A CRITICAL STUDY OF PET STORE RETAIL BUSINESS WITH REFERENCE TO COIMBATORE DISTRICT

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Abstract
Pet Store Industry is a unique and innovative form of retailing. New products, new formats and new technologies have always been elements any progressive retailer has had to embrace and successfully integrate into its core strategies. Growing urbanization, and increase in disposable incomes have contributed significantly to the increase in number of households owning pets. Market size, activity and dominance of product markets, such as, dog food, and cat food tend to vary across regional markets. The study revealed that pet store owners' are highly motivated to start the pet business by self interest and self motivation. They have to give importance for money back guarantee for the products and service availed in their pet store. Majority of the pet retailer created awareness through word of mouth to their pet store. The owners' have the problem of short span of life for the products in their pet store and diseased caused to them by the pets.

Key Words: Pet Retailer, Pet Store, Promotion Strategies, Pets and Motivation.

Introduction

Pet Store Industry is a unique and innovative form of retailing. New products, new formats and new technologies have always been elements any progressive retailer has had to embrace and successfully integrate into its core strategies. Driven by the increase in the number of single-member/nuclear families, and lower birth rates, and the consequential treatment of animals as part of the family, pet food is today one of the fastest growing sectors of the food industry. Growing urbanization, and increase in disposable incomes have contributed significantly to the increase in number of households owning pets. Market size, activity and dominance of product markets, such as, dog food, and cat food tend to vary across regional markets. But more and more retail outlets and supermarkets started emerging as viable distribution channels. Pet stores sell a variety of pets, including dogs, cats, fish and birds. Stores also sell pet foods and pet supplies, such as collars, leashes, health and beauty aids, shampoos, medication, toys, pet containers, dog kennels and cat furniture. Some stores also offer pet services such as grooming and training also.

IBIS World estimates that margins have increased from about 3.0% of revenue in 2008 to about 3.5% in 2013. In the five years to 2018, the Pet Stores industry is projected to maintain strong growth and industry revenue is forecast to rise at an average annual rate of 4.0% to total $19.3 billion. The basic pet supplies, competition from supermarkets and discount department stores are expected to remain strong. In the US, Latin America, Japan and in most regions of Asia Pacific, dogs are most popular pets. In contrast, cats dominate pet population in France and Germany. Product innovation is expected to emerge into a major driver sprucing up sales in the world, and driving consumers to purchase value added premium products.

The Indian pet care industry is all set to record double digit sales growth even while the economy is chugging along the slow lane given the effects of the global economic meltdown. The pet industry is one of the few sectors that has managed to thrive even under such challenging circumstances and this growth is likely to be driven by several factors, most importantly, a change in the perception of Indians towards pets. According to a report by a global research firm, Euro monitor International, the Indian pet care market is estimated to reach $133 million by 2015 from $61.2 million in 2011. The growth in the Indian pet market is driven by several factors. These are increased number of pet adoptions, Rising disposable income, higher awareness of dietary needs of pets and the benefits of pet food, and Change in perception towards pets. According to Euro monitor International, the pet population in India grew to 10 million in 2011. This has been constantly increasing year by year. On an average, 600,000 pets are adopted every year. In its revised 2007 figures, based on increased and sustaining growth, Goldman Sachs report has predicted that from 2007 to 2020, India's gross domestic product (GDP) per capita in US$ terms will quadruple.' Moreover, it is believed that the Indian economy will surpass the United States by 2043. According to Euro monitor International, the Indian pet care market is estimated to reach $133 million by 2015. Therefore, India is the right place for doing and even starting any pet business.

Statement of the Problem

The Indian pet care market is a young, growing market and there are a few major players that are active in it. The United States of America is the leading in the pet care market has a largest market value of $23,060 million with Compounded Annual Growth Rate of 4.7 in the year 2015 but India has a growing market value of $82 million with compounded Annual growth rate of 13.7 in the year 2015. India pet care market is still in infant stage of growth. The Indian pet market is expected to register strong double-digit value growth in the coming years. The media's positive portrayal of pets has had a

huge impact on public perception towards the pet stores. Pet store retailers' must well equipped with through knowledge about the products and services offered to the pet owners'. They must satisfy the pet owners' expectations. So India has a high potential to start pet business. The pet owners', pet retailers, pet products are the combination for the groups of pet industry along with government shares. Unless positive strength is revealed by all this industry though has high potential, will face severe problems for the survival in their scenario. The study has been focused on the nature of pet store retail business, motivational factors to start pet business and problems faced by the pet store retailer in the Coimbatore District.

Scope of the Study
The study highlighted the various aspect of the pet store business in the Coimbatore District. The Indian pet market is expected to register strong double-digit value growth in the coming years. Pet store retailers' must come up with new ideas of being unique and offering better services and products or being different from the rest is essential. So, the study aimed to examine nature of pet store business and problem faced by the pet store retailers in their business. The Coimbatore District has been purposively selected as to view the reflect growth of the Pet Industry growth in India.

Objective
1. To study motivational factor to start pet business.
2. To identify the nature and promotion strategies of pet retailer.
3. To analyse the problem faced in the pet retailer business.

Research Methodology
The research methodology gives an idea about the type of research design, the sampling techniques, the process of data collection and the instrument used for data collection. A Research methodology is a master plan for the conduct of formal investigation. Research methodology is the pathway or an approach to get the needed information by locating the data from different sources which are primary and secondary. This chapter discusses the method of data collection and tools of analysis. The survey is to know about the study on the pet retailer business in the Coimbatore city. The study lasted for a period of four months (December 2014-March-2015). The purposive sampling technique is used to collect the data. The sample size of the study is 57 respondents. The data required for the study has been collected from both the primary data and secondary sources. The following statistical tools have been used to analyze the primary data, simple percentage, descriptive statistics mean, standard deviation, ANOVA and t- test.

Hypothesis
There is no significant difference between pet stores related factors and promotion strategies.

Limitation
The respondents for the study are mainly in the Coimbatore city. Data's are collected from 57 respondents only. The study is based on the information provided by the respondents. So the study may be biased.

Table 1 : Demographic profile of the pet store owners

Demographic factor	Groups	No.	%
Age	Up to 25 yrs	9	15.8
	26-40 yrs	29	50.9
	41-55 yrs	17	29.8
	Above 55 yrs	2	3.5
Gender	Male	42	73.7
	Female	15	26.3
Education	No formal education	2	3.5
	School education	35	61.4
	Graduate	17	29.8
	Post Graduate	1	1.8
	Others	2	3.5
Main occupation	Pet business	46	80.7
	Othr occupation	11	19.3
Nature of other occupation	Agriculture	1	9.1
	Business	4	36.4
	Employee	4	36.4
	Others	2	18.2

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Location of pet store	Urban	47	82.5
	Semi-urban	6	10.5
	Rural	4	7.0
Experience in pet business	Less than 1 yr	4	7.0
	1-5 yrs	24	42.1
	5-10 yrs	19	33.3
	Above 10 yrs	10	17.5
Is store registered	Yes	20	35.1
	No	37	64.9
Are you member of any pet store association	Yes	10	17.5
	No	47	82.5

Source- Primary Data

From the table, gender wise distribution indicated that the maximum of 73.7 percent of the respondents are male, 50.9 per cent belong to the age group of 26-40 years and only 3.5 per cent of the respondents belong to the age group above 55 years. It is observed from the table that 61.4 per cent of the respondents have school level education, Occupational status wise distribution, 80.7 per cent of the respondents have pet business as their occupation , 36.4 per cent of the respondents have nature of other occupation has business and employee, Location wise distribution shows that, 82.5 per cent of the respondent belongs to urban area,42.1 per cent of the respondents have 1-5 years of experience in pet business,64.9 per cent of the respondents have registered their store and 82.5 per cent of the respondents have not possessed any membership in the pet store association.

Table 2 : Profile of Pet Store

Pet stores profile	Groups	No.	%
Nature of store	Multiple Pet store	41	71.9
	Speciality pet store	16	28.1
Nature of business	Sole proprietary	41	71.9
	Partnership	16	28.1
Number of employees	1-3	35	61.4
	4-6	11	19.3
	7-10	1	1.8
	None	10	17.5
Nature of staff employed	Family members	21	36.8
	Outside	14	24.6
	Friends	22	38.6
Nature of the building	Own	22	38.6
	Rental	33	57.9
	Leased	2	3.5
Existence of branches	Yes	10	17.5
	No	47	82.5
Number of branches	One	54	94.7
	Two	3	5.3
Nature of capital	Own capital	37	64.9
	Borrowed capital	11	19.3
	Both	9	15.8

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Initial investment	Below Rs.1 lakh	11	19.3
	Rs.1-2 lakhs	17	29.8
	Rs.2-3 lakhs	15	26.3
	Rs.4-5 lakhs	7	12.3
	Above Rs.5 lakhs	7	12.3
Monthly expenditure	Below Rs.25000	25	43.9
	Rs.25001-50000	18	31.6
	Rs.50001-75000	7	12.3
	Above Rs.100000	7	12.3
Monthly income	Below Rs.25000	19	33.3
	Rs.25001-50000	17	29.8
	Rs.50001-75000	10	17.5
	Rs.75001-100000	6	10.5
	Above Rs.100000	5	8.8
Total		**57**	**100**

Source- Primary Data

From the table, it has been observed that among the respondents 71.9 per cent have possessed multiple pet stores, followed by 28.1 per cent who have possessed specialty pet store. 71.9 per cent of the respondents are sole proprietary, 61.4 per cent of the respondents have one to three employees in their pet store, 38.6 per cent of the respondents have employed their friends in the pet store, 57.9 per cent of the respondents use rental building, 82.5 per cent of the respondents do not have any branches,64.9 per cent of the respondents have invested own capital in their pet business, 29.8 per cent of the respondents have initial investment Rs. One lakh – Two lakh,43.9 per cent of the respondents have monthly expenditure below Rs. 25,000 and 33.3 per cent of the respondents have monthly income below Rs. 25,000 from their pet store.

Table 3 : Creation of Awareness of pet shop-Multiple Response

Sources of Awareness	No.	%
Press advertisement	5	9.6
Radio/TV advertisement	2	3.8
Word of mouth	37	71.2
Hand bills/pamphlets	7	13.5
Posters	3	5.8
Pet show	13	25.0
Internet	21	40.4

Source- Primary Data

The multiple responses shows that, 71.2 per cent of the respondents created awareness of their pet shop through word of mouth, 40.4 percent of the respondents created awareness of their pet store through internet, 25.0 per cent of the respondents created awareness of their pet store through pet show, 9.6 per cent of the respondents created awareness through press advertisement and 3.8 per cent of the respondents created awareness through radio/ TV advertisement. Majority of the respondents created awareness through word of mouth to their pet store.

Table 4 : Pets dealt-Multiple Response

Pets Dealt	Number of respondents.	Per cent
Dogs	25	47.2
Cats	23	43.4
Birds	35	66.0
Aqua pets	35	66.0
Rabbit	14	26.4
Horse	2	3.8

It has been observed from the table that, 66.0 per cent of the respondents are dealt with birds and aqua pets, followed by 47.2 per cent respondents are dealt with dogs, 43.4 per cent of the respondents are dealt with cats, 26.4 per cent of the respondents dealt with rabbit and 3.8 per cent dealt with horse. Majority of the respondents dealt with birds and aqua pets in their pet store.

Table 5 : Pet products dealt – Multiple Response

Products Dealt	Number of respondents.	Per cent
Pets	32	56.1
Food products	20	35.1
Pet cosmetics	5	8.8
Pet accessories	20	35.1
Pet medicines	9	15.8
All the above	27	47.4

Source- Primary Data

The multiple response shows that, 56.1 per cent of the respondents are dealt with pets, followed by 47.4 per cent of the respondents are dealt with all the activities (pets, foods products, pet cosmetics, pet medicines) 35.1 per cent of the respondents are dealt with food products and pet accessories, 15.8 per cent of the respondents are dealt with pet medicines and 8.8 per cent of the respondents are dealt with pet cosmetics. Majority of the respondents dealt with pets.

Table 6 : Pet related aspect in the pet store

Pet Related Aspect	Groups	No.	Percent
Source of getting pets	From other pet stores	24	42.1
	Customers who breed pets	26	45.6
	From abroad	7	12.3
Source of getting pets	Local wholesalers/retailers	31	54.4
	From manufacturers directly	18	31.6
	Imported products	8	14.0
Kind of pets bring more profit	Dogs	18	31.6
	Cat	2	3.5
	Birds	16	28.1
	Aqua pets	19	33.3
	Rabbit	1	1.8
	Horse	1	1.8
Pets more sold	Dogs	13	22.8
	Cat	1	1.8
	Birds	15	26.3
	Aqua pets	27	47.4
	Rabbit	1	1.8
supply of demanded breed	Yes	38	66.7
	No	19	33.3
time taken to supply	Within a day	3	7.9
	Within a week	25	65.8
	Within a month	10	26.3
Total		57	100

Source- Primary

Data Among the respondents 45.6 per cent of the respondents get their pets from the customers who breed pets, 54.4 per cent of the respondents get their pet products from local wholesalers/ retailers, 33.3 per cent of the respondents earns more profits from aqua pets, majority of the respondents earns more profits from aqua pets, 47.4 per cent of the respondents have sold aqua pets, 66.7 per cent of the respondents supply the breeds demanded by their customers. 65.8 per cent of the respondents who take a week to supply the breed demanded by their customers.

Table 7 : Motivated factors to start pet business

Motivated factors		Highly acceptable	Acceptable	Not acceptable	total
Less financial requirement	No.	25	14	18	57
	%	43.9	24.6	31.6	100.0
Less risky	No.	20	18	19	57
	%	35.1	31.6	33.3	100.0
Higher margin	No.	12	32	13	57
	%	21.1	56.1	22.8	100.0
Assured income	No.	8	35	14	57
	%	14.0	61.4	24.6	100.0
Small scale operation	No.	15	35	7	57
	%	26.3	61.4	12.3	100.0
Less competitive	No.	10	32	15	57
	%	17.5	56.1	26.3	100.0
Less labour requirement	No.	12	20	25	57
	%	21.1	35.1	43.9	100.0
Easy to manage	No.	9	17	31	57
	%	15.8	29.8	54.4	100.0
Easy availability of imported pets	No.	7	20	30	57
	%	12.3	35.1	52.6	100.0
Knowledge about the business	No.	27	24	6	57
	%	47.4	42.1	10.5	100.0
Less skill required	No.	9	34	14	57
	%	15.8	59.6	24.6	100.0
Less procedure	No.	15	26	16	57
	%	26.3	45.6	28.1	100.0
Independent Business	No.	33	17	7	57
	%	57.9	29.8	12.3	100.0
Relaxation/Enjoyment business	No.	34	15	8	57
	%	59.6	26.3	14.0	100.0
Passion towards pets	No.	34	14	9	57
	%	59.6	24.6	15.8	100.0
Self interest/Self motivation	No.	36	13	8	57
	%	63.2	22.8	14.0	100.0
Family business	No.	16	11	30	57
	%	28.1	19.3	52.6	100.0
Motivation from friends & relatives	No.	18	20	19	57
	%	31.6	35.1	33.3	100.0

Source : primary data

From the table it is clear that, 43.9 per cent of the respondents are highly motivated to start pet business, 35.1 per cent of the respondents are highly motivated, 56.1 per cent of the respondents are motivated by higher margin, 61.4 per cent of the respondents are motivated by assure income and small scale of operation, 56.1 per cent of the respondents are motivated by less competitive business, 43.9 per cent of the respondents are not motivated by less labour requirement, 54.4 per cent of the respondents are not motivated by easy management, 52.6 per cent of the respondents are not motivated by easy availability of imported pets, 47.4 per cent of the respondents are highly motivated by knowledge about the business, 59.6 of the respondents are motivated by the less skill required, 45.6 per cent of the respondents are motivated by less procedure required, 57.9 per cent of the respondents are highly motivated by independent business, 59.6 per cent of the respondents are highly motivated by relaxation/enjoyment business and passion towards pets, 63.2 per cent of the respondents are highly motivated by self interest/ motivation, 52.6 percent of the respondents are not motivated by family business and 35.1 per cent of the respondents are motivated by their friends and relatives. Majority 63.2 of the respondents are highly motivated due to self interest and self motivation.

Table 8: Promotion strategies - Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Veterinary services	57	1.00	5.00	3.3684	1.59946
Training to the pets	57	1.00	5.00	3.4035	1.55678
Information about the pets	57	1.00	5.00	3.9123	1.22883
Free grooming	57	1.00	5.00	2.2105	1.27807
Home delivery	57	1.00	5.00	3.3158	1.53713
Money-back guarantee for products and services	57	1.00	5.00	2.0877	1.31313
Home visit to the pets by the menders	57	1.00	5.00	2.9298	1.70984
Breeding facility	57	1.00	5.00	2.5263	1.45289
Discount offers	57	1.00	5.00	3.2281	1.58134
Clarification of doubts	57	1.00	6.00	4.4561	1.13500
Pet show programme	57	1.00	5.00	2.4912	1.63797
Mode of payment facility	57	1.00	5.00	2.5965	1.53367
Boarding facility	57	1.00	5.00	2.6842	1.46577
Online services	57	1.00	5.00	2.4035	1.37399

Source- Primary Data

The table shows the promotion strategies of pets. It is inferred promotion strategies are inevitable dimensions for the pet shop owner to create demand for the pets in the market. The highest mean score had been found for 'Clarification of doubts' (4.4561) and the lowest score has been for 'Money-back guarantee for products and services' (2.0877). Respondents are not given important to money-back guarantee for products and services of pets in their pet store.

Demographic Profile Vs Promotion strategies – Pets
ANOVA and t-Test has been applied to find out whether there is any significant difference between demographic profile of pet store owners, pet store profile and promotion strategies.
H$_o$: " The mean score of promotion strategies does not differ significantly for the selected profile of pet store owners".

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Table 9 : Demographic Profile Vs Promotion strategies

Demographic	Groups	Mean	S.D	No.	t-value	F-	Table	Sig.
Main occupation	Pet business	42.67	10.70	46	1.620		2.004	Ns
	Other occupation	37.18	6.81	11				
Experience in pet business	Less than 1 yr	41.50	14.20	4		5.821	2.779	*
	1-5 yrs	37.08	6.96	24				
	5-10 yrs	42.21	10.59	19				
	Above 10 yrs	51.40	8.72	10				
Total		38.79	10.70	57				

Source – computed *significant at 5% level ** significant at 1% Ns – Not significant

ANOVA result indicates that when the calculated F-ratio is greater than the table value, the hypothesis is not accepted and if the calculated value is lesser than the table value, the hypothesis is accepted. The result shows that there is significant difference in the mean score of promotion strategies meant for experience in pet business. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected in respect of this factor. The paired t-test shows that there is no significant difference in the promotion strategies score in respect of main occupation and hence, the null hypothesis is accepted.

H₀: "The mean score of promotion strategies for pet store does not differ significantly for the selected profile of pet store related factors".

Table 10 : Pet Store Profile Vs Promotion strategies

Pet store profile	Groups	Mean	S.D	No.	t-value	F-value	Table Value	Sig.
Nature of store	Multiple Store	43.27	10.61	41	2.01		2.004	*
	Speciality Store	37.38	8.08	16				
Nature of capital	Own capital	40.62	10.12	37		0.583	3.168	Ns
	Borrowed capital	44.36	12.57	11				
	Both	42.33	7.81	9				
Initial investment	Below Rs.1 lakh	36.91	8.77	11		1.097	2.550	**Ns**
	Rs.1-2 lakhs	42.94	8.20	17				
	Rs.2-3 lakhs	41.33	8.47	15				
	Rs.4-5 lakhs	41.29	8.36	7				
	Above Rs.5 lakhs	46.71	18.94	7				
Monthly expenditure	Below Rs.25000	38.60	9.01	25		3.084	2.779	*
	Rs.25001-50000	40.67	8.74	18				
	Rs.50001-75000	47.00	5.72	7				
	Above Rs.100000	49.43	16.14	7				
Monthly income	Below Rs.25000	37.05	10.17	19		6.690	3.703	**
	Rs.25001-50000	39.94	8.58	17				
	Rs.50001-75000	44.40	7.07	10				
	Rs.75001-100000	41.83	6.55	6				
	Above Rs.100000	58.80	6.69	5				
Total		**38.79**	**10.70**	**57**				

– computed *significant at 5% level ** significant at 1% Ns – Not significant

ANOVA result shows that there is no significant difference in the mean score of promotion strategies of pet store meant for the nature of capital and initial investment. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted in respect of these factors. However, in the case of monthly expenditure there is a significant difference in the mean score of promotion attitude score at 5 per cent and for monthly income at 1 per cent level, thereby, the null hypothesis is rejected for these factors. The paired t-test result shows

that there is significant difference in the mean score of promotion strategies for pet store score in respect of nature of stop at 5 per cent and hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 11 : Problems faced in Pet Business - Pets Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Disease caused by pets	57	1.00	5.00	3.1579	1.48552
Disease caused to pets	57	1.00	5.00	2.9298	1.42503
More formalities	57	1.00	5.00	2.7193	1.27831
Blue cross regulations	57	1.00	5.00	2.2632	1.36965
Lack of trainers	57	1.00	5.00	2.3509	1.32949
Labour problems	57	1.00	5.00	2.0175	1.27463
Inadequate capital	57	1.00	5.00	2.5789	1.43859
High growing charges	57	1.00	5.00	2.7544	1.37945
Delay in providing veterinary services	57	1.00	5.00	2.1930	1.24554
Unnecessary interference from PFA	57	1.00	5.00	1.9474	1.43204
Lack of grooming facility	57	1.00	5.00	1.8421	1.27880
Breeding problem	57	1.00	4.00	1.7895	1.04773
Delay in providing pets	57	1.00	5.00	2.0351	1.13334
Lack of varieties	57	1.00	5.00	2.8070	1.27389
Neighbour's objection	57	1.00	5.00	2.4211	1.40086

Source- Primary Data

The table rating for problems faced in pet business of pets. It is inferred problems faced in pet business - pets in the pet store by the respondents for marketing the pets. The highest mean score had been found for 'Disease caused by pets' (3.1579) and the lowest score has been for 'Breeding problem' (1.7895). Respondents have a greater problem of disease caused by the pets in the pet store.

Table 12 : Problems faced in Pet Business - Products Descriptive Statistics

Statements	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Non-availability of feeds/accessories	57	1.00	5.00	2.2982	1.23873
Lack of storing facilities	57	1.00	5.00	2.7719	1.37604
Short life for the products	57	1.00	5.00	3.0351	1.23873
Expired products	57	1.00	5.00	2.4211	1.41355
Lack of movement of pet products	57	1.00	5.00	2.5789	1.40086
Lack of credit facilities	57	1.00	5.00	2.2281	1.42700

Source- Primary Data

The table shows the descriptive statistics of problem faced in pet business with regards to pets by the respondents along with its overall score and standard deviation. The table rating for problems faced in pet business of products. It is inferred problems faced in pet business - products in the pet store by the respondents for marketing the products. The highest mean score had been found for 'Short life for the products' (3.0351) and the lowest score has been for 'lack of credit facilities' (2.2281). Respondents have a greater problem of short life for the products in their pet store.

Suggestions
- Government should take effective steps to protect pet retailer business.
- Promotion activities like money-back guarantee for products and services, free grooming, veterinary service etc., should be given more importance by the pet retailers.

Conclusion
The Indian pet market is expected to register strong double-digit value growth in the coming years. The media's positive portrayal of pets has had a huge impact on public perception towards the pet stores. Pet store retailers' must well equipped with through knowledge about the products and services offered to the pet owners'. They must satisfy the pet owners' expectations. The pet industry is one of the few sectors that has managed to thrive even under such challenging circumstances and this growth is likely to be driven by several factors, most importantly, a change in the perception of Indians towards pets. According to the study pet store owners' are highly motivated to start the pet business by self interest and self motivation. They have to give importance for money back guarantee for the products and service availed in their pet store. Majority of the respondents created awareness through word of mouth to their pet store. The owners' have the problem of short span of life for the products in their pet store and diseased caused to them by the pets.

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