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A STUDY ON CUSTOMERS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS RETAIL SHOPS IN TIRUCHIRAPPALLI TOWN

Dr. G. Ravishankar[1] and R. Sathishkumar[2]
[1]M.Com., M.Phil., MBA., Ph.D., Assistant Professor in Commerce
PG and Research Department of Commerce MIET Arts and Science College
Gundur, Tiruchirappalli, Tamilnadu.
[2]M.Com., M.Phil., (Ph.D.), Doctoral Research Scholar, Department of Commerce, Annamalai University, Annamalainagar.

ABSTRACT

In modern era, customers play a dominant role in the market. The producers and retail shops should satisfied the customer needs and wants then only the product and market will be sustained in long duration in its life. So the present study is taken into consideration for analysing the various facilities and offers provided by the retail shops to their customers and this present study assess the customers' perception toward the retail shops located in main town in Tiruchirappali District. For the analysis purpose the researcher approach the 480 customers from 25 retail shops by adopting purposive stratified random sampling method from September 2016 to March 2017. The researched uses simple percentage and 5 point liker-scale techniques to analyse the data which is collected from the respective respondents. The present study suggested some suggestions to improve the services and offers which is provided by the stores and tells some new points which are not followed by the retail shops.

KEY WORDS: Customers, Facilities, Products, Retail shops.

INTRODUCTION

In the business environment Customer Relationship Management is a known concept and every entrepreneur and executive of any organization cannot afford to ignore this aspect for business sustenance and growth. The influence of aspects like increasing demands of sophisticated customers, shortened product life cycles and improvements in production/processing capacities elevated more aggressive environment that companies operate. This has become more important to service sectors where companies must address intangible products. Determining these tremendous challenges, service organizations seek to provide valuable services to their customers. As companies' business strategies become more customer oriented with evolution of mass customization and personalized services, information technologies are also used to serve customers. Rapid advances in information and communication technology provide greater opportunities for the companies to establish nurture and sustain long term relationship with their customers than before. Their main objective is to convert these relationships into profitability by reducing acquisition costs and increase repeated purchases.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In modern era, customers play a dominant role in the market. The producers and retail shops should satisfied the customer needs and wants then only the product and market will be sustained in long duration in its life. So the present study is taken into consideration for analysing the various facilities and offers provided by the retail shops to their customers and this present study assess the customers' perception toward the retail shops located in main town in Tiruchirappalli District.

METHODOLOGY

The present study is taken into consideration for analysing the various facilities and offers provided by the retail shops to their customers and this present study assess the customers' perception toward the retail shops located in main town in Tiruchirappalli District. For the analysis purpose the researcher approach the 480 customers from 25 retail shops by adopting purposive stratified random sampling method from September 2016 to March 2017. The researched uses simple percentage and 5 point liker-scale techniques to analyse the data which is collected from the respective respondents.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table – 1: Respondents Age

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Up to 20	113	23.5
21 to 30	146	30.4
31 to 40	80	16.7
Above 40	141	29.4

Source: Primary Data

From the above, it is observed that the majority of the respondents (30.4 per cent and 29.4 per cent) were between 21 and 30 years and have 40 years of age. It reveals that the respondents' age is the basis for their purchasing activity in modern retail consumer market.

Table-2: Gender Classification of the Respondents

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Male	208	43.3
Female	272	56.7

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that the majority of the respondents (56.7 per cent) were female. It shows that gender plays significant rate in purchasing activity, since number of female respondents is more than male respondents.

Table – 3: Educational Qualification

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Below 10th	127	26.5
10th to 12th	132	27.5
Graduate	111	23.1
Post graduate	110	22.9

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that the majority of the total respondents (26.5 per cent and 27.5 per cent) educational qualification is below higher secondary level. It reveals that the literacy level plays a significant role in purchasing activity in modern retail consumer market.

Table – 4: Occupation wise classification

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Govt./Official	87	18.1
Business	111	23.1
Professional	94	19.6
Private sector	68	14.2
Housewife	45	9.4
Others	75	15.6

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that significant numbers of respondents (23.1 per cent and 19.6 per cent) are professional and business persons. It reveals that the occupation plays an important role in purchasing activity in modern retail consumer market.

Table - 5: Income Wise Classification

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Rs.5000 to 10000	137	28.5
Rs.10001 to 20000	153	31.9
Rs.20001 to 30000	135	28.1
Above Rs.30000	55	11.5

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that the majority of the respondents (28.5 per cent, 31.9 per cent and 28.1 per cent) monthly income is between Rs.50000 and Rs.30000. It shows that the high income group (above Rs.30000) shows less interest in purchasing activity in modern retail consumer market. It reveals that high income plays a negative role in purchasing activity in modern consumer market.

Table – 6: Number of Members in family

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
2 to 4 members	162	33.8
5 to 7 members	117	24.4
Above 7 members	201	41.8

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that the majority of the total respondents (41.8 per cent) family consisted of more than 7 members. It reveals that the number of family members plays a significant role in purchasing activity.

Table - 7: Shopping companion

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Alone	122	25.4
With spouse	122	25.4
With family	129	26.9
With friends	107	22.3

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that the majority of the total respondents (25.4, 26.9 and 22.3 per cent) went for shopping with others. It reveals that shopping companions plays a significant role in purchase activities.

Table – 8: Reason for choosing the store

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Large variety of products	87	18.1
Service provided is good	77	16.0
Reasonable price	76	15.8
Good store environment	124	25.8
Parking facilities	30	6.3
Convenient locations	50	10.4
Others please specify	36	7.5

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that significant number of respondents (25.6 per cent) choose a particular store for good store environment. It reveals that among various factors for choosing a store, the factor of good store environment stood first.

Table – 9: Frequency of visiting the store in a month

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Once	96	20.0
Twice	123	25.6
Thrice	141	29.4
Frequent	120	25.0

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that the majority of the respondents (25.6, 29.4 and 25.0 per cent) visited the store more than twice in a month. It reveals that multiple visits are needed to fulfil monthly purchase.

Table – 10: Amount spent on purchase per visit

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Below Rs. 5000	138	28.8
Rs.5000 to 10000	167	34.7
Above Rs.10000	175	36.5

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that significant number of respondents (36.5 per cent) spent more than Rs.10000 per visit to the store. It reveals the purchasing capacity of the respondents.

Table – 11: Introduction of the store

Particulars	No .of respondents	Percentage
Relative	74	15.4
Neighbours	101	21.0
Advertisement	184	38.4
Friends	121	25.2

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that the largest section of the respondents (38.4 per cent) knew about the particular store by advertisement. It reveals that advertisement plays a major role in introducing the store to the customer.

Table – 12: Mode of payment on purchase

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Cash	83	17.3
Credit card	101	21.0
Cheque	135	28.1
Other	161	33.6

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that significant number of respondents (33.6 per cent) used other mode of payment apart from conventional modes, cash, credit card and cheque, of payment on purchase. It reveals the customers preference of the mode of payment is non conventional.

Table – 13: Recommendation of stores to others

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly don't recommend	69	14.4
Don't recommend	102	21.3
Somewhat recommended	170	35.4
Recommended	40	8.3
Strongly recommended	99	20.6

Source: Primary Data

The above table concluded that the majority of the respondents (35.4, 8.3 and 20.6 per cent) recommend the store to others in various degrees. It reveals that the store somewhat satisfied the existing customers that is why the majority of them recommend the store to others. This factor increases the customer base of the store.

Table – 14: Plan to switch over to other stores

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	242	50.4
No	238	49.6

Source: Primary Data

Out of the total 480 respondents, 242 respondents (50.4 per cent) planned to switch over to other store and 238 respondents (49.6 per cent) did not planned to switchover to other stores.It is concluded that majority of the respondents (50.4 per cent) planned to switch over to other store. It reveals that majority of the customers are dissatisfied with the store.

Table – 15: Opinion about the modern looking equipment and fixtures

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	58	12.1
Disagree	69	14.4
Somewhat agree	25	5.2
Agree	148	30.8
Strongly agree	180	37.5

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows the classification of the respondents on the basis of their opinion. Out of the total 480 respondents, 58 respondents (12.1 per cent) strongly disagreed the stores visual attractiveness; 69 respondents (14.4 per cent) disagreed; 148 respondents (30.8 per cent) agreed and 180 respondents (37.5 per cent) strongly agreed about the visual attractiveness of the store because of the modern looking equipment and fixtures. It is concluded that the majority of the respondents (5.2, 30.8 and 37.5 per cent) had an opinion that the store is visually attractive.

Table – 16: Opinion of store and details of products displayed

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	77	16.0
Disagree	103	21.5
Somewhat agree	49	10.2
Agree	146	30.4
Strongly agree	105	21.9

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that the majority of the respondents (10.2, 30.4 and 21.9 per cent) had an opinion that the stores layout and product display were neat.

Table – 17: Opinion about materials is visually appealing

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	69	14.4
Disagree	93	19.4
Somewhat agree	67	14.0
Agree	96	20.0
Strongly agree	155	32.3

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that majority of the respondents (14, 20 and 32.3 per cent) agreed that the materials associated with store services are visually appealing in various degrees.

Table – 18: Opinion about the store

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	63	13.1
Disagree	61	12.7
Somewhat agree	70	14.6
Agree	132	27.5
Strongly agree	154	32.1

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that the majority of the respondents (14.6, 27.5 and 32.1 per cent) agreed in various degrees that the decorating of the store make them feel good and welcoming.

Table – 19: Opinion about the convenience to do one stops shopping

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	57	11.9
Disagree	101	21.0
Somewhat agree	38	7.9
Agree	149	31.0
Strongly agree	135	28.2

Source: Primary Data

The above table concluded that the majority of the respondents (7.9, 31 and 28.1 per cent) of the opinion that doing one stop shopping at the store is convenient.

Table – 20: Opinion about the cleanliness and tidiness

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	68	14.2
Disagree	106	22.1
Somewhat agree	72	15.0
Agree	108	22.4
Strongly agree	126	26.3

Source: Primary Data

The above table concluded that the majority of the respondents (15, 22.4 and 26.3 per cent) favourably respondent in their opinion about the stores priority regarding cleanliness and tidiness.

Table - 21: Opinion about the play area for children

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	80	16.7
Disagree	80	16.7
Somewhat agree	96	20.0
Agree	96	20.0
Strongly agree	128	26.7

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that the majority of the respondents (20, 20 and 26.7 per cent) had favourable opinion about providing play area for children by the stores.

Table – 22: Opinion about the vehicle parking area

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	78	16.3
Disagree	75	16.6
Somewhat agree	79	16.5
Agree	107	22.3
Strongly agree	141	29.3

Source: Primary Data

The above concluded that the majority of the respondents (16.5, 22.3 and 29.3 per cent) had favourable opinion about providing convenient vehicle parking facility by the store.

Table – 23: Opinion about the layout of the store

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	63	13.1
Disagree	61	12.7
Somewhat agree	70	14.6
Agree	165	34.4
Strongly agree	121	25.2

Source: Primary Data

The above table concluded that the majority of the respondents (34.4 and 25.2 per cent) favourably agreed that the layout of the store make it easier for the customer to move around in the store.

Table – 24: Opinion about the atmosphere

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	79	16.5
Disagree	99	20.5
Somewhat agree	60	12.5
Agree	127	26.5
Strongly agree	115	24.0

Source: Primary Data

The above table concluded that the majority of the respondents (12.5, 26.5 and 24 per cent) agreed in various degrees the atmosphere of the department store is good and well coming.

Table - 25: Opinion about the toilets, drinking water, rest rooms

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	84	17.5
Disagree	84	17.5
Somewhat agree	92	19.2
Agree	98	20.4
Strongly agree	122	25.4

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows the classification of the respondents on the basis of their opinion. It is concluded that the majority of the respondents (19.2, 20.4 and 25.4 per cent) agreed that hygienic toilets, protected drinking water, rest rooms and fitting rooms are provided by the store to the customers.

Table – 26: Opinion about the overall environment

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	58	12.1
Disagree	88	18.3
Somewhat agree	63	13.1
Agree	123	25.6
Strongly agree	148	30.8

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows the classification of the respondents on the basis of their opinion. It is concluded that the majority of the respondents (13.1, 25.6 and 30.8 per cent) favourably opined that the overall environment of the store is stimulating for their purchase intention.

Table – 27: Opinion about the prompt service of the employee

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	81	16.9
Disagree	86	17.9
Somewhat agree	69	14.4
Agree	105	21.9
Strongly agree	139	29.0

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows the classification of the respondents on the basis of their opinion. It is concluded that the majority of the respondents (14.4, 21.9 and 29 per cent) favourably opined that the service by the employee in store is prompt.

Table – 28: Opinion about the employee's knowledge to consumer questions

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	74	15.4
Disagree	75	15.6
Somewhat agree	8	1.7
Agree	163	34.0
Strongly agree	160	33.3

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows the classification of the respondents on the basis of their opinion. It is concluded that the majority of the respondents (34 and 33.3 per cent) responded positively about the store employee's knowledge to answering consumer questions.

Table – 29: Opinion about the employee's tells customer service rendered

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	78	16.3
Disagree	93	19.4
Somewhat agree	56	11.5
Agree	127	26.5
Strongly agree	126	26.3

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows the classification of the respondents on the basis of their opinion. It is concluded that the majority of the respondents (19.4, 26.5 and 26.3 per cent) agreed in various degrees employees' truthfulness to the customers regarding the service provided by the store.

Table – 30: Opinion about the employee's courteous and humbleness with customer

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	77	16.0
Disagree	82	17.1
Somewhat agree	73	15.2
Agree	101	21.0
Strongly agree	147	30.6

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows the classification of the respondents on the basis of their opinion. It is concluded that the majority of the respondents (17.1 , 21 and 30.6 per cent) favourably opined that the employees of the store and courteous and humble in behaviour to customer.

Table – 31: Opinion about the employee's cooperative and customer friendly

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	61	12.7
Disagree	89	18.5
Somewhat agree	66	13.8
Agree	122	25.4
Strongly agree	142	29.6

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows the classification of the respondents on the basis of their opinion. It is concluded that the majority of the respondents (13.8, 25.4 and 29.6 per cent) positively responded about the employees cooperative and customer friendly approach towards customers.

Table - 32: Opinion about the customer feels safe in transaction

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	81	16.9
Disagree	103	21.5
Somewhat agree	39	8.1
Agree	147	30.6
Strongly agree	110	22.9

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows the classification of the respondents on the basis of their opinion. It is concluded that the majority of the respondents (8.1, 30.6 and 22.9 per cent) opined that they feel safe in their transaction with the store.

Table - 33: Opinion about the individual attention to customers

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	71	14.8
Disagree	106	22.1
Somewhat agree	68	14.2
Agree	122	25.4
Strongly agree	113	23.5

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows the classification of the respondents on the basis of their opinion. It is concluded that the majority of the respondents (14.2, 25.4 and 23.5 per cent) positively responded that the store pay individual attention to customers.

Table – 34: Opinion about the employee's courteously answer to customer

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	88	18.3
Disagree	75	15.6
Somewhat agree	63	13.1
Agree	107	22.3
Strongly agree	147	30.6

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows the classification of the respondents on the basis of their opinion. It is concluded that the majority of the respondents (13.1, 22.3 and 30.6 per cent) had favourable opinion that employees courteously answered telephone enquiries.

Table – 35: Opinion about the extends its services at the time it promises to do so

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	61	12.7
Disagree	104	21.7
Somewhat agree	88	18.3
Agree	101	21.0
Strongly agree	126	26.3

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows the classification of the respondents on the basis of their opinion. It is concluded that the majority of the respondents (18.3, 21 and 26.3 per cent) agreed in various degrees that the store extends services at the time it promises to do so.

Table - 36: Opinion about the error free sale transaction

Particulars	No of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	63	13.1
Disagree	59	12.3
Somewhat agree	39	8.1
Agree	125	26.0
Strongly agree	194	40.4

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows the classification of the respondents on the basis of their opinion. It is concluded that the majority of respondents (8.1, 24 and 40.4 per cent) overwhelmingly agreed that the store insists error free sale transactions and records.

Table - 37: Opinion about the free door delivery facility

Particulars	No of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	69	14.4
Disagree	102	21.3
Somewhat agree	69	14.4
Agree	150	31.3
Strongly agree	90	18.6

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows the classification of the respondents on the basis of their opinion. It is concluded that the majority of the respondents (14.4, 31.3 and 18.6per cent) positively responded that the store provides free door delivery facility on request.

Table – 38: Opinion about the prices of products offered is less than MRP and no hidden prices

Particulars	No of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	89	18.5
Disagree	86	17.9
Somewhat agree	77	16.0
Agree	102	21.3
Strongly agree	126	26.3

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows the classification of the respondents on the basis of their opinion. It is concluded that the majority of the respondents (16, 21.3 and 26.3 per cent) agreed in various degrees that the store offered less than MRP and no hidden prices on the products.

Table - 39: Opinion about the updating the prices at appropriate time

Particulars	No of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	72	15.0
Disagree	70	14.6
Somewhat agree	43	9.0
Agree	140	29.2
Strongly agree	155	32.2

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows the classification of the respondents on the basis of their opinion. It is concluded that the majority of the respondents (9, 29.2 and 32.2 per cent) agreed in various degrees that the store updates the prices of the products at appropriate time.

Table – 40: Opinion about the more payment counters for speedy transaction

Particulars	No of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	76	15.7
Disagree	103	21.5
Somewhat agree	67	14.0
Agree	131	27.3
Strongly agree	103	21.5

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows the classification of the respondents on the basis of their opinion. It is concluded that the majority of the respondents (14, 27.3 and 21.5 per cent) agreed in various degrees that the stores provides more payment counters and bills delivered promptly favouring speedy transactions.

Table - 41: Opinion about the suggestions from customers

Particulars	No of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	79	16.5
Disagree	70	14.6
Somewhat agree	91	19.0
Agree	106	22.1
Strongly agree	134	27.8

Source: Primary Data

The above table concluded that the majority of the respondents (19, 22.1 and 27.8per cent) agreed in various degrees that the store receives suggestions from customers with due respect.

Table - 42: Opinion about the credit/debit/loyalty cards

Particulars	No of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	67	14.0
Disagree	52	10.8
Somewhat agree	87	18.1
Agree	103	21.5
Strongly agree	171	35.6

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that the majority of the respondents (18.1, 21.5 and 35.6 per cent) variously agreed that the store accepts credit, debit and loyalty cards.

Table - 43: Opinion about the convenient operating hours

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	64	13.3
Disagree	76	15.8
Somewhat agree	24	5.0
Agree	142	29.6
Strongly agree	174	36.3

Source: Primary Data

Out of the total 480 respondents, 64 respondents (13.3 per cent) strongly disagreed; 76 respondents (15.8 per cent) disagreed; 24 respondents (5 per cent) somewhat agreed; 142 respondents (29.6 per cent) agreed and 174 respondents (36.3 per cent) strongly agreed about the operating hours of the store which are convenient to the customers.

Table – 44: Opinion about the free and complementary goods

Particulars	No of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	82	17.1
Disagree	114	23.8
Somewhat agree	57	11.8
Agree	137	28.5
Strongly agree	90	18.8

Source: Primary Data

Out of the total 480 respondents, 82 respondents (17.1 per cent) strongly disagreed; 114 respondents (23.8 per cent) disagreed; 57 respondents (11.8 per cent) somewhat agreed; 137 respondents (28.5 per cent) agreed and 90 respondents (18.8 per cent) strongly agreed regarding the supply of free and complimentary goods to the customers without fail.

Table – 45: Opinion about the items stated in offers, promotion catalogues are same

Particulars	No of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	85	17.7
Disagree	88	18.3
Somewhat agree	86	17.9
Agree	84	17.5
Strongly agree	137	28.6

Source: Primary Data

Out of the total 480 respondents, 85 respondents (17.7 per cent) strongly disagreed; 88 respondents (18.3 per cent) disagreed; 86 respondents (17.9 per cent) somewhat agreed; 84 respondents (17.5 per cent) agreed and 137 respondents (28.6 per cent) strongly agreed regarding the sameness of items received as the items offered and stated in the promotion catalogues by the stores.

Table – 46: Opinion about the entertain return and exchange

Particulars	No of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	59	12.3
Disagree	33	6.9
Somewhat agree	91	19.0
Agree	99	20.5
Strongly agree	198	41.3

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows the classification of the respondents on the basis of their opinion. It is concluded that the majority of the respondents (19, 20.5 and 41.3 per cent) opined that the store willingly entertain return and exchange of commodities.

Table – 47: Opinion about the interest in solving problems

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	133	27.7
Disagree	93	19.4
Somewhat agree	108	22.5
Agree	83	17.3
Strongly agree	63	13.1

Source: Primary Data

Out of the total 480 respondents, 133 respondents (27.7 per cent) strongly disagreed; 93 respondents (19.4 per cent) disagreed; 108 respondents (22.5 per cent) somewhat agreed; 83 respondents

(17.3 per cent) agreed and 63 respondents (13.1 per cent) strongly agreed regarding showing interest in solving customer's problem by the store.

Table – 48: Opinion about the services provided by store meets with my needs

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly disagree	67	14.0
Disagree	79	16.5
Somewhat agree	38	7.8
Agree	121	25.2
Strongly agree	175	36.5

Source: Primary Data

It is concluded that the majority of the respondents (7.8, 25.2 and 36.5 per cent) variously agreed that the service provided by the store meets with their needs.

CONCLUSION

Customers are king of the market. Satisfying the customer by providing more facility is very difficult task because the need and want of them is differ from person to person so the retail shop owners take necessary action to satisfy the customers' needs according to their perception then only they will sustain the market in long run.

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Dr. G. Ravishankar
M.Com., M.Phil., MBA., Ph.D., Assistant Professor in Commerce , PG and Research Department of Commerce MIET Arts and Science College , Gundur, Tiruchirappalli, Tamilnadu.