

Buyers' Perception of Important Retail Store Attributes in Indian Traditional Grocery Setting

Harsh Sharma*, Viabhav Lowalekar**, Rajnish Jain***

ABSTRACT

This paper aims to study the buyers' perception of retail store attributes that are important in Indian traditional grocery retailing. As grocery is the largest segment of retail world over, its importance from academic research point of view cannot be overstated. Also Indian grocery retail is dominated by the traditional grocery stores; the knowledge of the buyers' perception towards these stores would lead to a better understanding of these stores. This study is even more pertinent considering Indian retail is under transition with the introduction of organized retails even in tier 3 cities of India. This study identifies eight factors that are important for buyers' perception towards traditional grocery stores and indicate that buyers' favourably perceive these traditional stores on many retail store attributes. This research uses a research instrument developed by one of the authors for his Ph.D. dissertation.

Keywords: Retail, Buyer, Perception, Grocery, Store, Attributes.

INTRODUCTION

India is witnessing a retail revolution as organized retailing is spreading to not only to metro towns but also to the tier 2 and 3 cities. Also with the Indian government allowing FDI to the tune of 51% in the multi-brand retail outlets it presents great opportunities for global retail giants in view of its consumption hungry vast middle class and an almost unexploited retail industry. The Indian retail sector has seen unprecedented growth in the last few years owing to the favourable demographic and psychographic changes in the Indian consumer class, rising income, international exposure, availability of quality retail space, wider brand choice and better marketing communication (Sinha and Kar, 2007).

Indian retailing is undergoing a process of evolution and is poised to undergo dramatic transformation. The retail sector employs over 8% of the national workforce but is characterized by a high degree of fragmentation with over 96% of the outlets are very small with an area of less than 50 sq.m. (Mulky and Nargundkar, 2003). The retail industry

is divided into the organised and unorganised sectors. The former refers to businesses employing more than ten persons and includes the corporate-backed hypermarkets and retail chains. The latter refers to the traditional formats of low-cost retailing such as the local kirana shops, owner-manned general stores, paan/beedi shops, convenience stores, handcart and pavement vendors, and employs over four crore persons (Guruswamy, 2005).

Globally, the top three retail categories are grocery, apparel and furniture. The grocery retailing scenario in India is not the same as it was just before the nineties. Though it is an extremely large market, the organised sector's share of this market is very small. With about 6.5 million grocery outlets accounting for over half of the Indian retail market, the industry needs to understand consumer behaviour and inventory management (A Sivakumar).

It is widely speculated that entry of organised retailer will spell the doom for traditional mom-and-pop stores (Kirana Stores) as with their organised activities, effective buying strategies, attractive promotions, wide assortments, special pricing, scientific merchandizing, use of latest technology

* Associate Professor, Institute of Professional Education & Research (IPER), Bhopal, M.P., India.
Email-id: harsh_sharma9@rediffmail.com

** Associate Professor, Institute of Professional Education & Research (IPER), Bhopal, M.P., India.
Email-id: lowlekar.vaibhav@iper.ac.in

*** Reader, Institute of Management Studies, Khandwa Road, Indore, M.P., India.
Email-id: rajnish.ims@rediffmail.com

tools such as SCM, CRM etc. these bigger formats will strangle the traditional formats. While the organised retailer are equipped with such efficiencies the traditional mom-and-pop stores are generally perceived having the poor merchandise, high prices and unorganised activities which leads to the assumption that opening of a organised retailer will cause the closer of nearby traditional stores.

A store is what its attributes convey to customers. Retail store attributes are the characteristics of retail stores on which the retail store is patronised. Customer perceive the store on these store attributes and creates a mental sketch of the store and once this mental frame has been created he keeps following his mental picture for future purchase situations.

So it is thought that by identifying the important store attributes these vulnerable traditional grocery stores would be advised to plan out their strategies in more effective manner and would be able to face the challenges posed by the organised players.

The research question considered here was: How various retail store attributes of traditional grocery stores are rated/ perceived by customers?

TRADITIONAL GROCERY STORES

Grocery stores are defined for the study purpose are those stores which sell the daily need items mainly food and other household requirements. Grocery shopping refers to shopping for food and daily need products. Food and grocery shopping includes shopping for grains, pulses, fresh fruits and vegetables, packaged food, personal products and some household goods(Sinha, Mathew and Kansal, 2005) . The traditional formats include low-cost retailing such as the local Kirana shops, owner-manned general stores, paan/beedi shops, convenience stores, handcart, and pavement vendors. This study focused on the Kirana Stores as Traditional Grocery Stores.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Martineau (1958) highlighted (Refer Table I), way back, the importance of buyers' perception of store attributes in store choice behaviour and suggested that both the "Functional attributes" (store location, store layout, price ranges etc.) and "Psychological attributes" (refers to such qualities as friendliness of store personnel, sense of

belonging, or attractiveness of décor) are strong influence in store choice. Kunkel and Berry (1968) observed that some store attributes such as store location, merchandise, price, advertising and promotion, personnel, services offered, physical design and nature of store clientele have been found to exert a consistent influence on store choice. Hills et al. (1973) insisted that the way consumers perceive a retail store and its marketing policies (such as price, assortment, and quality) affects both shopping and expenditure patterns and the buyers' level of satisfaction with the retailing system. Oxenfeldt (1974) clarified that the customer reacts to the store's characteristics, as he views them, in an emotional way may feel toward one store as a warm, trustworthy, helpful friend. Other stores may seem to these same people deceitful, exploitative, unpleasant, and antagonistic. One finds that almost all customers have impressions-and fairly strong ones-about the characteristics of many individual stores, including some with whom they have not even dealt. Doyle and Fenwick (1974) stressed as well that the consumer's evaluation of all salient aspects of the store as individually perceived and weighted is the cause of what draws shoppers to one store rather than another. Doyle and Fenwick (1974) stated that what is called store image is very often the shoppers' perception of store attributes such as variety of goods sold, relative prices, and store layout. They explained that, "it is reasonable to view the customer as rationally evaluating the store on a multi-attribute utility function". Previous store-attribute research has shown that their importance varies depending on such variables as the type of product purchased (e.g. groceries or durables), the type of store (e.g. discount, department, or other) (Hansen and Deutscher, 1978). Pessimier (1980) reviewed the development of store positioning and listed the characteristics being perceived by shoppers are clientele mix, life cycle position of store type, merchandise offerings, locational conveniences, shopping pleasure, transaction convenience, promotion emphasis integrity and image strength and clarity. Tigert (1983) found that locational convenience, price level, product assortment, service and quality appear to be important in all sectors of retail stores. Mazursky and Jacoby (1986) emphasized that store choice behaviour is generally driven by how the buyers see the retail store. When the consumer thinks about the store, several of the most salient dimensions are retrieved from memory and represent what the store signifies.

Table 1 : Various Researchers & Categories of Attributes

| <i>Author/Researcher</i> | <i>No. of Categories</i> | <i>Categories of Attributes</i> |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| Martineau(1958) | 4 Categories | symbols and color, layout and architecture, advertising, and sales personnel |
| Fisk (1961-62) | 6 Categories (30 attributes) | locational convenience, merchandise suitability, value for price, sales effort and store service, congeniality of the store, and post-transaction satisfaction |
| Kunkel and Berry(1968) | 12 Categories (37 attributes) | price of merchandise, quality of merchandise, assortment of merchandise, fashion of merchandise, sales personnel, locational convenience, other convenience factors, service, sales promotion, advertising, store atmosphere, and reputation on adjustments |
| Oxenfeldt (1974-75) | 3 Categories (20 attributes) | Tangible Reality Factors , Intangible but genuine substantive benefits , Fantasies |
| Lindquist (1974-75) | 9 Categories (35 attributes) | Merchandise, Service, Clientele, Physical facilities, Convenience, Promotion, Store atmosphere, Institutional factors, Post-Transaction, and Satisfaction. |
| Hansen and Deutcher (1977-1978) | 9 Categories (41 attributes) | Merchandise, Service, Clientele, Physical Facilities, Convenience, Promotion, Store Atmosphere, Institutional, Post-transaction Satisfaction |
| Schiffman et al.(1977) | 5 Categories | convenience of store location, best price and/or “deals,” guarantee/ warranty policies, salesmen’s expertise, and variety of merchandise to choose from. |
| Zimmer and Golden (1988) | (32 attributes) | |

Source: Distilled from various studies

Consumer store choice results from a process whereby information on various alternatives is evaluated by the consumer prior to the selection of one of these alternatives (Fotheringham, 1988). Customer store choice is influenced by a number of factors, which affect the decision-making process. Woodside and Trappey (1992) pointed out that when shopping, a customer is likely to refer to a number of evaluative attributes and select the store or brand automatically linked with these “hot buttons”. Paulin and Geistfeld (2003) suggested that all store attributes are not important in affecting store choice and the importance of a particular store attribute may vary by type of store as well as customer characteristics. Sheth and Mittal (2004) stated that: “Store image, the sum total of perceptions customers have about a store, is determined by the merchandise, service, and price factors; it is also determined by atmospheric, advertising, and store personnel”. The retail store, its features influenced the shopping behaviour of consumers by means of certain internal, psychological variables. The first of those intervening variables was the ‘filter’ through which consumers see objective reality, i.e., the perception of those attributes of which the retail store consisted (Morschett et al., 2005). Kaul (2006) suggested that the consumer is capable of and makes the effort to evaluate each retail mix element, compares the performance of competing stores on each of those dimensions and based

on the importance that each element holds for him, he chooses that store which performs the best in providing him with greatest value. Visser et al., (2006) observed in their exploratory study that Merchandise and Clientele were the two most important store dimensions perceived by respondents.

There are not much retail studies available that have focused on the Indian Retailing especially on Traditional Grocery Retailing (Kirana Stores) as existing in tier 2-3 towns of the country. This calls for a study directed towards Traditional Grocery Stores in these towns as these towns are witnessing the introduction of organized retails in various formats and retailing is existing in state of transition.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The empirical part of this study has four stages which includes first stage of qualitative search and three stages of response/ opinion collection and therefore three different sampling groups/ participants/experts were used.

At **First Stage** (Refer Table 2), the researcher had identified 104 items related to various retail store attributes. This list was developed after extensive review of relevant literature and detailed discussions with senior professionals from retail industry. All relevant dimensions of buyer

Table 2 : First Stage-Identification of 104 Items

| | <i>Construct</i> | <i>Number of Items</i> |
|----|-------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 | Store Personnel Effectiveness | 9 |
| 2 | Merchandise Effectiveness | 13 |
| 3 | Store (Physical) Effectiveness | 13 |
| 4 | Store Service Orientation | 11 |
| 5 | Social Effectiveness | 4 |
| 6 | Relationship Orientations | 5 |
| 7 | Image | 4 |
| 8 | Communication | 5 |
| 9 | Differentiation (Regular Customer) | 8 |
| 10 | Personalization | 6 |
| 11 | Relationship Satisfaction | 5 |
| 12 | Trust | 4 |
| 13 | Relationship Commitment | 4 |
| 14 | Behavioural Loyalty | 5 |
| 15 | Habitual Loyalty | 3 |
| 16 | Forced Loyalty | 2 |
| 17 | Problem Solving Effectiveness | 3 |
| | TOTAL | 104 |

perception of traditional grocery store in terms of its store personnel, merchandise, store physical characteristics, service, relationship etc. were included. Some items were specially added considering their relevance in the Indian Traditional Grocery (Kirana) context as came out in the discussion with industry personnel.

Retail store attribute items were condensed from the previous retail researches, some of them are Brown and Fisk (1965), Kunkel and Berry (1968), Sirohi et al. (1974), Hansen and Deutscher (1977), Pessemier (1980), Golden and Zimmer (1987) etc. Additionally pioneer studies of Martineau (1958), Lindquist (1974), Oxenfeldt (1974) were also referred. Sinha, Banerjee and Uniyal (2002) and Sinha and Banerjee (2004) were also reviewed to include the attribute dimensions of Indian retailing.

Second Stage of the study (Refer Table 3) – This exhaustive items list of store attributes (104 items) were subjected to an initial analysis by two judges, who included one expert of retailing industry having experience of eight years in consumer goods sales and two years in organized retailing. The other judge was from the academic and research field with the expertise in marketing and sales and having an experience of industry, training and academics of about eleven year. The judges were asked to assess the appropriateness of these 104

items in terms of representing retail store dimensions for Traditional Grocery Stores. Initially both the judges checked the appropriateness of these items individually then they sat together to discuss the difference in their lists. The original list was finally reduced to 53 items after first screening.

Third Stage - A panel of thirty (30) experts, representing retailing industry personnel, Traditional Grocery (Kirana) store owners, management academicians and representative consumers of traditional grocery stores, was formed. Participants were chosen non-randomly, on convenience basis. A criterion in the participant selection was that all the participants had to have the buying experience of a Traditional Grocery Stores. Each of these judges was presented the modified list of 53 items and was once again asked to evaluate these items in terms of representation of retail store dimensions specifically for traditional grocery stores. The final list of 32 items, for which more than 70% of the experts gave their favorable opinion, was retained for development of final version of the scale.

In this study's 5 point Likert-type agreement scale is used on the final list of 32 items representing the retail store attributes for Traditional Grocery Stores.

Table 3 : Scale Developments (Data Collection Tool)

| <i>Stage</i> | <i>Items/ Attributes</i> | <i>Treatment</i> | <i>Details</i> | <i>Results</i> |
|--------------|--------------------------|---|---|----------------------------------|
| I | | Attribute items distilled from previous researches and discussion with retail experts | Martineau (1958), Brown and Fisk (1965), Kunkel and Berry (1968), Lindquist (1974), Oxenfeldt (1974), Sirohi et al. (1974), Hansen and Deutscher (1977), Pessemier (1980), Golden and Zimmer (1987) Sinha, Banerjee and Uniyal (2002) and Sinha and Banerjee (2004) | 104 relevant attributes |
| II | 104 | Screening for appropriateness by 2 Experts | One expert of retailing having experience of about 10 years and the other expert of the marketing research field with an experience of about 11 years assessed the appropriateness of items, in terms of representing retail store dimensions of traditional stores | 53 attributes after screening |
| III | 53 | Evaluated by 30 Pan-elist | Representing retailing personnel, Traditional Grocery (Kirana) store owners, management academicians and consumers of traditional grocery stores. Participants were chosen non-randomly, on convenience basis | 32 attributes with 70% agreement |
| IV | 32 | Responses on 5 point Likert type agreement scale of 1000 buyers | The population - the consumers/ buyers of grocery residing in Bhopal (M.P., India). The researcher adopted (Non-probability) Purposive Sampling method for this study. | 853 usable response |

ANALYSIS

The data obtained for the study was analyzed by using “Factor Analysis” (Refer Table 4) for identification of the factors of buyers’ perception towards Traditional Grocery Stores. The KMO and Bartlett statistics suggested that a factor analysis was entirely appropriate for these data (KMO = .911; Bartlett’s test of sphericity = 5481, $p < .0001$). Varimax Rotation has been used to simplify the factor structure. Only the factors having latent roots (Eigen values) greater than 1 (unity) are considered. Also the factor saliency has been assessed through the employment of multiple regression analysis. If “Overall Impression of a Store”, measured on a Likert type scale, represents the dependent variable and respondents’ factor scores are the independent variables, then regression analysis provides a manner of determining which factors are important (salient) at 0.01 level of significance (Beta and Order of contribution) .

Out of 32 store attributes, 19 attributes were found to be most responsible in describing the buyers’ perception towards a traditional grocery store. These 19 attributes were distributed over 8 factors labeled as Store Relationship, Store Personnel, Store Promotion, Store Merchandise, Store Service, Store location and Store Routine. Multiple regressions were applied to check the saliency of the factors in determining the overall impression of the store. The results show that except store reputation, all the other factors contribute significantly towards the overall impression.

IMPLICATIONS

In the Indian Traditional Grocery Setting the most important retail attribute factor comes out to be “**Store Relationship**”. The five store attributes which included this factor are “Makes Effort to Keep Regular Customers”, “Cares about Keeping Regular Customers”, “Favours Regular Customers”, “Gives a feeling of trust”, and “Has Favourable Return Policy. The traditional stores being perceived favourably on the factor of Store Relationship indicates that the traditional store are able to create a strong bondage with their regular buyers and this strength helps them in overcoming the competition with the organized retailers as they (the organized stores) may not be able to create as strong relationships as possible to traditional stores because their organized activities and orientation of self service results in a missing personal touch. Making effort to get the patronage of customers is an attempt to build relationship and similarly caring about keeping regular customers requires a relationship orientation of Traditional Grocery Stores. Also being perceived doing so creates a positive impression. Trust is always a foundation of any relationship and here in the case of Traditional Grocery Stores also giving a feeling of trust creates a strong relationship between customers and stores. Also having a favourable return policy is one step in creating a feeling of trust which ultimately leads to building a relationship with customers which would be mutually beneficial. Moreover returning a product in the organized setting is generally perceived to be very

Table 4: Factor Loading on Various Store Attributes and Factor Saliency

| <i>Factor No.</i> | <i>Factors</i> | <i>Attributes</i> | <i>Factor Loading</i> | <i>% Variance Explained</i> | <i>Beta</i> | <i>Order of Contribution (0.01 signif)</i> |
|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|--|
| 1 | Store Relationship | Makes Effort | 0.530 | 11.15 | .291 | 1 |
| | | Cares About | 0.594 | | | |
| | | Favours | 0.673 | | | |
| | | Trust | 0.532 | | | |
| | | Favourable Return Policy | 0.528 | | | |
| 2 | Store Merchandise | New Arrival Display | 0.509 | 7.60 | .125 | 4 |
| | | Merchandise Available | 0.628 | | | |
| | | Good Selection of Merchandise | 0.676 | | | |
| 3 | Store Personnel | Fairness of Dealing | 0.673 | 7.21 | .215 | 2 |
| | | Sales Person Impression | 0.629 | | | |
| | | Sales Person Courteous | 0.509 | | | |
| 4 | Store Promotion | Price Discounts | 0.672 | 5.94 | .162 | 3 |
| | | Good Discounts | 0.740 | | | |
| | | Informs New Offers | 0.510 | | | |
| 5 | Store Service | Home Delivery | 0.717 | 4.97 | .088 | 5 |
| 6 | Store Location | Near to Residence /Office | 0.765 | 4.71 | .083 | 6 |
| | | Convenient Location | 0.580 | | | |
| 7 | Store Routine | Routine | 0.750 | 4.49 | .074 | 7 significant at .02 level |
| 8 | Store Reputation | Reputation | 0.615 | 5.15 | .023 | 8 but non significant |

difficult, so this positive perception towards Traditional Grocery Store provides competitive advantage. The perception of store trying to have a relationship with its customers creates a positive image of store and influences the patronage of buyers towards the store.

“**Store Personnel**” factor is the second most important factor considering its contribution towards favourable perception of buyers. Buyers perceive the traditional stores on the attributes of “Fairness of dealing”, “Sales person impression”, “Sales Person Courteous” which are the contributing attributes of this factor. The attribute of “Fairness of Dealing” is the result of fairness displayed by sales person of the stores through the transaction with the buyers. The attribute of “Sales Person Impression” (Traditional Grocery Store sales personnel make good impression) represents the overall image the customer has about the sales men of the stores, and the attribute of “Sales Person Courteous” (Store sales personnel are courteous) represents the considerate behavior displayed by the sales men. A belief of a fair and courteous treatment by the sales

person gives a feeling of assurance/ comfort from buying from the store. A positive perception on this factor of Store Personnel would lead to creating a sustainable patronage of buyers because a store is what the store personnel make it. The feeling of fairness, the courteous response and the sales person impression not only ensure repeat patronage but also provides the comfort and satisfaction in grocery buying which itself is a non exciting buying activity. This factor also leads to building up of “Store Relationship” which is the most contributing factor.

The third most important factor is “**Store Promotion**”. This factor comes before the factor of “Store Merchandise” which indicates its relative importance in contributing towards the favourable perception towards Traditional Grocery Store. The attributes included in this factor are “Price Discounts”, “Good Discounts” and “Informs New Offers”. It reflects that the buyers perceive the Traditional Grocery Stores very positively on the dimensions of promotions. A store provides discounts and offers to its customer and how the customers perceive these efforts are

important from the point of view of patronizing the store. But traditional grocery store can't match the aggressive promotion as practised by the organized retailers so they need to be creative in their execution of promotion in their store. The promotion of these stores needs to have more personal touch and relationship orientation.

The fourth important factor is "**Store Merchandise**". Buyers perceive the traditional stores positively on the attributes of "New Arrival Display", "Merchandise Available" and "Good Selection of Merchandise". Merchandise in a grocery store is a very important but obvious attribute as the goods are repeatedly purchased without frequent trial of new variants. This factor comes after the "Store Relationship", "Store Personnel" and "Store Promotion" however it doesn't undermine its importance as most buyers assume a good quality merchandise to be the basic necessity of patronizing a store and the perception on merchandise though remain positive but it is not as noticeable as the factors of "Store Relationship", "Store Personnel" and "Store Promotion". Timing, Selection and New Arrival cover all the important aspects of merchandise and have contributed to this factor of "Store Merchandise".

The fifth important factor is "**Store Service**" and the attribute which is included into this factor is "Home Delivery". Out of various services provided by the store this particular service is more discernable. The factor of "Store Service" being relatively more important than the factor of location indicates its saliency as home delivery service neutralizes the location discomforts to some extent. The perception of provision of Home Delivery gives comforts to the buyers and an important consideration in regular purchase from the store.

The sixth important factor is "**Store location**" and the attributes which are included in this factor are "Convenient Location" and "Near to Residence/Office". Though it is to some extent surprising to have the factor of "Convenient Location" as relatively less contributing towards favourable perception of buyers comparing to other five factors it should be realized that for the traditional grocery stores the locational comforts has been assumed to be always present and the locational attribute were not seen as distinguishable as some of the other attribute. The perception of convenient location is something which is very important considering the nature of grocery buying which requires frequent visit to the store as well as visit by the housewife to get her requirements fulfilled.

The seventh important factor is "**Store Routine**" which has a single attribute of "Routine". Though this factor is not as salient as other six factors but grocery buying from traditional store becoming routine is important in terms of patronizing the store. Also being perceived by buyers as buying grocery from traditional grocery stores as Routine implies that buying grocery from these store has become somewhat automatic, repetitive and regular without much consideration to "where to buy".

DISCUSSIONS

It is evident that Indian Traditional Grocery Stores (TGS) are perceived positively by buyers on many retail attributes and it gives these stores sustenance against the onslaught of organised stores. These stores need to work on strengthening the relationship with the buyers by creating trust amongst its buyers by putting extra efforts in knowing and interacting with their regular customers as the Store Relationship is the most important factor of buyers' perception that gives these traditional stores a competitive advantage against organised grocery stores. Also this Store Relationship cannot be matched by the organised stores as the personal touch and relationship that is possible in traditional grocery retailing can't be replicated due the basic nature of organized retailing. The store personnel which include the owner can also create a patronage by creating good and courteous impressions. In fact the store personnel is mainly responsible for the relationship and trust that creates the sustained patronage for these traditional stores. The only requirement for these retailers is that they need to guide and focus their store personnel to have a relationship orientation towards their regular customers and trained them to be vigilant in knowing their regular customers. The store promotion is one dimension where the stores have to work more creatively so as to compete against the promotion done by the organized stores but they should avoid the overt and very visible promotions as they are not supposed to offer the kind of fancy promotion because the customers perceive them to be realistic provider of limited but relevant grocery products on a reasonable pricing. They are perceived favourably on quality and selection of merchandise so they in fact may not be needed to expand their assortments excessively rather they have to be focused in their merchandise assortment and should use their understanding of the regular buyers to specialize their assortment as per the local needs. Store service also

comes out a strong factor of buyers' perception and the attribute included was "Home Delivery", which indicate that these stores need to work on this attribute also this can again be a differentiating factor with organized retailers as the "Home Delivery" does not seem to be possible from the organized stores. The next important factor of "Store Location" is a factor that has been assumed by the buyers to be present in case of traditional grocery stores mostly being near to residence or office. Not all organized retailers can match this competence of traditional stores and which gives them sustained survival against organized retailers. Store Routine as the seventh important factor indicates that groceries buying from these traditional grocery stores are also considered to be regular repetitive activities which mean every time the store decision has not been reconsidered and buying grocery becomes some kind of mechanical activity. This also indicates that traditional stores are strong in the domain of grocery purchase as this is perceived as one of the routine kind of activity to be done with minimum of efforts. So grocery buying becoming routine activity and combined with Store Location gives these traditional grocery stores tremendous advantage vis-à-vis the organized stores as for routine purchase customer will prefer a store which is located at a convenient place.

Value

There are millions of traditional grocery stores spread over all corners of the country (about 6.5 million) and these stores provide employment to a huge part of the population. Therefore the prime benefit of this study is that it provides valuable insight on key issues in successfully managing the traditional grocery store business in view of the threat emerging from the arrival of organised retailers. At the same time organised retailers are also benefited by the first hand information about the important factors responsible in building a positive perception of the various segments of Indian customers. The research also indicates that the traditional stores are to be studied considering their strengths in terms of their strong relationship with their regular customers which can provide them much needed sustenance for survival against the onslaught of modern trade.

REFERENCES

- Brown, F. E. & Fisk, G. (1965). Department stores and discount houses: Who dies next? *Journal of Retailing*, 41(3), 15-27.
- Doyle, P. & Fenwick, I. (1974-75). How store image affects shopping habits in grocery chains. *Journal of Retailing*, 50(4), 39-52.
- Guruswamy, M. (2005). FDI in retailing - short-charging the Kirana store? *New Delhi: The Hindu Business Line*.
- Hansen, R. A. & Deutscher, T. (1977/78). An empirical investigation of attribute importance in retail store selection. *Journal of Retailing*, 53(4), 59-73.
- Hills, G. E., Granbois, D. H. & Patterson, J. M. (1973). Black consumer perceptions of food store attributes. *Journal of Marketing*, 37(2), 47-57.
- Kunkel, J. H. & Berry, L. (1968). A behavioural conception of retail image. *Journal of Marketing*, 32(4), 21-27.
- Lindquist, J. D. (1974). Meaning of image: Survey of empirical and hypothetical evidence. *Journal of Retailing*, 50(4), 29-38.
- Mazursky, D. & Jacoby, J. (1986). Exploring the development of store images. *Journal of Retailing*, 62(2), 145-165.
- Martineau, P. (1958). The personality of the retail store. *Harvard Business Review*, 36(1), 47-55.
- Mulky, A. & Nargundkar, R. (2003). Modernization in Indian retailing: Managerial and policy perspectives. *Udyog Pragati*, 27(2), 1-8.
- Oxenfeldt, A. (1974/75). Developing a favorable price quality image. *Journal of Retailing*, 50(4), 8-15.
- Pessemier, E. A. (1980). Store image and positioning. *Journal of Retailing*, 56(1), 94-106.
- Schiffman, L. G., Dash, J. F. & Dillon, W. R. (1977). The contribution of store-image characteristics to store-type choice. *Journal of Retailing*, 53(2), 3-15.
- Sinha, P. K. & Banerjee, A. (2004). Store choice behaviour in an evolving market. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 32(9), 482-494.
- Sinha, P. K., Banerjee, A. & Uniyal, D. P. (2002). Deciding where to buy: Store choice behavior of Indian shoppers. *Vikalpa*, 27(2), 13-28.
- Sirohi, N., McLaughlin, E. W. & Wittink, D. R. (1998). Model of consumer perceptions and store loyalty intentions for a supermarket retailer. *Journal of Retailing*, 74(2), 223-245.

- Zimmer, M. R. & Golden, L. L. (1988). Impressions of retail stores: A content analysis of consumer images. *Journal of Retailing*, 64(3), 265-303.
- Sinha, P.K., & Kar, S.K. (2007). An insight into the growth of new retail formats in India. *Working Paper No. 2007-03-04*, IIMA.
- Sinha, P. K., Mathew, E., & Kansal, A. (2005). Format Choice of Food and Grocery Retailers No WP2005-07-04, *IIMA Working Papers from Indian Institute of Management*, Ahmedabad, Research and Publication Department
- Fotheringham, A. S. (1988). Consumer store choice and choice set definition, *Marketing Science*, 7(3), 299-310.
- Sheth, J.N., & Mittal, B. (2004). *Consumer Behaviour: A Managerial Perspective*. (2nd ed.). Ohio: Thomson
- Morschett, D., Swoboda, B., & Foscht, T. (2005). Perception of store attributes and overall attitude towards grocery retailers: The role of shopping motives. *International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research*, 15 (4): 423-447
- Tigert, D.J. (1983). Pushing the hot buttons for a successful retailing. In *Patronage Behavior and Retail Management*, Prentice hall, 251-291.
- Woodside, A. G., & Trappey, R. J. (1992). Finding Out Why Customers Shop Your Store and Buy Your Brand. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 32(6), 59-78.