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# CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR IN RETAIL MARKETING – A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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**Abstract**

*Modern consumer in the 21st century is gifted with the technology like internet, mobile, media that allows him to know the changing trends in the market, styles, brands, products and services. Consumer behaviour is the way by which consumer spend their income. Different consumer has different behaviour. Consumer behaviour is characterized by both internal as well as external factors. Increasing competition in the era of globalization has created the companies and its marketers to carefully analyze the behaviour of consumers. As the success or failure of the companies in meeting the objectives will depend on the acceptance of consumers, study of consumer behaviour with reference to buying and consumption will be extremely important to determine the decision making of consumers with regard to various products and services. The cosmopolitan outlook, projected retail outlets with availability of almost everything under one roof makes retail outlets a star attraction for one and all. As the retailing sector has witnessed as one of the rising industries, analyzing the consumer buying behaviour towards retail marketing will help to analyze the various factors that affect the consumer buyer behaviour, further, it also helps to understand the decision making process adopted for various retail marketing practices adopted by the companies. The study is further having significance because it provides critical analysis on consumer buying behaviour in urban and semi-urban areas. In view of this the present paper investigates the comparative analysis on consumer buying behaviour in retail marketing with a comparison of select attributes.*

***Keywords: Gap Analysis, Marketing Mix, Retail Outlets, Service Quality.***

## 1. Introduction

Consumer buying behaviour is an art and science of knowing needs and wants of consumers, and developing an understanding how prospective buyers decide to spend their resources like time, money and efforts during different stages of buying process. In more systematic manner, study of consumer buying behaviour entails identification of underlying mechanism in decision making process, identification of factors influencing the decision making and understanding of ever changing retail environment. Buyer behaviour includes the acts of individuals directly involved in obtaining and using economic goods & services including the sequence of decision process that precede and determine these actions. Actual purchase is only a part of the decision process. An understanding of buyer behaviour is essential in marketing planning and programmes. In the final analysis, buyer behaviour is one of the most important keys to successful marketing.

## 2. Key Features of Buying Behaviour of Indian Consumers

Shopping behaviour of consumers in India is quite different from their counterparts elsewhere in the world in more than one way. Treating them as a single homogeneous market can be fatal for big retailers and describing shopping behaviour of such a big and diverse market is a real challenge. An attempt has been made to identify the key features of an average Indian consumer to help students develop better understanding of the buying behaviour. These include:

a. Indian consumers have a high degree of value orientation. They have been labeled as one of the most discerning consumers in the world. Even luxury and lifestyle brand retailers have to design a unique pricing strategy in order to penetrate the Indian consumer market.
b. Indian consumers have a higher degree of family orientation. This orientation, in fact, is applicable to the members of extended family and friends as well. Outlets, products and brands which support family values, communicate feelings and emotions in their messages have better chances of success in India.
c. Indian consumers attach lot of importance to freshness in food items. Only 35% of prospective buyers may actually be willing to purchase packed food items in India in comparison of 76% in china and 94% in USA. Many Indian consumers associate packed food with staleness.
d. Indian shoppers give a lot of importance to convenience. Around 64% buyers do not mind paying extra money for conveniently located outlets, compared with 31% in China.
e. 64% of Indian buyers prefer spending less than 15 minutes time to travel. In Brazil it is 78% and 69% in China and Russia both.

f. Role of traditions in shaping the consumer behaviour is quite unique in India. So, one can see traditional products being sold alongside modern products. For example, hiar oils and tooth powder existing with shampoos and toothpaste. More than 75% women's clothing and 85% jewellery sold in India are traditional in style and design.
g. Almost two fifth of shoppers in India buy clothes for special occasions, whereas only a small percentage of Chinese and Russians are driven by occasions for their apparel purchase.
h. Indian shoppers are quite flexible in branding as long as food items are concerned. 57% of respondents said buying a well-known brand of shampoo was important, while as many as 49% may settle for lesser-known brands. On the other hand, almost 85% shoppers prefer purchasing a repute brand in case of electronic goods.
i. Though India is considered to be a traditional society and most of the decisions are taken collectively by the family members or by a group of friends, "Individualism" as value has made inroads among Indian youth.
j. Purchasing on loan is still a taboo for many Indians, but now a considerable percentage of customers are ready to purchase goods on credit in India abut availability is not easy to come by. Among this category of customers which are open to credit purchases, the highest percentage is from the group less than 25 years of age.

**3. Brief Overview of Organized Retailing in India**

India has a great history of retailing. The evidences of ornaments, designer apparels, foot wares and other daily ware items were first found sold during Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa civilization. Though, ancient period offered diversity exist in food and clothing habits in India, the climatic conditions were dominated the retailing scenario in India. In medieval times, the customers were found more commanding than earlier. The customers in medieval India were found to be worthy of setting the rules of marketing (Premchand, 1986). Indian Life style goods were always in demand in India and abroad. Evidences are found that trade flourished in India since ancient times and urbanization of Indian towns has roots in the growth of trade. The culture was the major influencing factor in purchasing decisions of the Indians right from the growth of civilization (Nehru, Discovery of India, 1950). The households in urban and rural India were mainly of joining facilities and patriarchal. The life style of the people was largely influenced by their occupation, Gender, Socioeconomic status, education and the place of living. Through the 1990s, India introduced widespread free market reforms, including some related to retail. Between the years 2000 to 2010, consumers in select Indian cities have gradually begun to experience the quality, choice, convenience and benefits of organized retail industry.

India in 1997 allowed foreign direct investment (FDI) in cash and carry wholesale. Then, it required government approval. The approval requirement was relaxed, and automatic permission was granted in 2006. Between 2000 to 2010, Indian retail attracted about $1.8 billion in foreign direct investment, representing a very small 1.5% of total investment flow into India. Single brand retailing attracted 94 proposals between 2006 and 2010, of which 57 were approved and implemented. For a country of 1.2 billion people, this is a very small number. The last few years witnessed immense growth by retail sector, the key drivers being changing consumer profile and demographics, increase in the number of international brands available in the Indian market economic implications of the government increasing urbanization, credit availability, improvement in the infrastructure, increasing investment in technology and real estate building a world class shopping environment for the consumers. In order to keep pace with the increasing demand, there has been a hectic activity in terms of entry of international labels, expansion plans and focus on technology, operations and processes.

**Table 1: Global Retail Destinations**

| **Country** | **2011 Rank** | **2010 Rank** | **Change** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Brazil | 1 | 5 | +4 |
| Uruguay | 2 | 8 | +6 |
| Chile | 3 | 6 | +3 |
| India | 4 | 3 | -1 |
| Kuwait | 5 | 2 | -3 |

Source: A.T. Kearney Global Retail Development Index, 2011

Moreover, India recently topped the Nielsen Global Consumer Confidence study, conducted by Nielsen, a market research company. The biannual report revealed that Indians are "the most optimistic lot globally who think that their country will be out of the economic recession very earlier than the other economies." Commercial real estate services company, CB Richard Ellis' findings state that India's retail market is currently valued at US$ 511 billion, and is poised to grow to US$ 833 billion by 2013. The report further stated that organised retail that currently accounts for less than 5 per cent of the total retail market is expected to register a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 40 per cent and swell to US$ 107 billion by 2013. Retailing in more developed countries is big business and better organised than what it is in India. Report published by McKinsey & Co. in partnership with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) states that the global retail business is worth a staggering US $ 7 trillion. The ratio of organised retailing to unorganized in US is around 80 to 20, in Europe it is 70 to 30, while in Asia it comes to around 20 to 80. The organized retail market in India is estimated at US$ 26 Bn in 2011 and is projected to grow to US$ 84 Bn by 2016, CAGR of 26% for the period 2011-16. Food and Grocery market in India is estimated at US$ 325 Bn in 2011 (69% of the overall retail) and is expected to grow to US$ 425 Bn by 2016 (63% of the overall retail ), at CAGR of 5.5%. The organized Food and Grocery retail market in India is estimated at US$ 9 Bn in 2011 and is expected to grow to US$ 34 Bn by 2016, at CAGR of 30%.

**4. Review of Literature**

Organized retailing has got huge importance and valuable source for the research in the recent past. Several researches and articles were been made by many researchers. Some of the important observations from the earlier studies are presented below.

According to the published literature by S.A. Sherlekhear(1997) “Wholesalers are the individuals or business firms who sells products to be used primarily for resale or for industrial use”. The wholesaler is a bulk purchaser with the object of resale to retailers or other traders after breaking down his “bulk” in smaller quantities and if necessary repacking the smaller lots into lots suitable for his customers viz. retailers.” Dominique M.Hanssens (1998) has examined the order forecasts, retail sales, and the marketing mix of consumer durables.The paper examines the problem of forecasting ongoing factory orders and monitoring retail demands, with specific reference to high-technology consumer durables. Shaline Bahadur (1998) reports that retail in India is still a very early stage. Most retail firms are companies from other industries that are now entering the retail sector on account of its amazing potential. Most new entrants to the Indian retail scene and real estate groups who see their access to and knowledge of land, location and construction as prime factor for entering the market. Dr.Suvasis saha (2002) has attempted to study the retailing scenario in the Indian context. He argues that Indian retailing has its own format. The retailing format that worked in London will work in Parin, but is unlike so in case of India. John Egan (2004) according to the author customer satisfaction is regularly suggested as an outcome of relational strategies and a pre-requisite for loyalty and retention.

Peter Jones, Peter Williams, Davide Hiller and Daphe Comfort (2007) argue that, to meet the customer requirements the retailer must offer quality retail services. Retail services are two types: Customer related services and process related services. Outcome related services like pre-purchase design and advice services, refunds and exchanges, extended warranties, home delivery, customer service desk and arranging credit facilities.

Darshan Parikh (2006) concentrated on the assessing the internal reliability of the retail service quality instrument by evaluating the validity of the scale. Further, the study has concentrated on the gap analysis and identification of areas for improvements in retail service quality. The study found that the gap mode of service quality does not perform as well as the perceptions based performance measures of service quality in terms of its factor structure.The study made by C.P.Gupta et al.(2008) emphasized on the consumer buying behaviour with regard to organized retailing. The study critically examined the consumer’s perception about the assortment of products/services available at the malls vis-à-vis a traditional Kirana outlet. Further, the impact to the organized retailing on the buying behaviour of the consumers is also studied.

Mridula S. Mishra and Umakant Dash(2008) in their study “Importance of retail service attributes: A study on Indian consumers” indicated that the hypermarkets/malls/supermarkets are the outlets preferred by the consumers, and concluded that consumers primarily focus on the convenience factor while shopping. Ajay S. Shriram(2010), in his article entitled “Retail FDI will unite farm economy with markets” viewed that the primary goal of allowing FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) and modern trade is to benefit the local economy, consumers and farmers by setting up of rural retail chains and provide large direct and indirect employment opportunities for the rural youth.

Sita Mishra (2010) has analyzed the luxury and life style retail India by considering the positive aspects in Indian retail industry. The authors have opined that organized retailing in India is spreading and making its existence felt in different parts of the country. Vikram Parekh (2011), in their thesis titled “Modern Retail Locations: Blessing or Disguise” made an attempt to reveal the impact of organised retail outlets on consumer spending and also the development of the sector. The authors have concluded that the future of retail space management lies in collaborating efforts between retailers and developers and further providing more entertainment options or formats in the mall to make it a complete family destination, there is a rising importance of encouraging brand building activity for malls.

From the observation on review of literature, it is noticed that, there is no particular study which directly concentrates on consumer buying behaviour in retail marketing. The present study is a unique one which mainly concentrates on analyzing the consumer decision making process with regard to retail companies. Further, the study also makes an extensive comparative analysis on the behaviour of consumers from urban and semi-urban areas.

**5. Objectives of the Study**

The aim of the study is to investigate consumer buying behaviour towards retail marketing practices adopted by the select companies. The study mainly investigates the following objectives.

1. To present the overview of retail marketing scenario in India with special reference to select retail companies.
2. To examine the marketing mix practices adopted by select retail companies.
3. To present the comparative analysis on consumer decision making process with regard to pre purchase and post purchase in retail outlets.
4. To make comparative analysis of urban and semi-urban retail consumers towards service quality adopted by the retail companies' outlets.
5. To investigate the consumer satisfaction towards marketing practices adopted by the retail companies.
6. Finally, the study presents findings and suggestions on the basis of analysis.

**6. Methodology and Sample Design**

Primary data is collected with the help of a structured questionnaire which is distributed among the consumers of both urban and semi-urban areas. The secondary data is collected from the annual reports of select retail companies, reports generated by Global Retail Development Index (GRDI) and periodical reports on marketing done by the select retail companies. As the research study concentrates on consumer buying behaviour in retail marketing, the consumers are said to be the sample respondents. For the purpose of adopting the selecting these sample respondents from select cities and select retail outlets, convenience sampling method is applied. As the sample respondents are found to be quiet typical to turn up to respond to the structured questionnaire, the non-random sampling method, i.e., convenience sampling method is applied to select the sample respondents for the present study. The sampling frame for the research study constitutes three organized retail companies, i.e., Reliance Industries Limited, Aditya Birla Group, RPG Group-Spencers and their respective retail outlets situated in 2 select cities in Telangana state.

**7. Analysis of Results**

Detailed analysis on the basis of survey obtained through a field survey separately for urban and semi-urban consumers are presented in the following heads.

**A) Findings from the analysis on demographic profile of consumers**

From the analysis on primary data sources, the demographic and socio economic profile of sample respondents, i.e, consumers who have visited the three select retail company outlets is presented below.

**Table 2 : Demographic profile of sample respondents**

| S.No. | Demographic variable | Results |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Region | Urban – 250 respondents, Semi-urban 250 respondents |
| 2 | Gender | Male-317 respondents, Female -183 respondents |
| 3 | Age group | Majority of the respondents are in the age group of 30-40 Years (i.e, 162 respondents) |
| 4 | Marital status | Majority of the respondents, i.e, (346 respondents) are married |
| 5 | Employment category | Majority of the respondents(115 respondents from urban and 88 respondents from semi-urban category) are from Private Employment category |
| 6 | Educational Qualification | Majority of the respondents,i.e, (132 from Urban and 100 from semi-urban region) have Graduation qualification |
| 7 | Size of family | Majority of the respondents , i.e., (121 from semi-urban) are having the family size of 3-5 members |
| 8 | Monthly income of the | Majority of the respondents from urban category is in the income range of Rs.25001- |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | family | 35000 |
| 9 | Average disposable income | Majority of the respondents from urban category have the disposable income of Rs.5000-10000 |

Source: field survey results

From the results on the comparative analysis from urban and semi-urban region, it is observed that, majority of the sample respondents are from male category and they are in the age group of 30-40 years and it is also observed that majority of the respondents possesses graduate qualification and majority of them having the family size of 3-5 members. Urban category of respondents have the income range of Rs.25001-35000 and the disposable income for urban region have found high with an average rate of Rs.5000-10000.

**B) Findings from the comparative analysis on consumer buying behaviour in urban and semi-urban regions**

The following results are found from the comparative study on the consumer buying behaviour and decision making process in urban and semi-urban regions towards select organized retail companies.

**Table 3: Comparative study on consumer perception on buying decision process in urban and semi-urban regions**

| S. N | Perception | Urban region results | Semi-urban region results | Test applied | Result |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Consumer willingness to purchase goods during the visit to organized retail outlet | 246 respondents have opined that they are willing to purchase goods during the visit to organized retail outlet | 245 respondents have opined that they are willing to purchase goods during the visit to organized retail outlet | Chi-square test | H0 accepted |
| 2 | Perception on type of organized retail outlet visited for buying | Majority of the Urban region have opined that they visit 'Other organized retail outlet. | Majority of the Semi-Urban region have opined that they visit Reliance organized retail | Chi-square test | H0 accepted |
| 3 | Perception on distance covered for visiting the organized retail outlet | Majority of the respondents from urban region have opined that they cover 3-5 km for visiting the retail outlet | Majority of the respondents from Semi-urban region have opined that they cover Less than 1km for visiting the retail outlet | Chi-square test | H0 accepted |
| 4 | Perception on Grocery item they buy in the organized retail outlet | Majority of the respondents from urban region have opined that they purchase frozen/wet market items | Majority of the respondents from Semi-urban region have opined that purchase Provisions from the organized retail outlet | Chi-square test | H0rejected |
| 5 | Perception on preferred destination for buying goods | Majority of the respondents choose Nearest Kirana shop | Majority of the respondents from semi-urban choose Nearest Kirana shop | Chi-square test | H0 rejected |
| 6 | Perception of verification of requirements at home | Majority of them verify daily about the requirements at home | Majority of them verify daily about the requirements at home | Chi-square test | H0 accepted |
| 7 | Perception on average duration that consumers spend at retail outlet | Majority of them from Urban region have opined that they spend more than One hour at organized retail outlet | Majority of them from Semi-urban region have opined that they spend more than One hour at organized retail outlet | Chi-square test | H0 rejected |
| 8 | Duration of visiting for buying in organized retail outlet | Majority of them have opined that they buy goods once in a week at organized retail outlet | Majority of them have opined that they buy goods once in fortnight at organized retail outlet | Chi-square test | H0 rejected |

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| 9 | Average disposable income | Majority of the respondents from urban category have the disposable income of Rs.5000-10000 | Majority of the respondents from Semi-urban category have the disposable income of Rs.5000-10000 | Chi-square test | H0 rejected |
| 10 | Perception on maximum availability of goods can be found | Majority of the urban region have opined that in Spencers' and Reliance Fresh they avail maximum goods | Majority of the urban region have opined that in Spencers' and other organized retail outlets they avail maximum goods | Chi-square test | H0 rejected |
| 11 | Perception on person in the family takes major decision | Husban in the family takes the major decisions regarding the goods to be purchased | Husband in the family takes the major decisions regarding the goods to be purchased | Chi-square test | H0 accepted |
| 12 | Perception on source of awareness about the retail outlet | Majority of them have opined that Television is the major source of awareness | Majority of consumers Hoarding boards and Television is the major source of awareness | Chi-square test | H0 accepted |
| 13 | perception on influence by promotional campaign | Majority of them have opined positive, i.e, promotional campaign influence the purchase decision | Majority of them have opined positive, i.e, promotional campaign influence the purchase decision | Chi-square test | H0 accepted |
| 14 | perception on type of organized retail outlet where the information regarding requirements are facilitated well | Majority of the urban consumers have opined that in Spencers' the information regarding the requirements are facilitated well. | Majority of the semi-urban consumers have opined that in Spencers', the information regarding the requirements are facilitated well. | Chi-square test | H0 accepted |
| 15 | Perception on person in the family who takes major decision regarding the goods to be purchased | Majority of the urban consumers have pined that 'Husband' in the family takes major decision on type of good to be purchased in retail outlet. | Majority of the Semi-urban consumers have pined that 'Husband' in the family takes major decision on type of good to be purchased in retail outlet. | Chi-square test | H0 accepted |
| 16 | Perception on source of awareness about the type of good to be purchased for household consumption | majority of the consumers from urban region have opined that the source of awareness about the type of good to be purchased is 'Television advertisements' | majority of the consumers from semi-urban region have opined that the source of awareness about the type of good to be purchased is 'Television advertisements' | Chi-square test | H0 accepted |
| 17 | Perception on influence by promotional campaign | Majority of the urban consumers have opined favoured to the statement that they are influenced by promotional campaign | Majority of the Semi-urban consumers have opined favoured to the statement that they are influenced by promotional campaign | Chi-square test | H0 accepted |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 18 | Perception on type of retail outlet from which the consumers get information which they have looked for. | Majority of the consumers from urban region have opined that from Spencers' and Reliance Fresh they perceived that they will get the information which is required for them. | Majority of the consumers from Semi-urban region have opined that from Spencers, they will get the information which is required for them | Chi-square test | H0 accepted |
| 19 | Perception on choice of preference of good brand that consumers prefer | Majority of the consumers from the urban region have opined that National brand is their choice of preference with regard to preference for good from organized retail outlets | Majority of the consumers from semi-urban region, have opined that they prefer to purchase National brand. | Chi-square test | H0 accepted |
| 20 | Perception on prices of goods which is affordable for purchase | Majority of the consumers from urban region have opined that the prices of goods which is affordable for purchase. | Majority of the semi-urban consumers have opined that prices are reasonable. | Chi-square test | H0 rejected |
| 21 | Perception major influencing factors in place mix influencing the purchase decision | majority of the urban consumers have opined that 'varieties' and convenience to outlet location are the major influencing factors in place mix influencing the purchase decision. | majority of the semi-urban consumers have opined that 'availability of organized retail 'outlet as the lowest price in the area' is the major influencing factor which influence their purchase decision. | Chi-square test | H0 rejected |
| 22 | Perception on amount of time spent in retail outlet for purchase of goods for individual and household consumption | Majority of the urban consumers have opined that they spend upto 1 ½ hour in the organized retail outlet for purchase of goods for individual and household consumption. | majority of the consumers from semi-urban region have opined that they spend up to 1 hour in the organized retail outlet for the purchase of goods for individual and household consumption. | Chi-square test | H0 rejected |
| 23 | Perception on amount spent for shopping in the organized retail outlets when the visit | majority of the urban area consumers have opined that they spend around 1501-2500 rupees for shopping in the organized retail outlets when they visit. | majority of the consumers from semi-urban region have opined that they spend around 1000 rupees in the organized retail outlets for shopping. | Chi-square test | H0 rejected |
| 24 | Perception on important consideration with regard to organized retail outlets | Majority of the urban consumers have opined that they 'proximity of residence' is the most important consideration for organized retail outlets. | Majority of the semi-urban consumers have opined that 'proximity of residence is the most influencing consider for organized retail outlets. | Chi-square test | H0 accepted |

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| 25 | Perception on source helping them to get awareness about the organized retail outlets over the years. | majority of the urban region consumers have opined that Television is helping them to get awareness about the organized retail outlets. | majority of the semi-urban region consumers have opined that Television is helping them to get awareness about the organized retail outlets. | Chi-square test | H0 accepted |

Source: field survey

**C) Findings from comparative analysis on relative customer dimensions urban and semi-urban consumers**

**Table 4: Comparison of Relative ranking of the Consumer requirement dimensions**

| S.No. | Dimensions | Overall Gap Score for Urban region consumers | Overall Gap score achieved for Semi-urban region consumers |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Tangibility | -1.5 | -1.329 |
| 2 | Reliability | -1.6 | -2.566 |
| 3 | Responsiveness | -2.57 | -1.840 |
| 4 | Assurance | -2.57 | -2.568 |
| 5 | Empathy | -2.38 | -2.692 |

Source: field survey results

With regard to Tangibility dimension, for urban region, there is a increase in gap score than the semi-urban region; hence it is evident that the retail outlets at urban region need to concentrate in order to show the tangibility representation of services. With regard to reliability of services, semi-urban region retail outlets need to improve in comparison with the urban region. For responsiveness dimension, semi-urban region retail outlets need to concentrate more in order to create confidence to the consumers. For the assurance dimension, both urban and semi-urban region consumers have given same rating and the score also almost shown similar. And for the Empathy dimension, semi-urban retail outlets need to work well in order to create empathy for the buyers.

**D) Comparative study on the consumer satisfaction towards product mix attributes for urban and semi-urban consumers**

**Table 5: Comparative analysis on product mix attributes for urban and semi-urban areas**

| S.No. | Name of the attribute | Mean value for Urban consumers | Mean value for Semi-urban consumers |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Display of products | 3.536 | 3.62 |
| 2 | Fixture & Lightings | 3.064 | 3.868 |
| 3 | Quick shop experience | 2.62 | 3.204 |
| 4 | Spartan décor & arrangement of brands | 3.832 | 3.76 |
| 5 | Product Line of various companies | 2.656 | 3.032 |
| 6 | Popularized fashions | 3.952 | 3.956 |
| 7 | New stock/newest fashions | 3.7 | 3.16 |
| 8 | Parking and ambience | 2.444 | 2.956 |
| 9 | Floor plan/lay out | 3.032 | 3.028 |
| 10 | Availability of Trolleys/containers | 2.512 | 2.924 |

Source: field survey

From the comparison of mean scores achieved for product mix with reference to urban and semi-urban areas, it is observed that urban consumers have given more satisfaction towards 'Quick shop experience, Spartan décor, floor plan. Whereas with reference to display of products, fixture and lightings, product line, popularized fashions, parking and ambience and availability of trolleys and containers, semi-urban consumers have given more level of satisfaction. From the comparison of results, it is to conclude that the parking facility, quick shop experience, availability of trolleys are the major concern which are needed to be improve in both urban and semi-urban areas.

**E) Comparative analysis on the satisfaction levels of consumers with regard to urban and semi-urban area**

From results on table 6.10, the comparison of mean scores for price mix attributes, it is observed that for the attributes including discounts, price variation than the competitors' products and free value added services, urban consumers have more satisfaction than the semi-urban consumers. Whereas for the attributes including list price, allowances on specific goods,

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semi-urban consumers have more satisfaction than the urban consumers. And for the attributes on payment facility through plastic currency, both urban and semi-urban consumers have same level of satisfaction.

**Table 6: comparative analysis on mean scores on price mix attributes**

| S.No. | Name of the attribute | Mean value for Urban consumers | Mean Value for Semi-urban consumers |
|---|---|---|---|
| a) | List Price | 3.1 | 3.82 |
| b) | Discounts | 3.60 | 2.53 |
| c) | Allowances on specific goods | 2.62 | 2.71 |
| d) | Payment facility through plastic currency | 3.83 | 3.83 |
| e) | Credit facility | 2.51 | 2.51 |
| f) | Price variation than the competitors' products | 3.75 | 2.86 |
| g) | Free value added elements | 3.70 | 3.07 |

Source: field survey

**F) Comparative analysis on the consumer satisfaction levels towards place mix attributes for urban and semi-urban area consumers**

**Table 7: Comparison of mean values on place mix for Urban and Semi-urban consumers**

| S.No. | Name of the attribute | Mean value for urban consumers | Mean Value for Semi-urban area consumers |
|---|---|---|---|
| a) | Transportation facility from the retail outlet | 2.296 | 3.016 |
| b) | Inventory back up for the demanded goods | 2.86 | 3.88 |
| c) | Order processing time | 2.508 | 3.548 |
| d) | Retailer's convenience | 2.864 | 3.56 |
| e) | Availability of number of outlets | 3.072 | 2.432 |
| f) | Space for customer waiting at billing counter | 2.848 | 2.292 |

Source: field survey

From the comparison of mean scores achieved for place mix attributes, it is observed that urban consumers have more satisfaction for availability of number of outlets and space for customer waiting at billing counter. Whereas semi-urban consumers have more satisfaction towards transportation facility, inventory back up, order processing time and retailers' convenience. Overall, the results clearly shows that availability of number of outlets and space for customers waiting at billing counter is the major problem for semi-urban consumers and transportation, order processing time and inventory back up are the major problems for the urban consumers.

**G) Comparative analysis on the satisfaction levels of consumers with regard to promotion mix for urban and sub-urban areas**

**Table 8: Comparison of mean values achieved for promotion mix for urban and semi-urban consumers**

| S.No. | Name of the attribute | Mean value for Urban area consumers | Mean value for Semi-urban area consumers |
|---|---|---|---|
| a) | Personal selling in the retail outlet | 3.732 | 3.86 |
| b) | Advertising campaigns | 3.952 | 3.336 |
| c) | Sales promotion schemes | 3.556 | 3.88 |
| d) | Publicity boards/Pamphlets | 3.82 | 3.12 |
| e) | Discount offers in print media | 3.76 | 3.816 |
| f) | Special offers in Electronic media | 3.092 | 2.768 |
| g) | Public relations by sales personnel | 3.732 | 3.86 |

Source: field survey

From the results, it is clear that there is a difference in the mean score achieved for urban and semi-urban area consumers. With regard to personal selling, sales promotion and public relations, semi-urban consumers have more satisfaction than the urban consumers. For the attributes including advertising campaign, publicity boards, urban consumers have more satisfaction than the semi-urban consumers. Further, with regard to discount offers in print media, both semi-urban and urban consumers have same satisfaction level. And finally for the attribute 'special offers in electronic media' semi-urban

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consumers have dissatisfaction in comparison with the urban consumers who got satisfaction with the special offers information in electronic media.

**8. Conclusions**

From the analysis on the field survey results, it is clearly observed that for majority of the attributes including buying decision process, perception on marketing mix and service quality urban consumers perception was found significant differ to semi-urban consumers. Further both urban and semi-urban consumers have different level of satisfaction for product, place, price, promotion and other select attributes. The gap score found high for urban consumers in select cases and from the study it is to conclude that on the basis of findings and observations, urban consumers and semi-urban consumers are differ in terms of their perception and satisfaction and further the organized retail outlets need to make different strategies and services to the consumers in order to match their expectation on products and services.

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