



RESEARCH ARTICLE

PROBLEMS AND STRATEGIES FOR RETAIL STORES IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Grasp the demands of customers and look for more company prospects, develop the ideal marketing strategy, reduce losses, and monitor the competition. Consumers can access a wide range of goods and services from across the world because of retailers, and the retail industry strengthens the national economy and adds jobs. The purpose of this study is to investigate the issues and tactics faced by Indian retail stores, as suggested by the study's title. **Design/ Methodology/ Approach:** This paper is an analysis of secondary data obtained from a variety of sources related to retail stores and marketing strategies, including research papers, journal articles, and journal papers found by searching relevant key words in Google Scholar, relevant websites, and information from reports on problems and strategies of retail stores. **Findings:** Retailers may make informed decisions about developing products, pricing, promotion, and distribution techniques by having an in-depth understanding of their target market, their rivals, and the most current market conditions. Retail analytics can be used to track inventory levels, analyse customer buying patterns, and assess the success of advertising strategies. The study of data analysis, data gathering, and data reporting in relation to retail operations is known as retail analytics. **Originality/Value:** A research-based case study on analysis of the Problems and strategy of retail store in India. **Paper Type:** Research Case Study

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INTRODUCTION

Marketing is a complex mechanism involving number of functions. These functions call for different specialized persons for employment. Marketing activities require the services of different enterprises such as finance, insurance, transportation, production, research, warehousing, wholesales, retailer, advertising etc. These services require large number of persons and it provides employment to society (Hans & Seema, 2003). Considering the fact that there are 19 million retail outlets operating throughout India (2020), only 4% of them are larger than square feet in size. In India, there are 11 retail stores per 1000 people. Marketing is the process of creating, examining, and delivering products that meet the needs of a target market in the form of goods and services. It may also involve determining a target market and choosing particular attributes to emphasize in advertising, advertising campaigns, trade shows, and public market and encourage them to buy its goods or services. The absence of a clear strategy, inadequate time and resources, lack of alignment with target audiences, inability to adopt new trends, and generic, unreliable, or unclear messaging can alienate your audience and result in a variety of sales and marketing issues. Finding technology solutions, attracting and retaining customers by keeping up with changing customer expectations, promoting digital and contactless payments, and supply chain management are challenges of retail marketing strategies.

They also include knowing what data to capture A marketing strategy was a plan strategy a company utilizes to find its target market. Customers are attracted to the goods through their new, attractive look. The total expense of the goods, any price that falls, and the guarantee that it provides are all included in the terms of sale. Retail refers to the sale of products and services to consumers. Retailers are people who purchase items from producers or wholesalers in large quantities and then sell them to customers in smaller quantities for a profit. Understanding consumer behaviour, creating brand loyalty among consumers, and managing the supply chain from producers to consumers are all responsibilities of retailers. Product, pricing, placement, and promotion are the four Ps of marketing that together make up a marketing plan. A marketing strategy aims to establish and communicate a long-term competitive edge over competitors. It is essential that the product satisfies the needs of the target market and that the marketing plan builds on its strengths and matches them with the demands of the market it is designed to attract. After developing a marketing plan, determine the marketing efforts that would best reach the audience you want to reach. A key aspect of every successful strategy is monitoring and evaluation. After choosing a marketing approach, create a plan describing your strategy to carry it forward. The retail landscape in India is a vibrant and diverse tapestry, reflecting the country's rich cultural heritage and dynamic economic growth.

In this introduction, we delve into the fascinating world of retail stores in India, exploring their significance, evolution, and the unique characteristics that define this market.

The Significance of Retail in India: Retailing is a cornerstone of India's economy, contributing significantly to its GDP and providing employment opportunities to millions. It serves as a crucial bridge between producers and consumers, offering a wide array of products and services that cater to the diverse needs of the Indian populace.

Evolution of Retail in India: India's retail sector has witnessed a remarkable transformation over the years. Traditionally dominated by small, family-owned stores and local markets, the landscape has evolved to encompass a wide spectrum of formats. From bustling bazaars to modern shopping malls, from street vendors to e-commerce giants, the retail industry in India has embraced innovation and adaptation.

Unique Characteristics: Several distinctive features set the retail scene in India apart from other markets:

Diversity: India's cultural diversity is reflected in the retail space, where a plethora of regional tastes and preferences shape product offerings and customer experiences.

Festive Retail: Festivals and celebrations play a significant role in India, driving heightened retail activity during festive seasons. Businesses often plan their strategies around these periods.

Mom-and-Pop Stores: Small, neighbourhood stores, affectionately known as "kirana shops," continue to be a vital part of India's retail ecosystem, providing a personalized touch to shopping.

E-commerce Boom: India has witnessed a rapid growth in e-commerce, with homegrown platforms and international giants vying for a share of the market, transforming the way Indians shop.

Sustainable and Ethical Consumption: An increasing awareness of sustainability and ethical consumption is influencing purchasing decisions, with many retailers incorporating eco-friendly practices.

Omni-channel Retailing: Retailers are increasingly adopting an omni-channel approach, combining physical stores with online presence to offer customers a seamless shopping experience.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- To study problems and solutions faced by the Indian retail stores.
- To study the marketing strategies of retail stores in India.
- To study challenges faced by the Indian retail stores.
- To analyse marketing strategies that have an influence on customer satisfaction.
- To SWOC analyse of marketing strategy implemented by the retail stores in India.

METHODOLOGY

Secondary data for this paper was compiled from a variety of sources related to retail stores and marketing tactics, such as research papers, articles in journals, and literature reviews obtained by finding essential key phrases in the Google Scholar search engine, appropriate web pages, and additional data from reports on problems and business strategies of retail stores.

A SURVEY OF THE PREVIOUS RESEARCH: An empirical study on customer satisfaction toward organized retail shops in Bengaluru City was conducted by Gondes Santhoshi Kumarai in 2002. The next flourishing business is being meticulously transformed into by organized retailing, which is progressively making its way there.

Customers' future purchase intentions are prioritized, although customer happiness has been identified as a key component. Marketing strategy has developed into a classic text on centrist marketing, according to Steven P. Schnaars Simon & Schuster (1998). This crucial material has been amended and enhanced by Steven Schnaars to take into account the corporate world's quick developments. It has previously been examined in the learning environment. The goals of Prokopis K. Theodoridis (2009) include store image aspects, customer happiness across various consumer profiles, and the supermarket industry in Greece. The two goals of this study are to extend the functional relationship test of store image attributes and customer satisfaction in the Greek market environment and to assess the equilibrium of the fundamental connections between store image descriptions and customer delight across a range of demographic groups.

According to a 2007 study by Guy Parrott and Usha Ramanathan, the use of social media in retail network operations and marketing to improve customer happiness and the Purpose of the technological evolution forces retail networks to introduce innovative companies to keep Obtain clients and gain a competitive edge. To develop a model with unique service marketing and operations tactics that add value to shoppers and foster trust, retail chains must take account of customer input from social media. The period 2009, Rajyalakshmi Nittala the success of an organization is increasingly considered as being dependent on both internal and external customers. Unfortunately, a lot of retail businesses don't think in these terms, and as a result, they haven't established the orientation needed to produce excellent customer service representatives. The impact of technical advancements and changes in marketing tactics employing analytics in the retail industry will be addressed in Jasmine Kaur, Vernika Arora, and Shivani Bali's (2020) article. The expression "Customer is the King" has completely changed due to a combination of technical advancements and the retail industry's more competitive the environment. In their 2013 study, Quality Retailing: Delivering Value to the Users in the Existence of Stringent The Competition Facing the Indian Retail Industry, Pardeep Bawa, BL Gupta, and Bhavna Sharma found that retail service quality had an impact on value delivery and satisfaction with services in a retail store environment. Retailers who adhere to the value framework while providing high-quality products and services and a positive shopping experience will be successful in the long run. The degree of the quality of service, the execution of services, and the delivery of service quality have a significant impact on organized retail's performance.

The 2008 article The Role of Customer Contact Staff as External Customers by Pratibha A. Dabholkar and Kristie A. Abston: Future research and a conceptual framework for marketing are connected with existing channels of work in marketing, management, and organizational behavior to create a philosophical framework that stresses the customer connection person's dual role as an employee and an outside customer of the business. Vangelis Souitaris and George Balabanis' 2007 study looks at how retailers on the internet can integrate their unique selling points and market segmentation methods to increase consumer satisfaction and loyalty. Using information from a variety of UK supermarket e-buyers, the authors distinguished between focused on goals and experienced online purchasers. Mohammed Al-Ali's (2015) research A successful retail business depends on satisfied customers. Customer happiness has become a top priority for the retail sector, particularly in the grocery sector. This study explores the fundamental factors that influence customer satisfaction in the grocery sector and analyses the relationship between store characteristics and customer satisfaction. Miguel I. Gomez and Dick R. Wittink's (2004) empirical study, "Consumer Experience and Retailing Efficiency," examines the connections between customer fulfillment and performance in sales as well as among customer happiness and opinions of shop attributes. The data collection is made up of six stages of sales and consumer satisfaction data that were gathered for a publicly traded grocery company during 1998 and 2001 from roughly 250 retail outlets.

Customer satisfaction varies between organizational units, according to Edward C. Malthouse (2004), and in businesses with several units or subunits, this article looks at customer satisfaction models for evaluating the link between satisfaction in general with an offering or service and satisfaction with certain parts of the product or service. Robert D. Green, Mei-Lien Li (2012), Customer loyalty affects all three categories of retail establishments where consumers purchase. A key element in a company's success is customer loyalty. Price sensitivity is lower among loyal customers. These clients are also more inclined to make larger purchases, test out other services offered by the business, and refer new clients. According to Eunju Ko and Doris H. Kincade's 1997 article, "The impact of immediate reaction techniques on retail store attributes," merchants can make money in a cutthroat business environment by anticipating and satisfying customers. With the help of cutting-edge technologies (such as barcoding and scanners), the quick response (QR) business approach aims to increase customer satisfaction. Shopping mall retailers operate in a highly competing retail environment that necessitates good management in order to satisfy consumers and generate customers loyalty, according to SS Makgopa (2018). Determining shopping malls' customers' pleasure and loyalty was one of the shopping mall retailers' main goals. This essay's main goal was to ascertain how satisfied and focused customers in malls were with the shops they visited.

Jinsoo Hwang, Hyun Kim, and Woohyoung Kim (2020), Customer equality, customer satisfaction, and loyalty-based sustainable growth for contract workers in the retail sector Traditional retail areas in Korea are in serious trouble Situation in which companies in downtown districts risk collapsing as the local population shrinks, leading to a drop in self-employed sales and an improving local economy Customers. Nanda Primidya Kusuma and Satnam Ubeja's study, "A Study of Sales Promotion Combination on Customer Experience with regard to Retail Malls in Indore," was published in 2014. In India, the retailing industry has witnessed a substantial transition over the previous ten years. By 2016, the organized retail sector in India is expected to develop by 25–30% yearly and triple or quadruple in size. Relationship marketing tactics employed by department stores are examined in a study by Suzanne Hanley and Rose Leahy titled *The Performance of Relationship Strategies for Marketing in Department Stores* published in 2008. Finding out how much customers use and are influenced by relationship marketing methods was the study's main goal. 1989's William Weitzel, customer service views of employees and retail store sales Modern retailing environments are fiercely competitive, and there is ongoing demand to innovate and find new ways to boost sales. Sales have been related to product characteristics, store variables, consumer tastes, seller's variables, and the combination of these with monetary variables in an effort to identify the aspects that enhance retail achievement. Mr. Bankim R Vaja (2015). Retail management refers to any business activities involving the requirement of goods and services to shoppers for their own, individual, or personal use. While retailing is the term used to describe all sales to consumers.

In their 2012 paper *Determinants of retail satisfaction with consumers: a study of organized retail establishments in Delhi*, Manish Madan and Sima Kumari claim that the study looks into specific data regarding the expansion of the retailing business in India and It looks at how awareness of the brand is rising across every socioeconomic class in India and how the urban and semi-urban retail sectors have grown substantially. Satisfaction for clients with supermarket retail shopping was examined in a study by Binta Abubakar (2001), which also looked at customer perceptions of the significance of several qualities related to supermarket shopping. After that, we looked at the attribute satisfaction scores. The objective was to rate the variables and link the rankings of relevance to customer satisfaction. Investigation of consumer satisfaction levels and hidden determinants for specific retail store purchases, Choudhury Abul Anam Rashed (2018). How successfully retail establishments are satisfying customer expectations can be largely determined by how satisfied customers are. The degree of client happiness must be measured.

Two sets of questionnaires were created for this purpose: one for the consumers and one for the personnel of the two locations that were chosen.

VARIOUS TYPES OF INDIAN RETAIL STORES

In this diverse and dynamic landscape, retail stores in India play a vital role in not only providing goods and services but also in connecting with the cultural fabric of the nation. They navigate the balance between tradition and innovation, offering a unique and ever-evolving shopping experience for consumers across the country. India boasts a diverse retail landscape that encompasses various types of retail stores catering to the varied needs and preferences of its population. Here are some common types of retail stores in India:

- **Kirana Stores:** These small, neighborhood grocery stores are a staple of Indian retail. They provide daily essentials, snacks, and convenience items to local communities.
- **Supermarkets:** Being greater in size than kirana outlets, supermarkets offer a wider selection of goods, such as food, fresh fruit, home goods, and occasionally clothing and electronics.
- **Hypermarkets:** These sizable shopping centers mix the products that department stores and supermarkets have to offer. Typically, they house food, electronics, apparel, and household items all under one roof.
- **Department stores:** These establishments provide a wide range of goods and are frequently separated into sections for electronics, apparel, cosmetics, and other items. Consumers Stop and Leisure are a couple such instances.
- **Specialty Stores:** These establishments concentrate on a particular market segment or assortment of goods, such as electronics (Croma), sporting goods (Decathlon), or literature (Crossword).
- **Apparel and Fashion Stores:** India has a thriving fashion retail sector, with stores ranging from high-end boutiques to budget-friendly outlets. Popular brands like Pantaloons, Zara, and Fab-India fall into this category.
- **Pharmacies and Chemists:** Retail stores specializing in pharmaceuticals and healthcare products are widely available throughout India. Examples include Apollo Pharmacy and Med Plus.
- **Electronics and Mobile Stores:** These stores primarily sell electronic gadgets, smartphones, and accessories. Chains like Reliance Digital and Vijay Sales are prominent in this category.
- **Furniture and Home Decor Stores:** Retailers like Pepper fry and Urban Ladder offer a wide selection of furniture and home décor items.
- **Jewelry Stores:** India has a rich tradition of jewelry, and numerous jewelry stores cater to various tastes and budgets, with brands like Tanishq and Kalyan Jewelers being well-known.
- **Footwear Stores:** Brands like Bata and Metro Shoes offer a wide range of footwear options for all ages and occasions.
- **E-commerce Platforms:** The rise of online shopping has seen the emergence of several e-commerce giants like Amazon India, Flipkart, and Snapdeal, which offer a vast array of products online.

- **Traditional Markets and Street Vendors:** India is known for its bustling street markets, including places like Delhi's Chandni Chowk and Mumbai's Colaba Causeway, where you can find a wide variety of goods and street food.

Luxury Boutiques: Major cities like Mumbai and Delhi house luxury boutiques representing international fashion and lifestyle brands.

Organic and Health Food Stores: With the growing interest in health and wellness, stores like Organic India and Nature's Basket cater to those seeking organic and health-conscious products.

These are just some of the many types of retail stores you can find in India, reflecting the country's cultural diversity and consumer preferences. Each type of store serves its unique purpose in this vast and dynamic retail market.

MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR INDIAN RETAILSTORES:

Identifying the market being targeted and how a good or service might benefit it can be done with the use of a strategy for marketing. And determine how to draw in prospective consumers and motivate current ones to keep buying goods or services.

- **Localized Marketing:** Tailor your marketing efforts to the diverse cultural preferences across different regions in India. Understand local festivals, customs, and preferences to connect with your target audience effectively.
- **Online Presence:** Establish a strong online presence through e-commerce platforms and social media. Utilize platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp for both advertising and customer engagement.
- **Discounts and Promotions:** Indians are often drawn to discounts and promotions. Implement strategic pricing strategies, bundle deals, and limited-time offers to attract customers.
- **Customer Loyalty Programs:** Create loyalty programs to encourage repeat business. Indians appreciate long-term relationships, and loyalty programs can incentivize customers to choose your store over competitors.
- **Influencer Marketing:** Leverage social media influencers to promote your products. Collaborate with influencers who align with your brand and have a significant following in your target market.
- **Omni-Channel Retailing:** Integrate your online and offline channels to provide a seamless shopping experience. Allow customers to research online and purchase in-store, or vice versa.
- **Local Partnerships:** Build partnerships with local businesses or influencers. Collaborate on events or promotions to tap into their existing customer base and enhance your brand visibility.
- **CSR Initiatives:** Engage in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives that resonate with the Indian audience. Showcasing a commitment to social causes can positively impact your brand image.
- **Multi-Lingual Marketing:** Communicate in multiple languages to cater to India's linguistic diversity. Ensure that your marketing materials are translated accurately to connect with a broader audience.
- **Customer Reviews and Testimonials:** Encourage satisfied customers to leave reviews and testimonials. Positive word-of-mouth is powerful in Indian communities, and online reviews can influence potential customers.

Remember, continuously analyze the effectiveness of your strategies and be adaptable to changes in the market and consumer behavior.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY: A retail marketing strategy is any technique used to promote items or businesses, boost sales, and increase profitability. A strong retail marketing strategy will strengthen the brand and make the products and businesses more identifiable. It extends well beyond newspaper advertisements. Retail marketing is to attract new clients and keep them on board over the long term. Strategies to boost sales for a business include social networking, SEO, partnerships, and paid advertising. In-store marketing refers to any marketing activities that take effect throughout a physical store. While the promotion of products is going on, shoppers are given an enjoyable experience.

In-store marketing examples include:

- In-store displays that highlight particular products or price reductions.
- Host gatherings with live music and product demonstrations; provide samples of new products.
- Including a collaborative board and suggestion box.
- In-store promotions that encourage clients to enter the store.

The "4 Ps" of retail marketing, sometimes known as the "key components," are Product, Price, Place, and Promotion. The physical item that is being sold is referred to as a "product.", Price: This term relates to the method of pricing the product that the retailer uses to sell it., Place: This alludes to the place or platform where goods are sold., Promotion is what the business uses to spread the word and attract customers to make a purchase. Customers-both current and potential-are divided into distinct segments or groups based on their demands. It is crucial that the product line responds to the needs of the selected target market and that the marketing plan makes the most of strengths and connects them with the demands of the clients it is trying to attract. Once a marketing plan has been developed, choosing marketing efforts or activities that will make sure the target market is aware of the goods or services offered and the reason they satisfy their demands is essential. A crucial component that is frequently ignored is tracking and assessing the success of the approach. After deciding on a marketing strategy, develop a marketing strategy that explains how you'll use it and evaluates its success.

PROBLEMSANDSOLUTIONS FOR AINDIAN RETAIL STORE

Retail start-ups and expanding businesses must act proactively to stay competitive.

Insufficient effective data gathering and analysis: Focusing on service to customers, encouraging sales, demand fulfilment, and handling inventory are essential components of running a retail firm. Planning in these areas requires the use of solid, trustworthy data. Lack of information can also affect poorly informed decisions, such as continuing stocked purchasing performing goods. Find the best instrument for collecting, storing, and understanding pertinent data by defining objectives for both the short and long-term Data can be utilized to develop better, more powerful methods. Utilizing cutting-edge data and analytical methods, patterns can be found to evaluate previous performance and comprehend future happenings.

Failure to meet market demands: Some retail companies spread their resources broad by diversifying their product lines and sales channels, and roughly 63% of customers anticipate that companies will be aware of their particular requirements. If not, their dissatisfaction and unstained feelings may result from the unfulfilled expectations. To do research for commodities and channels using feedback, opinions, and direct interviews, it is essential to comprehend the needs of customers and behaviour. Inefficient administration of inventory in stores

Inefficient retail inventory management: May harm a company's ability to compete, cut capital, and result in inefficient stores. According to a study, inadequate replenishment techniques are said to be responsible for 70% to 90% of situations in which supplies are McKinsey revealed that 32% of organizations attributed their supply chain problems on storage inefficiencies, such as inadequate forecasting and demand fluctuation. Without strategic management to address these problems, the retail industry is likely to suffer.

Assess the condition of the possessions by identifying abnormalities in the technique stream and addressing the cause of inventory issues, which frequently result in overproduction or out-of-stock. Is inventory turning out too slowly and costing too much funds? Excel forecast computations might not produce reliable results.

- **Addressing cash flow issues:** Some short-term in nature cash flow issues can result in a long-term lack of operational capital for a corporation. As a matter of fact, without money, business could not exist. Inadequate management of cash is cited as the primary cause of failure in 82% of small firms, even a brief shortage of cash can result in the accumulation of unpaid payments and invoices that are subject to penalty payments and interest.
- By borrowing money via the internet and hosting quick sales, you can better control your cash flow. To prevent lowering the value of the company brand and their goods, make sure that firm practices this in moderation.
- **Not placing a high priority on satisfaction with consumers:** Customer are the only reason a firm exists, therefore retailers who don't solicit input and act on it risk building toxic relationships with consumers. Unsatisfactory customer service and unfulfilled commitments can turn off potential customers and damage the reputation of your brand.
- Practice active excellent service by being open and honest with your customers while listening to their needs. Additionally, businesses must engage customers who shop in- by putting up boxes for feedback and training personnel on how to effectively serve retail customers.
- **Relying solely on PPC marketing:** PPC marketing has revolutionized the retail industry. An attractive title and description causes about 19% of consumers to choose to click on advertisements that are paid for. However, concentrating primarily on transient pay-per-click will only increase awareness and not long-term client loyal.
- Build the groundwork for marketing initiatives by thinking back to the first discussion points on our compilation of retail issues and solutions. By supporting corporate digital marketing initiatives with consumer data and analytics, you can create brand promotion that is customized to their tastes and behaviours.
- **Inappropriate business development plans:** Keeping up with the competition and being relevant are the two key objectives of business growth. And retail failures might result from complacency. A breakeven point shop may be forced to scale back operations in order to survive if it decides it is no longer ready to take on more risks in order to enter new markets.
- By using this list of commercial issues and solutions, you can improve procedures and solidify interactions. The answers offered here differ depending on your organization's concept. Maintaining competitiveness necessitates a basic strategy that involves adapting trends in whatever way they appear to your rivals.
- **Growing the firm too quickly:** If expansion up for growth is important, so is right timing. Improper scaling methods are not only costly; they can also permanently end the retail industry. This IBRF study found that a lack of an organization strategy is a significant cause of beginning and scaling failures in companies.
- Define the requirements for the transition by documenting the new business procedures and allocating sufficient time for staff onboarding. Then, businesses have all the opportunity they need to organize a team and analyze these market issues.

- **Not enough assignment transfer:** In order to cut expenses, merchants, especially owners of small enterprises, frequently refrain from hiring extra staff. It's not dissatisfied but the issue starts when there isn't enough delegation of tasks. Workplace exhaustion lowers professional effectiveness and work performance, which can be just as expensive as freelancing.

If an organization is unable to afford hiring full-time selling staff members, think about outsourcing and assigning tasks to third parties.

MARKETING STRATEGIES THAT HAVE AN INFLUENCE ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION:

Marketing strategies can have a significant impact on customer satisfaction. Here's an analysis of some key strategies and how they influence customer satisfaction:

- **Personalization:** Tailoring marketing messages and product recommendations to individual preferences can enhance customer satisfaction. Customers are more likely to be impressed after they believe that a business comprehends and fulfills their wants.
- **Customer Segmentation:** Dividing the customer base into segments based on demographics, behaviour, or preferences allows for more targeted marketing efforts. This can lead to higher satisfaction as customers receive more relevant offers and content.
- **Quality Products/Services:** The core of any marketing strategy should be offering high-quality products or services. No amount of marketing can compensate for a subpar offering. High-quality offerings inherently lead to higher customer satisfaction.
- **Clear Communication:** Transparent and honest communication about products, pricing, and policies is crucial. When customers feel they have been misled or deceived, it can lead to dissatisfaction and erode trust.
- **Engagement through Content:** Content marketing can provide valuable information and engage customers. When companies provide helpful and relevant content, it can enhance the overall customer experience and satisfaction.
- **Customer Feedback and Surveys:** Actively seeking and acting upon customer feedback demonstrates a commitment to improving and meeting customer needs. This can lead to higher satisfaction as customers see their input making a difference.
- **Loyalty Programs:** Rewarding loyal customers with discounts, exclusive offers, or loyalty points can foster a sense of appreciation and satisfaction among repeat customers.
- **Social Proof:** Highlighting positive reviews, testimonials, and endorsements can build trust and confidence in your brand, ultimately leading to increased customer satisfaction.
- **Responsive Customer Service:** Marketing should align with a company's customer service efforts. Quick and helpful responses to inquiries or concerns can significantly impact customer satisfaction.
- **Consistency:** Ensuring a consistent brand image and message across all marketing channels and customer touchpoints is essential. Inconsistencies can confuse customers and lead to dissatisfaction.
- **Competitive Pricing:** Pricing strategies, such as competitive pricing or value-based pricing, can influence customer satisfaction. Customers often appreciate fair pricing that aligns with the perceived value of the product or service.
- **User Experience:** If marketing efforts lead customers to a website or app, ensuring a smooth and intuitive user experience is critical. A frustrating user experience can quickly lead to dissatisfaction.
- **Emotional Connection:** Marketing that appeals to the feelings of customers can establish intimate connections. Customers are more likely to feel pleased and devoted if they have a personal attachment to the brand.

In summary, marketing strategies that prioritize personalization, customer feedback, transparency, and delivering quality products or services tend to have a positive influence on customer satisfaction. However, it's essential to align marketing efforts with the overall

customer experience and consistently meet or exceed customer expectations to build and maintain high levels of satisfaction.

CHALLENGES FACED BY THE INDIAN RETAIL STORES:

It can be difficult to maintain customer loyalty by persuading a customer to make a purchase at a retail establishment, but the true challenge is in encouraging the customer to return.

- **Getting customers back into the business:** One of the largest challenges will be getting customers back into the store. People’s purchasing habits will change, and they may not desire to step out of their homes to visit retailers. One of the best strategies for physical stores is to take every safety measure necessary and inform their customers of them.
- **Customer retention:** Keeping customers will be a struggle for offline shops, and there has already been a change in how much money consumers are spending, with fewer individuals doing pleasure shopping.
- **Meeting altering customer expectations:** As consumer behaviour changes, it is critical for retailers to comprehend and satisfy changing customer expectations. To do this, the former must have access to helpful information. Using analytics, retailers can ascertain what their consumers are looking for and adjust to meet these demands.
- **Stimulate digitized and technological transactions:** Retailers must encourage digitized and contactless payment options while minimizing the use of currency. Retailers must make substantial investments in the systems that will make it possible for them to accept electronic payment methods.
- **Convert distribution networks:** Retailers must transform their supply networks in order to meet customer demands. Inventory and logistics must be planned in an organized way until the end of the season.

SWOC ANALYSIS: The SWOC analysis provides direction for retail store management and serves as the basis for its activities. This could denote either a challenge that is being overcome or reduced in order for the retailers to survive Weaknesses (W) or Challenges (C) or it could denote Opportunities (O) and Strengths (S) that will strengthen the business plan of retail stores in achieving its goals. The intention is to motivate the retail industry to create methods and procedures that take into account its advantages, reduce difficulties, and correct faults. The information is generated while solutions created after all of the retail store’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats have been examined.

The visual representation below illustrates that SWOC analyses in the region of Problems and strategy of retail stores In India.

Strengths: If the retail location is in a busy area where customers move in and out frequently, prime locations are crucial to the growth and productivity of any business. Customers can be encouraged to make repeat purchases if the sales personnel and owner build nice, professional relationships with them. If the retail establishment has a strong working relationship with its supply chain, they will ensure the prompt availability of goods and services at the establishment, giving the customer peace of mind that the good or service is available present at the moment of purchase.

Weaknesses: Not being specific means that a retail business provides its consumers with an extensive variety of items and amenities rather than focusing on a single class of products or services. The rate of conversions and overall business sales have dramatically fallen since the staff at a business’s retail store lacks the expertise needed to interact with customers effectively and increase sales. Buyers would be unwilling about checking it tried at an outlet shop if it was new and didn’t have a reputable brand name. As a result, it would require a long time for customers to trust the goods and services offered by retail businesses. Along with the brand recognition and public image, the dimensions of the retail location are important. The other customers would visit other stores and nearby

businesses if the region was constrained and capable of holding a restricted number of customers.

Opportunities: Market penetration, Retailer use their existing retail format to encourage existing customers to buy more. Market expansion, to connect with an innovative target market, retailers employ their current retail format. These days, more people prefer to shop at huge retailers with an expanding the atmosphere of malls in India at which they will discover a wide selection of products all under a single surface. Retail Businesses with a comprehensive understanding of their target market, competition and the latest trends in the retail industry and this information can help retailers make informed decisions about product development, pricing, promotion and distribution strategies. Retailers need to focus on three key fillers to drive success and deliver positive in-store experience for customers. These includes inventory management, store productivity and reduced friction at the point of sale.

Challenges: One of the major difficulties and opportunities will be to draw new customers to the store and keep them coming back. It might be difficult to keep a customer’s business by encouraging them to make a purchase at a retail establishment. Another difficulty that offline traders will face is customer retention. This will be a top priority. Retailers are capable of comprehending the needs and expectations of their customers and meeting these requirements and demands in a timely manner. There will be significant disruptions in supply chain management, and merchants will need to rebuilt their strategy to match customer needs. Merchants have to restrict the usage of cash and promote online and contactless transactions

Table 1.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location/area/place. • Innovative sales technique. • Relationship marketing. • Supply chain agreement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not focused; that retail location doesn't concentrate on any particular type of good or service. • Limited industry knowledge. • Unknown brand name. • clients from small retailers.
Opportunity	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market expansion, diversity, and format development are key factors in the retail sector’s future growth prospects. • Demographic increment. • E-commerce trend. • Geographic expansion. • Backward integration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers are choosing multichannel buying experience • Bringing in prospective customers • Retaining current customers • keeping up with increasing customer expectations. • Promoting contactless and electronic transactions • Distribution chain business administration

FINDINGS

- Retailing businesses that have an in-depth comprehension of the market they are targeting, rivals, and the most recent developments in the retail sector. With this knowledge, retailers can make prudent choices about product creation, pricing, promotion, and distribution method.
- Retail market research helps firms make judgments about anything from products to packaging, pricing to advertising, or shop layout to web design that will appeal to customers and increase sales.
- Retailers need to focus on three key fillers to drive success and deliver positive in-store experience for customers. These includes inventory management, store productivity and reduced friction at the point of sale.

- Retail analytics can be used to check inventory levels, analyse consumer behaviour, and assess the success of advertising initiatives. The study of data analysis, data gathering, and data reporting in relation to retail operations is known as retail analytics.
- Retail audits help brand measure and monitor retail success by analysing the shoppers experience with in-store products.
- The major segments in the Indian retail market include fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), clothes and footwear, and electronic products for consumers. Comprising, respectively, 65%, 10%, and 9%.

SUGGESTIONS

- Retailers need to improve product or service and focusing on customer experience, utilizing marketing and advertising and offering promotions and discounts, by focusing on these points businesses significantly increase sales and achieve success.
- The proper offerings, at the ideal place, as expected, at the correct moment, at the appropriate rate, with the proper advertising, with the right staff, and with the right services are the seven basic rights of retail stores.
- Make sure the store you operate appears in internet search results; a greater number of individuals are using Google for searching for stores and products.
- Employ and educate employees who can deliver outstanding customer service.
- Set smart sales goals; this is one way to increase retail sales and revenue.
- Encourage corporate social responsibility. Being more generous and responsible with business operations not only benefits the environment, but it could improve a company's sales.
- Ensuring that the sale of product is accurate by stocking the goods at the appropriate time. A successful product line-up will boost a company's sales.
- Maintain regular improvements to the visual elements of retail stores.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, retail stores in India face various challenges that require thoughtful strategies for sustained success. Issues such as intense competition, price sensitivity, and diverse consumer preferences pose hurdles for businesses. However, implementing effective strategies can mitigate these challenges and foster growth. Embracing technology, optimizing supply chains, and providing personalized customer experiences are key approaches. Additionally, addressing infrastructure limitations, navigating regulatory complexities, and leveraging data for informed decision-making can enhance a retail store's resilience in the dynamic Indian market. Success lies in the ability to adapt, innovate, and prioritize customer satisfaction to thrive amid the unique landscape of retail in India. Retailers use retail marketing to promote the in-store services and products of a company or organization. Traditionally, retailers were in charge of the basic marketing and sales of commodities bought from wholesalers. Retail marketing is the practice of delivering products directly to retail customers. Planning, promoting, and presenting the product are all part of this process. Market research expands the number of potential customers for businesses, clarifies consumer wants, organizes the best advertising campaign, reduces expenses, and keeps an eye on the competition. Retailers give customers access to a diverse choice of products and solutions from around the world, and the industry boosts the economy and creates jobs in the country. The first stage is having a distinctive product, and the elements of retail marketing include ergonomic packaging, successful sales campaigns, and aggressive pricing. When a business offers products or services to consumers, typically are end users, it is known as retail marketing. Retail marketers have a variety of tools at their disposal to market and advertise products and services. In this study, retail shop problems and alternatives for India are provided.

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