websites, books, project reports

## 4.0 DATA ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

### DEMOGRAPHICS

Questionnaires were distributed between both male and female having the percentage 70.9% and 29.1% respectively. The respondents, from which data were collected having different level of age, education, and income. Some of the respondents were single while some were married and having children or without children. Respondents were advised to select one retail store which they have visited recently.

Pearson correlation coefficient is used to assess existence of relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty.

**TABLE 1: STATISTICAL OUTPUT**

| | | Satisfaction | CL1 | CL2 | CL3 | CL4 | CL5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Satisfaction** | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .325[**] | .312[**] | .262[**] | .267[**] | .135[**] |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | . | **.000** | **.000** | **.000** | **.000** | **.000** |
| | N | 650 | 650 | 650 | 650 | 650 | 650 |
| **CL1** | Correlation Coefficient | .325[**] | 1.000 | .742[**] | .744[**] | .824[**] | .327[**] |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | . | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 650 | 650 | 650 | 650 | 650 | 650 |
| **CL2** | Correlation Coefficient | .312[**] | .742[**] | 1.000 | .566[**] | .787[**] | .265[**] |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | . | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 650 | 650 | 650 | 650 | 650 | 650 |
| **CL3** | Correlation Coefficient | .262[**] | .744[**] | .566[**] | 1.000 | .731[**] | .341[**] |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | .000 | . | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 650 | 650 | 650 | 650 | 650 | 650 |
| **CL4** | Correlation Coefficient | .267[**] | .824[**] | .787[**] | .731[**] | 1.000 | .399[**] |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | . | .000 |
| | N | 650 | 650 | 650 | 650 | 650 | 650 |
| **CL5** | Correlation Coefficient | .135[**] | .327[**] | .265[**] | .341[**] | .399[**] | 1.000 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | . |
| | N | 650 | 650 | 650 | 650 | 650 | 650 |

[**]. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

[*]. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

As per the table1 indicates that the correlation (r) of customer satisfaction is 0.325, 0.312, 0.262, 0.267 and 0.135 p-value is 0.000. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and it can be concluded that customer satisfaction is positively related to customer loyalty in the organised retail sector.

## 5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this survey was to examine the relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty. The results show a significant relationship between satisfactions of customers their loyalty. This result is compatible with the results of the investigation of Davise et al. (2007), Kotler and Armstrong (2010), and Jones and Sasser (1995). In this respect, this survey can be classified as the third category of classification of Henning-Thurau and Klee (1997), in which a weak/unimportant relationship between satisfaction and repeated buying behavior (loyalty) was been observed.

## 6.0 IMPLICATION

The research contributes to the knowledge by providing support the relationship between satisfaction and customer loyalty. The result of the study recognized that with improvement of customer satisfaction the firm will find customers that are more loyal. By the referring of loyal customers a firm can also attract more customers. However, the main focus of management attention is to strive hard for customer satisfaction and building loyalty of the customer for the retail store. The future research may be focus on identifying and possibly developing unique measure for customer satisfaction for retail firm.

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