

Purchase Practices of Customers at Corporate Retail Outlets in Selected Cites of Andhra Pradesh

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ABSTRACT

Retailing is all about the distribution of goods and services because retailers play a key role in the journey that products make from a manufacturer, a grower or service-provider to the person who consumes. One of the significant factors responsible for the success of unorganized retail stores is the personal relations maintained by the shop keeper with his customers. This result is building up customer loyalty and customer relationship. The main objective of the study is to examine Purchase practices of Customers including Frequency of Shopping, Time Spending on Shopping, Purchase per visit, Lasting Customer Loyalty (LCL), Reasons for Continuity, Distance to Outlet, Superior Quality Products and Consistent Quality has been discussed. A survey was conducted to collect data. A sample size of 1245 customers was drawn from 59 retail outlets in select cities of Andhra Pradesh, namely Hyderabad, Vijayawada, and vizag. The questionnaire was administered for survey in 3 cities, for the period of March to December 2010. Above 41 per cent of the respondents visit less than 2 times per month, a little over 50 per cent spend half an hour to one hour in shopping, 84 per cent spend around Rs.3000 per each visit. Moreover, around 82.4 per cent of the respondents have been buying in the same outlet for the last four years at a stretch, about 45 per cent of the respondents selected the out let for gifts/complimentaries and around 85.5 per cent of the respondents have outlets 3 kms from their house.

Key Words: Purchase practices, Frequency of Shopping, Time Spending on Shopping, Purchase per visit.

INTRODUCTION

Dabholkar et. al (1996), suggests that convenience of the shopping and purchase practices are affected by the psychological aspects of a store and repeat transaction satisfaction effects global impression of the firm. **Byron Sharp and Anne Sharp(1997)** supports that changing the fundamental repeat-purchase patterns of markets is very difficult. How-ever, it is clearly possible to alter repeat-purchase patterns, at least to a small degree, and loyalty programs are bringing about such change. **Yuping Liu(2007)** expreed that long-term impact of a loyalty program on consumers' usage levels and their exclusive loyalty to the firm.

One of the significant factors responsible for the success of unorganized retail stores is the personal relations maintained by the shop keeper with his customers. This result is building up customer loyalty and customer relationship. This also results in the prosperity of the retail stores. Organized retail in India is a recent phenomenon and is still evolving. A growing presence is increasing *consumer awareness, accessibility and loyalty to brands*. This provides the opportunity of large and better-organized retailers to grow and develop. The Indian retail sector is going through a period of *consolidation* and fast changes. A number of new players-both domestic and foreign-are entering the industry. Driven by rising incomes, favourable demographics and changing lifestyles, the Indian retail industry is witnessing increased activity in terms of expansion with the entry of international brands and increasing focus on technology.

Retailing is all about the distribution of goods and services because retailers play a key role in the journey that products make from a manufacturer, a grower or service-provider to the person who consumes. One of the significant factors responsible for the success of unorganized retail stores is the personal relations maintained by the shop keeper with his customers. This result is building up customer loyalty and customer relationship. The Individual Purchase Capacity of Customers including Frequency of Shopping, Time Spending on Shopping, Purchase per visit, Lasting Customer Loyalty (LCL), Reasons for Continuity, Distance to Outlet, Superior Quality Products and Consistent Quality has been discussed. Above 41 per cent of the respondents visit less than 2 times per month, a little over 50 per cent spend half an hour to one hour in shopping, 84 per cent spend around Rs.3000 per each visit. Moreover, around 82.4 per cent of the respondents have been buying in the same outlet for the last four years at a stretch, about 45 per cent of the respondents selected the out let for gifts/complimentaries and around 85.5 per cent of the respondents have outlets 3 kms from their house.

The objective of the study:

To examine the purchase practices of customers like(Frequency of Shopping, Time Spending on Shopping, Purchase per visit, Length of customer relations, Reasons for Continuity)and their influence on customer loyalty.

Dabholkar et. al (1996), in their research on “The measure of service quality for retail stores”, reported the result of quantitative study that indicated the customer value, cleanliness and general appearance of the store and availability of public facilities such as rest rooms and fitting rooms. The research additionally suggests that customers are positively influenced by the convenience of the shopping that is affected by the psychological aspects of a store.

Further they found that repeat transaction satisfaction effects global impression of the firm, such as service quality in study of large grocery stores and the author also found that merchandise quality significantly effects customer loyalty.

Byron Sharp and Anne Sharp(1997) in their paper on **Loyalty programmes and their impact on repeat-purchase loyalty patterns**, opined that the loyalty programs are currently increasing in popularity around the world. This paper discusses the potential of loyalty programs to alter the normal market patterns of repeat-purchase behaviour which characterise competitive repeat-purchase markets. In line with this thinking, a large scale loyalty program is evaluated in terms of its ability to change normal repeat-purchase patterns by generating 'excess loyalty' for brands in the program. Overall a trend towards a weak level of excess loyalty was observed, although the expected deviation was not consistently observed for all the loyalty program brands. Only two of the six loyalty program participant brands showed substantial excess loyalty deviations. However, these deviations in repeat-purchase loyalty were observed for non-members of the loyalty program as well as members and appear likely to be at least partially the result of other loyalty efforts particular to these brands. They did not observe each and every loyalty program brand enjoying excess repeat-purchase, however, we did observe more excess loyalty deviations for loyalty program brands. Of the six loyalty program brands, only two showed substantial repeat-purchase loyalty deviations and both of these showed this deviation for non-members of the loyalty program as well as members suggesting another causal, perhaps additive, factor. In summary, our research supports those who have argued that changing the fundamental repeat-purchase patterns of markets is very difficult. However, it is clearly possible to alter repeat-purchase patterns, at least to a small degree, and loyalty programs are probably the only marketing effort which deliberately focuses on bringing about such change.

Anne W. Mägi(2003) in her article on **Share of wallet in retailing: the effects of customer satisfaction, loyalty cards and shopper characteristics**, expressed that In retailing, consumers typically patronize multiple outlets. Thus, an important issue is why consumers vary in how they divide their purchases across outlets and how outlets can get a greater share of consumer expenditures. Two potential avenues for increasing customer share are to raise customer satisfaction and increase repeat purchase through loyalty cards. This study examines the effects of customer satisfaction and loyalty cards as well as consumer characteristics on customer share spent on the primary grocery store. The findings suggest that customer satisfaction has a positive, albeit modest, effect on share while consumer economic shopping orientation has a negative direct effect on share. The economic orientation of shoppers, their felt importance of a personal relationship with store personnel, and the level of their aggregate purchase volume moderate the effect of satisfaction on customer share. Finally, the results provide mixed support for the impact of loyalty cards on customer behaviour. In this study, the economic shopping orientation was the motivational factor with the largest overall impact on customer share. However, it is possible that other motivational factors, such as the personalizing shopping orientation or the apathetic shopping orientation would be more prominent in other retail industries. For example, for retailers with a large emphasis on personal interaction, the personalizing orientation is more likely to have both a direct effect on customer share and possibly a stronger moderating effect on the satisfaction–share relationship.

Moreover, a preference for recreational shopping might well be important in many retail sectors: a consumer with a high recreational shopping orientation might distribute purchases across several stores despite being highly satisfied with each of them, as a result of a preference for spending time on shopping. In more general terms it should be important for all types of retailers to incorporate variables that are linked to consumers' preferred shopping styles when assessing how manageable variables such as satisfaction impact on customer share.

Oswald A. Mascarenhas, Ram Kesavan and Michael Bernacchi(2006) in their paper on **Lasting customer loyalty: a total customer experience approach**, worked for understanding and delivering total customer experience (TCE) in order to sustain lasting customer loyalty (LCL) is increasingly important given the pressures of commoditization, globalization and market saturation in developed countries. They reviewed the concepts of TCE and LCL. The concepts of TCE and LCL are discussed and defined and their combined importance for marketers is outlined and few key cases of their best practices are analyzed in order to derive a set of managerial frameworks for strategizing TCE to achieve LCL. Customer loyalty as a hierarchical ladder starting from random casual awareness in the bottom rung to high bonding loyalty of brand communities in the topmost rung is derived. They found that the TCE is captured in its three essential interactive elements: physical moments, emotional involvement moments, and its value chain moments. Accordingly, a typology of customer loyalties is proposed as a function of high vs low levels of the three constitutive elements of TCE. Practical implications – The loyalty ladder is a useful classification tool to monitor customer loyalty and dollar-effectiveness of customer loyalty programs. Each rung offers a managerial challenge to ascend to the next rung of loyalty. Linking TCE with LCL is unique and challenging. Adding the third dimension of value chain moments makes TCE more focused and loyalty-driven. The typology of TCE-based customer loyalty is new and offers a broad strategic canvas for marketers. The loyalty ladder with each rung buttressed by differentiated value, interactive relationship and TCE makes it credible, viable and a strategic destiny. TCE and LCL are also distinguished from related concepts in marketing to derive managerial implications. To realize the full benefit of delivering such experiences, businesses must deliberately design engaging experiences in what they produce, design and offer. Companies manage and compete best when they combine functional and emotional benefits in their offerings. Emotional bonds between companies and customers are difficult for competitors to imitate or sever.

Yuping Liu(2007) in his paper on **The Long-Term Impact of Loyalty Programs on Consumer Purchase Behaviour and Loyalty**, expressed that despite the prevalent use of loyalty programs, there is limited evidence on the long-term effects of such programs, and their effectiveness is not well established. The current research examines the long-term impact of a loyalty program on consumers' usage levels and their exclusive loyalty to the firm. Using longitudinal data from a convenience store franchise, the study shows that consumers who were heavy buyers at the beginning of a loyalty program were most likely to claim their qualified rewards, but the program did not prompt them to change their purchase behavior. In contrast, consumers whose initial patronage levels were low or moderate gradually purchased more and became more loyal to the firm. For light buyers, the loyalty program broadened their relationship with the firm into other business areas.

The findings suggest a need to consider consumer idiosyncrasies when studying loyalty programs and illustrate consumers' cocreation of value in the marketing process. This research examines the impact of a loyalty program on consumers' purchase behavior over a two-year period. It extends prior studies by explicitly modeling the dynamic change in consumers' spending levels and their behavioral loyalty to the store. The results suggest that depending on consumers' initial usage levels, the loyalty program had different effects on their behavior. Consumers who were heavy buyers at the beginning of the program were most likely to claim the rewards they earned and thus benefited the most from the program. However, their spending levels and exclusive loyalty to the store did not increase over time. In contrast, the loyalty program had positive effects on both light and moderate buyers' purchase frequencies and transaction sizes, and it made these consumers more loyal to the store. The most visible change for these two segments occurred within three months of joining the program, and the growth continued at a steady but slower pace in the following months. At the end of the analysis period, these consumers' average purchase frequencies were not statistically different from that of an adjacent tier. The diverse responses from consumers suggest a need to consider consumer idiosyncrasies when assessing the impact of loyalty programs. By their very nature, loyalty programs are one-to-one programs. How much a consumer can benefit from such a program depends on his or her "investment" in the relationship with the firm. However, this one-to-one nature of loyalty programs has not been thoroughly examined in existing research. A surprising finding from the current research is that consumers who started with low usage levels changed their behavior as much as or more than moderate and heavy buyers. This contradicts the commonly held belief that light buyers are less-than-ideal targets for loyalty programs and that they will not perceive much value in the program. In the current case, the loyalty program did not initially appear very attractive to light buyers. However, these consumers diversified their purchases and branched into the firm's other service areas. By claiming a higher portion of rewards, they also gradually invested more efforts into the program. Through these measures, the opportunity for these consumers to benefit from the loyalty program increased, further motivating them to spend more and patronize the store more exclusively.

METHODOLOGY

A questionnaire prepared was administered, among the customers who fall within the sample frame. Judgment sampling was used for identifying the retail outlets, whereas convenience sampling is used for picking the respondents in each outlet. Out of the total 238 retail stores in these 3 cities 59 outlets are taken for the purpose of this study. A total of 1245 responses are recorded from the customers of 3 retail outlets of Hyderabad, Vijayawada and Vizag Corporation in Andhra Pradesh. The stores were selected on the following condition:

- There should more than 3 supermarket chains within 1km radius
- The locations were selected on the basis of supermarket penetration in these cities

Table :1
Sample Size - No of Respondents

| City | Names of the Retail Stores | | | | | | | Total |
|--------------|----------------------------|----------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|------------|-----------|-------------|
| | Fresh @ | Reliance Fresh | Modern Supermarket | More Supermarket | Spencer's Daily | Food World | Nilgiris | |
| Hyderabad | 178 | 132 | 0 | 137 | 122 | 138 | 39 | 746 |
| Vijayawada | 0 | 72 | 48 | 69 | 23 | 0 | 0 | 212 |
| Vizag | 0 | 68 | 0 | 106 | 90 | 0 | 23 | 287 |
| Total | 178 | 272 | 48 | 312 | 235 | 138 | 62 | 1245 |

Agerage of 21 respondents per store

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Individual Purchase Capacity of Customers including Frequency of Shopping, Time Spending on Shopping, Purchase per visit, Lasting Customer Loyalty (LCL), Reasons for Continuity, Distance to Outlet, Superior Quality Products and Consistent Quality has been elicited and discussed in the present paper.

Frequency of Shopping

People visit to shops depending upon the purpose, necessity and circumstances. Higher the frequency of visits to shopping higher will be the need and necessity. The frequency of visits the respondents make has been elicited and presented in the table 1.

Table :2
Frequency of shopping in a month of the Respondents

| Frequency of shopping in a month | Location | | | Total |
|----------------------------------|-----------|------------|--------|--------|
| | Hyderabad | Vijayawada | Vizag | |
| < 2 times | 289 | 96 | 131 | 516 |
| | 38.7% | 45.3% | 45.6% | 41.4% |
| 2 - 4 times | 243 | 62 | 95 | 400 |
| | 32.6% | 29.2% | 33.1% | 32.1% |
| > 4 times | 89 | 11 | 29 | 129 |
| | 11.9% | 5.2% | 10.1% | 10.4% |
| Occasionally | 125 | 43 | 32 | 200 |
| | 16.8% | 20.3% | 11.1% | 16.1% |
| Total | 746 | 212 | 287 | 1,245 |
| | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

The table presents that 516 respondents (41.4%) visit less than two times per month, 400 respondents (32.1%) 2-4 times per month, and 129 respondents (10.4 %) more than 4 times per month and 200 respondents (16.1 %) visit occasionally. Around 45.6 per cent and 33.1 per cent of the respondents visit less than 2 times and 2-4 times per month in Vizag. On the contrary, around 12 per cent of the respondents in Hyderabad visit more than 4 times per month.

It is quite interesting to note that 20.3 per cent of the respondents in Vijayawada visit occasionally and above 41 per cent of the respondents visited less than 2 times per month.

Time Spending on Shopping

The people spend time on shopping depending upon the availability of time, need, more products purchase and running the stores with packed house. Sometimes the time spending on shopping varies from person to person and from shopping to shopping and from time and space. Moreover time spending times also depends on knowing more about the products information such as brand, lifespan, durability, cost of the product and incentives prizes offered etc. Higher time indicates longer decision making and lower time indicates emergency or pickle mindedness. The information on how much the respondents spend in shopping has presented in the table 2.

Table :3
Average time spent on shopping of the Respondents

| Average time spent on shopping | Location | | | Total |
|--------------------------------|-----------|------------|--------|--------|
| | Hyderabad | Vijayawada | Vizag | |
| Below 1/2 hour | 154 | 51 | 110 | 315 |
| | 20.6% | 24.1% | 38.3% | 25.3% |
| 1/2 - 1 hour | 377 | 115 | 134 | 626 |
| | 50.5% | 54.2% | 46.7% | 50.3% |
| 1 - 1 1/2 hour | 157 | 35 | 31 | 223 |
| | 21.0% | 16.5% | 10.8% | 17.9% |
| Above 1 1/2 hour | 58 | 11 | 12 | 81 |
| | 7.8% | 5.2% | 4.2% | 6.5% |
| Total | 746 | 212 | 287 | 1,245 |
| | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

The table expounds that 315 respondents (25.3 %) spend below half an hour, 626 respondents(50.3 %) spend just half an hour, 223 respondents (17.9 %) spend one to one and half an hour and 81 respondents(6.5%) spend above one and half an hour in shopping. Majority of the respondents (38.3 %) in Vizag spend below half an hour in shopping and majority of the respondents (7.8 %) in Hyderabad spend above one and half an hour in shopping. A little over 50 per cent of the respondents spend half an hour to one hour in shopping.

Table :4
Average purchase per visit of the Respondents

| Average purchase per visit (Rs.) | Location | | | Total |
|----------------------------------|-----------|------------|--------|--------|
| | Hyderabad | Vijayawada | Vizag | |
| < 1000 | 367 | 107 | 138 | 612 |
| | 49.2% | 50.5% | 48.1% | 49.2% |
| 1000 - 3000 | 258 | 75 | 100 | 433 |
| | 34.6% | 35.4% | 34.8% | 34.8% |
| 3000 - 5000 | 74 | 15 | 26 | 115 |
| | 9.9% | 7.1% | 9.1% | 9.2% |
| > 5000 | 47 | 15 | 23 | 85 |
| | 6.3% | 7.1% | 8.0% | 6.8% |
| Total | 746 | 212 | 287 | 1,245 |
| | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

Purchase per visit

People visit shops for acquiring required products and purchase the products of both consumables and external uses. The average purchase per visit depends on the emergency, need, availability of time, purse permit, income and pressure of the members of the family. The average purchase per visit of the respondents has been elicited and presented in the table 3.

The table presents that 612 respondents (49.2%) spend an amount of less than Rs.1000 as an average purchase per visit, 433 respondents (34.8 %) spend Rs.1000-3000, 115 respondents (9.2 %) spend Rs.3000-5000 and mere 85 respondents (6.8 %) spend above Rs.5000 as an average purchase per visit. The table also presents that more than 50 per cent of the respondents in Vijayawada spend less than Rs.1000 as an average purchase per visit and 8 per cent of the respondents in Vizag spend above Rs.5000 per each visit. By and large, 84 per cent of the respondents spend around Rs.3000 per each visit.

Lasting Customer Loyalty (LCL)

The period of buying in the same outlet shows the good will of the outlet and customer’s belief over the outlet. The information from the respondents over the period of buying essential goods in the same outlet for quite long time has been elicited and presented in the table 4.

Table 4
Period of buying of the Respondents

| Period of buying | Location | | | Total |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|--------|--------|
| | Hyderabad | Vijayawada | Vizag | |
| Below 2 years | 344 | 111 | 173 | 628 |
| | 46.1% | 52.4% | 60.3% | 50.4% |
| 2 to 4 years | 259 | 61 | 79 | 399 |
| | 34.7% | 28.8% | 27.5% | 32.0% |
| 4 to 6 years | 62 | 22 | 14 | 98 |
| | 8.3% | 10.4% | 4.9% | 7.9% |
| 6 years and above | 81 | 18 | 21 | 120 |
| | 10.9% | 8.5% | 7.3% | 9.6% |
| Total | 746 | 212 | 287 | 1,245 |
| | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

The table shows that 628 respondents (50.4 %) have been buying for below 2 years, 399 respondents (32 %) have been buying for 2 - 4 years, 98 respondents (7.9 %) have been buying for 4-6 years and 120 respondents (9.6 %) have been buying for 6 and above years. Above 60 per cent of the respondents in Vizag have been buying for below 2 years and 10.9 per cent of the respondents in Hyderabad have been buying for 6 and above years in the same outlet. Around 82.4 per cent of the respondents have been buying in the same outlet for the last four years at a stretch.

Reasons for Continuity

The outlets amply attract the customers by myriad modes of offers, novel attractions, recreation facilities, free delivery of provision, and goodwill over the outlet etc. The reasons for the selection of outlet has been derived from the respondents and presented in the table 5

Table 5
Reasons for Selection of Same Outlet of the Respondents

| Reason for selecting the outlet | Location | | | Total |
|---------------------------------|-----------|------------|--------|--------|
| | Hyderabad | Vijayawada | Vizag | |
| Air condition | 168 | 32 | 80 | 280 |
| | 22.5% | 15.1% | 27.9% | 22.5% |
| Snacks available | 130 | 44 | 23 | 197 |
| | 17.4% | 20.8% | 8.0% | 15.8% |
| Gifts / Complimentaries given | 305 | 114 | 146 | 565 |
| | 40.9% | 53.8% | 50.9% | 45.4% |
| Children's play place | 85 | 21 | 31 | 137 |
| | 11.4% | 9.9% | 10.8% | 11.0% |
| Others | 58 | 1 | 7 | 66 |
| | 7.8% | 0.5% | 2.4% | 5.3% |
| Total | 746 | 212 | 287 | 1,245 |
| | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

The table portrays that air condition is the reasons for 280 respondents (22.5 %) for selecting the outlet, availability of snacks is the reason for 197 respondents (15.8 %), gifts/complimentaries given is the major reasons for majority of the respondents, i.e.565 (45.4 %), children’s play place is the reason for 137 respondents (11 %) and 66 respondents (5.3 %) have other reasons for selecting the outlet. About 45 per cent of the respondents selected the out let for gifts/complimentaries.

Distance to Outlet

Distance of the outlet from home is one of the indicators of the purchasing capacity of the customer and business performance of the outlet. Longer the distance of outlet from the house lower will be purchasing opportunity and vice-versa. The information on the distance of the outlet from home of the customers has been derived from the respondents and presented in the table 6.

Table 6
Distance to Outlet of the Respondents

| Distance to Outlet | Location | | | Total |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|--------|--------|
| | Hyderabad | Vijayawada | Vizag | |
| Below 1 km | 361 | 124 | 204 | 689 |
| | 48.4% | 58.5% | 71.1% | 55.3% |
| 1 to 3 km | 252 | 66 | 58 | 376 |
| | 33.8% | 31.1% | 20.2% | 30.2% |
| 3 - 5 km | 88 | 18 | 19 | 125 |
| | 11.8% | 8.5% | 6.6% | 10.0% |
| 5 km and above | 45 | 4 | 6 | 55 |
| | 6.0% | 1.9% | 2.1% | 4.4% |
| Total | 746 | 212 | 287 | 1,245 |
| | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

The table quite obviously shows that 689 respondents (55.3 %) have the outlets at less than 1 km, 376 respondents (30.2 %) have the outlets at 1-3 km, 125 respondents (10 %) have the outlets at 3-5 km and mere 55 respondents (4.4 %) have the outlets 5 above kms. Majority of the respondents (71.1 %) in Vizag have outlets just at less than 1 km and 6 per cent of the respondents in Hyderabad have outlets at a distance of 5 and above kms. Around 85.5 per cent of the respondents have outlets 3 kms from their house.

Superior Quality Products

Superior quality of products, if any outlet distributes, the customers throng to the outlets and the business will flourish. The information on whether the retailer offers products of superior quality has been elicited from the respondents and presented in the table 7

Table 7
Superior Quality Products of the Respondents

| Level of Agreedness | Location | | | Total |
|------------------------------|-----------|------------|--------|--------|
| | Hyderabad | Vijayawada | Viza g | |
| Disagree totally | 45 | 0 | 2 | 47 |
| | 6.0% | 0.0% | 0.7% | 3.8% |
| Disagree some what | 118 | 13 | 39 | 170 |
| | 15.8% | 6.1% | 13.6% | 13.7% |
| Neither agreed nor disagreed | 331 | 70 | 87 | 488 |
| | 44.4% | 33.0% | 30.3% | 39.2% |
| Agree Some what | 84 | 69 | 101 | 254 |
| | 11.3% | 32.5% | 35.2% | 20.4% |
| Totally agree | 168 | 60 | 58 | 286 |
| | 22.5% | 28.3% | 20.2% | 23.0% |
| Total | 746 | 212 | 287 | 1,245 |
| | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

The table presents that 47 respondents(3.8 %) totally disagreed that the retailer offers products of superior quality, 170 respondents(13.7 %) disagreed somewhat that the retailer offers products of superior quality, 488 respondents(39.2 %) neither agreed nor disagreed that the retailer offers products of superior quality, 254 respondents(20.4 %) agreed somewhat that the retailer offers products of superior quality and 286 respondents(23 %) totally agreed that the retailer offers products of superior quality. Above 44 per cent of the respondents in Hyderabad neither agreed nor disagreed that the retailer offers products of superior quality and 28.3 per cent of the respondents in Vijayawada totally agreed that the retailer offers products of superior quality. Above all, 39.2 per cent of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that the retailer offers products of superior quality.

Consistent Quality

The quality of the products a retailer sells amply attracts the ample customers and this is the secret of the business. The information on whether the products the respondents buy from this retailer are of consistent quality has been elicited and presented in the table 8.

Table 8
Consistent Quality of Products of the Respondents

| Level of Agreedness | Location | | | Total |
|------------------------------|-----------|------------|--------|--------|
| | Hyderabad | Vijayawada | Vizag | |
| Disagree totally | 22 | 0 | 0 | 22 |
| | 2.9% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 1.8% |
| Disagree some what | 121 | 6 | 24 | 151 |
| | 16.2% | 2.8% | 8.4% | 12.1% |
| Neither agreed nor disagreed | 301 | 90 | 127 | 518 |
| | 40.3% | 42.5% | 44.3% | 41.6% |
| Agree Some what | 235 | 76 | 79 | 390 |
| | 31.5% | 35.8% | 27.5% | 31.3% |
| Totally agree | 67 | 40 | 57 | 164 |
| | 9.0% | 18.9% | 19.9% | 13.2% |
| Total | 746 | 212 | 287 | 1,245 |
| | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

The table expounds that all the 22 respondents (1.8%) hailing from Hyderabad totally disagreed that that the products the respondents buy from this retailer are of consistent quality, 151 respondents (12.1%) disagreed somewhat, 518 respondents (41.6 %) neither agreed nor disagreed and 390 respondents (31.3 %) agreed somewhat that the products the respondents buy from this retailer is of consistent quality. On the contrary 164 respondents (13.2 %) have totally agreed that the products the respondents buy from this retailer is of consistent quality. It is concluded that 42 per cent of the respondents have neither agreed nor disagreed that the products the respondents buy from this retailer are of consistent quality.

CONCLUSION

Retailing is an activity concerned with getting goods in the finished state into the hands of the customers who are prepared to pay for the pleasure of eating, wearing or experiencing particular product items. The Individual Purchase Capacity of Customers including Frequency of Shopping, Time Spending on Shopping, Purchase per visit, Lasting Customer Loyalty (LCL), Reasons for Continuity, Distance to Outlet, Superior Quality Products and Consistent Quality has been elicited and discussed in the present paper. Above 41 per cent of the respondents visit less than 2 times per month. A little over 50 per cent of the respondents spend half an hour to one hour in shopping. By and large, 84 per cent of the respondents spend around Rs.3000 per each visit. . Around 82.4 per cent of the respondents have been buying in the same outlet for the last four years at a stretch. About 45 per cent of the respondents selected the out let for gifts/complimentaries. Around 85.5 per cent of the respondents have outlets 3 kms from their house. Above all, 39.2 per cent of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that the retailer offers products of superior quality. About 42 per cent of the respondents have neither agreed nor disagreed that the products the respondents buy from this retailer are of consistent quality.

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