

MEASURING CUSTOMERS' SATISFACTION TOWARDS VALUE ADDED SERVICES PROVIDED IN ORGANIZED AND UNORGANIZED RETAIL MARKET IN WEST BENGAL

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Abstract: The emergence of various retail formats in India explores entirety a few new avenues of pleasurable shopping experience for customers. The growing competition has been a major driver in bringing in improved value added services to create an appealing environment and to induce hedonic experiences. It has been observed that the organized retailing is growing exponentially with a bundle of features containing over all ambience specially in store ambience [Shivaraman,2011], in store decoration, prominent display [Joshi and Kulkarni, 2012], spacious store layout [Mangold and Faulds,1993], variety of branded products [Anselmsson, 2006] parking facilities [Ward, Bitner and Barnes, 1992] cleanliness and safety [Rajendhiran, 2012] place for entertainment and recreation [Kim, et.al, 2005] to enthuse buyers. Though a wide disparity exists in the number of organised retail outlets and traditional unorganised retail shops available in India, yet the role of organised retail outlets is remarkable in shaping up the expectation and desires of Indian customers. The sprawling growth of modern retail formats like hyper market, departmental stores and shopping malls in different parts of the country unfolds new shopping experiences for their customers [Mohanty & Shikaria, 2011; Akhter & Equbal, 2012]. The retail industry in India has gained forth position as one of the most dynamic and fast paced industries [Akhter and Equbal, 2012]. The attitudinal shift of the Indian consumers in terms of their preferences, value for money and emergence of organized retail format have transformed the way of retailing [Sachdeva, 2008].

The extensive literature review has contributed to a great extent to the identification of the parameters responsible for the retail shift which in other way contributes more in designing the research problem. Then the purpose of this study stands on the identification of the customers' satisfaction towards organized and unorganized retail outlets in terms of overall ambience, availability of brands, space, customers' service, display, refreshment facilities, civic amenities, exterior & interior decoration, parking facility and symbol of status etc. In the literature, there is a dearth of research evidences on the emergence of retail formats and customers' preferences in West Bengal as well as in the Indian context.

Ultimately the study tries to explore through investigation the extent of customers' satisfaction towards organized and unorganised retail formats in different destinations of West Bengal based on the above mentioned value added services. This research work is based on secondary and primary data which are collected through an extensive literature review and structured questionnaire designed for customers respectively. The study includes 402 respondents and different statistical tools have been employed for analysis of data. This study has ample of scope to implement in the context of socio-economic background where the traditional retailers may upgrade their value added services to attract more customers and to enhance satisfaction level. It is noteworthy to mention that this study provides a new perspective of measuring customers' satisfaction in relation to various components of valued services provided by different types of retailers in West Bengal, a state of eastern part of India.

Key Words: Retail Format, Customer Satisfaction, Value Added Services etc.

Introduction: Though a wide disparity exists in the number of organised retail outlets and traditional unorganized retail shops available in India, yet the role of organised retail outlets is remarkable in shaping up the expectations and desires of Indian customers. The modern retail market accounts for 4% share of total Indian retail market (Mohanty and Shikaria, 2011). India is estimated to reach 175 – 200 USD billion by 2016 (Akhter and Equbal, 2012).The sprawling growth of hyper market, departmental stores and shopping malls in different parts of the country unfolds new shopping experiences for their customers.

The emergence of various retail formats in India explores new avenues of pleasurable shopping experience for customers. The growing competition has been a major driver in bringing in improved value added services to create an appealing environment and to induce hedonic experiences. It has been observed that the organized retailing is growing exponentially with a bundle of features containing overall store ambience (Shivaraman,2011), in store decoration, prominent display (Joshi and Kulkarni,2012), spacious store layout (Mangold and Faulds,1993), variety of branded products (Anselmsson,2006), parking facilities (Ward et al.,1992) cleanliness and safety (Rajendhiran *et al*,

2013), place for entertainment and recreation (Kim *et al.*, 2005) to enthruse buyers. The rising organized retail trends in India present a need of understanding how consumers perceive value from retail atmosphere and its impact on their behavior (Kumar *et al.*, 2010). Sign and Kaur (2013) put forth an opinion that the sophistication in retailing has emerged as an outcome of rising buying power of the customers, availability of branded products and their exposure to international standard. It is needless to mention that the ambience, facilities and convenience of shopping are the prime mover to generate customers' satisfaction. This has also been a matter of concern for the old and traditional retailers.

This study has made an attempt to understand customers' responses towards value added services rendered by different types of retail outlets in West Bengal. This study has been conducted in three cities of West Bengal which is a state of eastern India. It is the 4th largest state in terms of population. The state is well connected with Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, other states of India such as Bihar, Orissa and North East part of the country. A large number of people visit this state for medical, education and commercial purposes. Kolkata, a metro city of West Bengal is an embodiment of cultural mix, a center of all commercial and industrial activities and socio-economical developments. Durgapur is an industrial city and recently renowned as educational hub. The city caters to a huge population for employment and education from different parts of the state and other states which has improved its economic potentials. This study has also considered Burdwan retail market because it is distinctly characterized in regards to agricultural based economy, rural customers, and their standard of living and consumption pattern.

In this backdrop, the study attempted to explore the customers' satisfaction in regard to valued services available in various retail shops.

Background of the study: Retailing in India is gradually blooming and the concept of shopping has been transformed in a way of format and consumer buying behavior (Hand and Grover, 2012). The attitudinal shift of the Indian consumers in terms of their preferences, value for money and emergence of organized retail format have transformed the way of retailing (Sachdeva, 2008). Narayan *et al.* (2013) analysed the nature of changes in retail sector due to organized form of retailing and its implication on shifting to the new form of retail. Singh and Sahay (2012) identified five factors such as 'ambience', 'physical infrastructure', 'marketing focus', 'convenience', 'safety' and 'security' which create shopping experiences and different importance is assigned in terms of significance to each of these factors. The store atmospheric is created to influence buying environment which enhances emotion of

customers' likelihood towards purchase (Kumar and Karande, 2000). Khan *et al.*, (2014) indicated that service and product quality plays an important role in generating customers' satisfaction. Kumar *et al.*, (2010) considered designing of retail store is the combination of artistic ideas and atmospheric cues which includes colour, lighting (Joshi and Kulkarni, 2012), music (Jain and Bagdare, 2011), design, store layout (Wu *et al.*, 2014), olfactory factors to affect consumers' cognitive process.

Moore and Lochhead (1998) examined that the impact of store exterior on the store image and designing of retail store has an influence on positioning and image of the store. The designing of stores is the combination of artistic ideas and atmospheric cues to trigger customers' cognitive senses with colour, music, design, layout and sensory factors (Kumar *et al.*, 2010; Meenakumari, 2013) and also considered visual merchandising as a means of conveying stores value and quality image which may be presented through exterior and interior decoration, store entrance, window display, fixtures, promotional signage, design layout, cleanliness. Wang and Lang (2015) examined the effect of special display on shopping behaviour and inferred that it has impact on customer product choice and store image. According to Rajendhiran *et al.*, (2013) distance of the retail stores and the variety of goods are the most significant factors whereas safety and cleanliness are the second most important factor to create store image. Singh and Pandey (2013) declared that organised retail formats are facilitated with parking facility, entertainment, food, shopping, safety measures and billing system which have noteworthy impact on customer satisfaction (Hedrick *et al.*, 2006).

Oh. *et al.*, (2007) addressed the SOR model in retail environment and also investigated atmospheric environment in the store with respect to various stimuli like colour, sound, scent, layout, space which consider important cues for buyers. The store atmospheric involves different types of stimulus such as store decoration, product shape, packaging, arrangement of product in the shelf (Sezgin and Kucukkoylu, 2013). Jiang and Liu (2014) explored that the exterior & interior decoration, store layout, design, point of purchase, display, store front, lighting of the store encourage shoppers to spend more time inside the store.

There is a perceived difference between modern and traditional retail market while considering attributes like store image, range of product, brand choice, price, store ambience (Shivaraman, 2011). Mohanty and Shikaria (2011) revealed three elements to differentiate the retail store from its competitors: Merchandise, Customer support and Store ambience. There is an attempt to know the importance of store

ambience in organized retail market. The study unveils that shifting from traditional to modern format is correlated with ambience, convenience, quality, window displays and marquees are the determining factor for the ambience. Reimers and Clulow (2014) concluded that customers perceive spatial convenience as important factor and shopping malls are providing superior spatial convenience compared to strip type shops in terms of store compatibility and compact shopping environment. The studies exhibited noteworthy differences in various features involved in organized and unorganized retail market in India. (Sivaraman., 2011; Jhamb and Kiran, 2012; Talreja and Jain, 2013) The majority of the Indian consumers are shifting from brand loyalist to value conscious and positive consumer sentiments has influenced retailers expanding to tier 1 and tier 2 cities (Sinha *et al.*, 2012).

The following features have been measured in several studies as performance indicators of organized retailing. Machleit *et al.*, (2000) observed that the link between customer's perception of crowding in retail outlet and their satisfaction level which varies with different store type and considering the visual attractiveness of ceiling and floor of the store. The influencing factors for organized retailing have been recognized as prime factors such as variety of products (Gupta, 2012) easy availability, cleanliness, entertainment (Khare, 2011), parking facility etc. (Jhamb and Kiran, 2012; Nair and Nair, 2013;)

Talreja and Jain (2013) indicated that there is a difference between organized and unorganized retailers in connection with store image. product range, choice of brand, pricing level, store ambience, credit availability and shop proximity. Nobbs *et al.*, (2012) identified elements of luxury store format which has the features of exclusivity and uniqueness to provide a reason for customers to visit the store. Nsairi (2012) viewed that the attributes like store atmosphere, accompanying, motivation, mood and time of spending have an effect on browser's perceived value and satisfaction and perceived value are of significant importance to transform browsers into loyal shoppers.

There are number of retailers who have been upgrading themselves by relocating to new upcoming malls and in better atmospheric location (Ravindra *et al.*, 2013) and the study also showed that gap exists in customers' expectation and satisfaction on the basis of physical facility, salesman service, billing service and overall environment. The elements like parking area, availability of brands are able to generate satisfaction among customers.

Objectives: The above mentioned literature review has contributed to a grand extent to the identification of multifaceted uniqueness of varied market structure

with added services across geographical locations which is the ultimate foundation of the formulation of problem. So, therefore, this study tries to identify the followings:

1. Which are the possible parameters that are mostly responsible for value added services and emergence of modern retail outlet?
2. Whether there is any impact of those identified services provided in retail outlets on customer satisfaction?
3. If there is any difference in the performance of organised and unorganized retail formats in West Bengal?
4. Lastly, this study also strives to know the consumer behavior of the stated and experimented shopping destinations considered for this study.

Methodology: The observation is a preferred technique to gather data in public places. This technique is suitable for specific setting, event, demographic factor (Barbour, 2007). The observation is the systematic noting and recording of events and behaviour of informants in a specific situation. Alder and Peter (1994) suggested that observation is the fundamental element of all types of research work.

The observation technique has been adopted for various places in Kolkata, Durgapur and Burdwan retail market in West Bengal. In this context different shopping malls, speciality stores, departmental stores, hyper markets and traditional retail markets of three cities have been visited for the purpose of data collection.

The observation technique has guided to focus on some important aspects of value added services in traditional and modern retail market. Moreover, the extensive literature review has helped to identify the important element for measurement. A structured questionnaire has been prepared to collect relevant data from customers.

With a view to collect data effectively, a structured questionnaire for customers has been circulated randomly in selected retail setting. At the time of data collection from both traditional and modern markets, the people who were present in the respective markets had been surveyed. The respondents include no less than the age of 18 and both the sexes among customers. In the process of data collection 500 questionnaires for customers have been distributed randomly among the customers in the market places of Kolkata, Durgapur and Burdwan. After screening out incomplete and irrelevant responses, 402 respondents have been considered. The method of convenience sampling has been employed for this study.

A number of experts, academic scholars in the field of marketing management and retailing were asked to confirm the validity of the questionnaire.

Therefore, in this study, content validity was strengthened through an extensive literature review. For the purpose of data analysis R programming has been used to measure whether the distance exist between organized and unorganised retail sector concerning customer satisfaction.

Hypothesis: There is a significant difference across traditional markets and modern markets in respect of the attributes such as overall ambience, civic amenities, parking facilities, availability of branded items, exterior and interior design, refreshment facilities, customer service, symbol of status, space and display.

It is based on correlation between variables by which different patterns can be identified and analysed. It is used for classification techniques. The Mahalanobis distance of a multivariate vector given below.

$x = (x_1, x_2, x_3, \dots, x_N)^T$ from a group of values with mean $\mu = (\mu_1, \mu_2, \mu_3, \dots, \mu_N)^T$ and covariance matrix S is defined as dissimilarity measure between two vectors of the same distribution with the covariance matrix.

$$D_M(x) = \sqrt{(x - \mu)^T S^{-1} (x - \mu)}$$

$$D^2 = (\bar{x} - \bar{y})^T S^{-1} (\bar{x} - \bar{y})$$

The following tables indicate the measurement of distance between traditional and modern retail markets [According to customers' satisfaction towards value added services]

Analysis:

Null hypothesis (H₀): There is no significant difference in customers' satisfaction between traditional and modern retail markets in relation to value added services provided by the retailers.

The following table 1.1 presents 1st Population

	Oa.Tr	Ca.Tr	Sp.Tr	Dp.Tr	Ab.Tr	Ss.Tr	Pf.Tr	Ei.Tr	Rf.Tr	Cs.Tr
Oa.Tr	0.573	0.018	0.098	-0.010	-0.023	-0.066	0.038	-0.029	0.028	0.022
Ca.Tr	0.018	0.444	-0.002	-0.033	-0.053	-0.022	0.032	0.013	-0.017	-0.023
Sp.Tr	0.098	-0.002	0.865	0.052	0.037	0.061	0.019	0.030	0.003	0.029
Dp.Tr	-0.010	-0.033	0.052	1.069	0.073	-0.028	0.062	0.008	0.018	0.030
Ab.Tr	-0.023	-0.053	0.037	0.073	1.241	0.046	0.051	0.062	0.102	0.089
Ss.Tr	-0.066	-0.022	0.061	-0.028	0.046	1.779	0.048	-0.014	0.008	0.021
Pf.Tr	0.038	0.032	0.019	0.062	0.051	0.048	0.669	0.078	0.081	-0.053
Ei.Tr	-0.029	0.013	0.030	0.008	0.062	-0.014	0.078	1.057	0.095	-0.036
Rf.Tr	0.028	-0.017	0.003	0.018	0.102	0.008	0.081	0.095	0.969	0.122
Cs.Tr	0.022	-0.023	0.029	0.030	0.089	0.021	-0.053	-0.036	0.122	1.505

The following table 1.2 presents 2nd Population:

Modern Market:

	Oa.Md.	Ca.Md.	Sp.Md.	Dp.Md.	Ab.Md.	Ss.Md.	Pf.Md.	Ei.Md.	Rf.Md.	Cs.Md.
Oa.Md.	0.266	0.042	0.027	0.022	0.018	0.005	0.030	0.049	0.020	0.045
Ca.Md.	0.042	0.273	0.003	0.015	0.030	0.048	0.019	0.034	0.028	0.018
Sp.Md.	0.027	0.003	0.276	0.045	0.029	0.026	0.086	0.061	0.055	0.002
Dp.Md.	0.022	0.015	0.045	0.252	0.017	0.034	0.050	0.068	0.009	0.035
Ab.Md.	0.018	0.030	0.029	0.017	0.252	0.035	0.032	0.044	0.003	0.008
Ss.Md.	0.005	0.048	0.026	0.034	0.035	0.275	0.023	0.023	0.024	0.009
Pf.Md.	0.030	0.019	0.086	0.050	0.032	0.023	0.273	0.100	0.049	0.028
Ei.Md.	0.049	0.034	0.061	0.068	0.044	0.023	0.100	0.387	0.049	0.030
Rf.Md.	0.020	0.028	0.055	0.009	0.003	0.024	0.049	0.049	0.267	0.030
Cs.Md.	0.045	0.018	0.002	0.035	0.008	0.009	0.028	0.030	0.030	0.255

The table 1.3 represents Combined Dispersion Matrix

0.419	0.030	0.063	0.006	-0.003	-0.031	0.034	0.010	0.024	0.033
0.030	0.358	0.001	-0.009	-0.011	0.013	0.025	0.023	0.005	-0.002
0.063	0.001	0.571	0.049	0.033	0.043	0.052	0.045	0.029	0.016
0.006	-0.009	0.049	0.661	0.045	0.003	0.056	0.038	0.014	0.033
-0.003	-0.011	0.033	0.045	0.747	0.040	0.042	0.053	0.053	0.049
-0.031	0.013	0.043	0.003	0.040	1.027	0.036	0.004	0.016	0.015
0.034	0.025	0.052	0.056	0.042	0.036	0.471	0.089	0.065	-0.012
0.010	0.023	0.045	0.038	0.053	0.004	0.089	0.722	0.072	-0.003
0.024	0.005	0.029	0.014	0.053	0.016	0.065	0.072	0.618	0.076
0.033	-0.002	0.016	0.033	0.049	0.015	-0.012	-0.003	0.076	0.880

The table 1.4 represents differential mean between two population

	Mean 1 st population		Mean 2 nd population		mean diff
Oa.Tr.	1.544776	Oa.Md.	4.400498	Oa	2.855721
Ca.Tr.	1.422886	Ca.Md.	4.410448	Ca	2.987562
Sp.Tr.	1.89801	Sp.Md.	4.435323	Sp	2.537313
Dp.Tr.	2.218905	Dp.Md.	4.616915	Dp	2.39801
Ab.Tr.	2.189055	Ab.Md.	4.557214	Ab	2.368159
Ss.Tr.	2.034826	Ss.Md.	4.477612	Ss	2.442786
Pf.Tr.	1.624378	Pf.Md.	4.415423	Pf	2.791045
Ei.Tr.	1.975124	Ei.Md.	4.30597	Ei	2.330846
Rf.Tr.	1.711443	Rf.Md.	4.440299	Rf	2.728856
Cs.Tr.	1.965174	Cs.Md.	4.422886	Cs	2.457711

Δ^2 (Mahalanabish Distance Square) = 88.289

Table value of $X^2_{10, .05} = 18.3$

The calculated value 88.289 > table value 18.3

So, null hypothesis is rejected.

Significant difference lies between both the markets in terms of customer satisfaction level in relation to Overall ambience , Availability of brands , Space , Customers' service , display , refreshment facilities , Civic amenities , Exterior & Interior Decoration , Parking facility and symbol of status.

Conclusion: These recommendations are provided on the basis of responses of the customers and observation of the researcher and the literature review.

The Municipality Corporation, traditional retailers, State government agency and other civic bodies should decide together to introduce adequate and modernised civic amenities and parking facilities for unstructured retail market in West Bengal. A system of underground multi-tier automated parking facilities may be installed for the unorganised retail market. This may reduce the congestion of vehicular traffic in overcrowded conveniently located market.

In some cases it has also been noticed that a few traditional retail outlets specially shops of garments, grocery, food & beverages, vegetables and fruits etc. have been operating successfully over the years but fail to develop any structural as well as decorative

modification. An attempt to upgrade overall ambience, the small retail outlets may concentrate to make the stores visually attractive by using prominent store signage, glow sign board, decorative store front, well painted wall, clean floors, neatly stacked racks, installation of air conditioner, eye catching display, use mannequin, soothing in store music and sufficient lighting. The trial room for garment shop is essential criteria to incorporate and proper space arrangement may help such outlets to retain their existing customers and also may attract new customer.

The traditional retailers should commence promotional offers like contest, discounts, loyalty programme, invite customers on special occasion celebration, offer gifts, maintain customer database for better customer relationship management. The sales persons in unorganised market should be well trained, friendly, tolerant, well behaved to make their customer happy.

At the entrance of the shopping centres and malls, small vendors, food stalls, kiosks, unstructured public transport system creates environmental pollution. They should be provided with a separate space for their business to maintain environmental serenity.

Today's business operation is almost techno-based which add more speed into the business transaction

by using billing machine and bar codes to increase customers' convenience.

The modern stores and malls as well traditional small organization can celebrate special days with thematic displays and proper arrangements like Independence Day, Christmas, , New Year's Eve, Valentine's day, Women's day, Father's day, Mother's day, Environmental day etc. A creatively designed shopping mall and a place for children entertainment in a mall may encourage customers to spend more time which may ultimately lead to more sales (Gray et al., 2014).

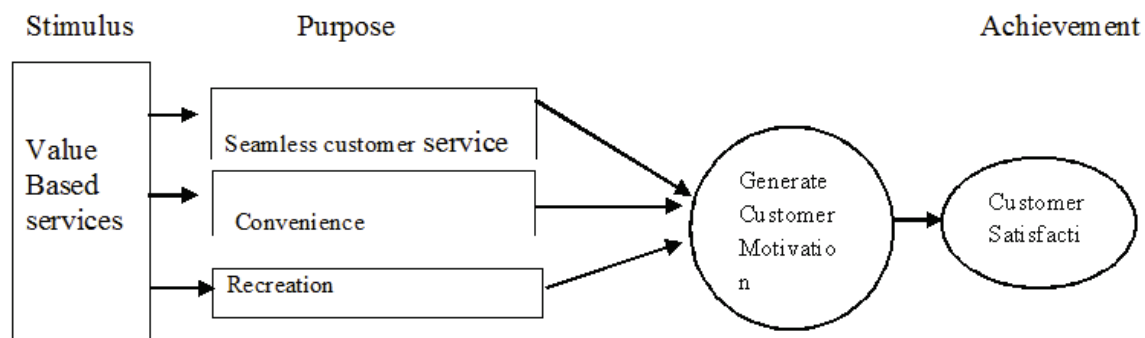
The recent trend of malls is to give emphasis on shopping- recreation combination in the competitive environment. Some unique attraction should be introduced to gain differential advantage (Leischnig et al., 2011). This may include arrangement of a car and motorbike shows, fashion shows, antique sale, holiday show, education week etc.

Mall developers can take initiatives to provide currency exchange booth and ATM facilities for both the domestic and foreign buyers to provide more

customers' convenience. It is recommended for the malls, shopping complexes to introduce retail outlets of handicrafts and artwork like terakota, dokra, clay model, silk, Kantha stitch, batik, and other attractive fabrics of different districts of West Bengal and other states of India. This will rejuvenate the traditional heritage and will inspire cottage industries of obsolete art and handicraft of West Bengal. In turn, this will attract people of different part of India as well as adjacent countries, especially from Bangladesh , Nepal, Bhutan etc , who come to Kolkata, Durgapur etc for education, business, leisure activities and commercial purposes.

The main purpose of value based services is to attract new customers to the stores and spend more time within the store which may lead to greater purchase of the products and also to build unique brand image.

Figure 1 indicates relationship between Retail value added services and customer satisfaction (SPA Model)



Scope of the study:

- An in depth study can be conducted on each of the attributes like in store ambience, customer service, display etc. present in the retail markets and its effect on buying behaviour
- It would be meaningful if researchers identify the effect of additional retail services on influencing impulsive buying behavior.
- The data can be collected from various states of India to conceptualise retail scenario , Retail services and customer responses as a whole

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