

CONSUMERS PERCEPTION AND SATISFACTION RELATING TO COOPERATIVE WHOLESALE STORES-A PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

Dr.T.MALATHI, Ph.D,

Assistant Professor and Research Supervisor, PG & Research Department of Commerce, Poompuhar College (Autonomous), Melaiyur-609 107, Nagapattinam district, Tamilnadu

&

M.CHRISTY JOSPHIN JAYA

Ph.D., Research Scholar, PG & Research Department of Commerce, Poompuhar College (Autonomous), Melaiyur-609 107, Nagapattinam district, Tamilnadu

Introduction

Consumers are the largest economic group in any country. They are the central point of all of our economic activities. In any economy, is it capitalistic, socialistic or mixed, the individual consumer is the prime concern. Consumers' co-operative wholesale stores (CCWS) are rendering services not only to the members but also to the general public. They are expected to provide all the requirements of the consuming public and to satisfy them in all respect. The customer orientation backed by the integrated marketing aimed at generating customer satisfaction as the key to satisfying organizational goals. It is not an exaggeration to state that a satisfied customer is a good advertisement to the enterprise. Therefore the consumers' cooperatives are expected to satisfy both the members of the stores as well as the other customers by supplying quality goods at reasonable price and in correct weight and measurements. An attempt is made to study and measures the benefits derived by the consumers of the CCWS's in terms of the levels of satisfaction with the services of the stores.

Consumer Cooperatives

Consumer cooperatives mean an association of consumers having a common aim of buying pure unadulterated and better quality goods at reasonable consumer price. A consumers cooperative is an enterprise owned by consumers and managed democratically which aims at fulfilling the needs and aspirations of their members.

Selection Sample Procedure

The sample for the purpose of analyzing was considered on the basis of the number of stores. The entire study is based on the opinion of 450 samples of respondents,

consumers opinion relating to cooperative wholesale stores in Nagapattinam district of Tamil Nadu, selected randomly at the rate of 50 consumers from each block from the once existed maximum eleven block they adopt convenient sampling method.

Purchases of the Products

It is neither an in-built characteristic of product nor the result of any advertising or sales promotion programme. In this study, six factors are classified for the purpose to identify the factors influencing the consumer to purchase the goods from CCWS. The six factors are fair price, better quality, correct weight, and better service, availability of all goods and nearness of the stores.

Table1: Purchases of the Products

S. No	Variables	No. of Consumers	Percentage
a	Reasonable Price	175	40
b	Better Quality	40	08
c	Correct Weight	60	13
d	Better Services	55	12
e	Availability of all Goods	42	10
f	Nearness of the Stores	78	17
Total		450	100

Source: Primary data Computed

It is clear from the Table1 gives the details of the factors influencing the purchase of the goods from CCWS by the consumers. Out of 450 consumers, 175 consumers (40 per cent) are opined the reasonable price, because the CCWS's are distributing the essential commodities to the consumers at reasonable prices. For example, the state government concession of free rice wheat, sugar and kerosene at reasonable price. It is very cheaper when compared to other commodities. Normally the open market price of the rice is Rs.30 per kegs. 78 consumers (17 per cent) favoured the nearness of the stores. As per the government policy, the consumers' stores should locate the nearest place of the residential areas. About 60 consumers (13 per cent) opined that the factor was correct weight. The fair price and quality goods are the top two factors influencing the consumers mainly due to the following reasons. Usually, the politicians are dependent on the consumers cooperative stores for the purpose of getting their votes at the time of election. Most of the rural people are depends the CCWS for their livelihood. In India, the rural sector is the deciding authority of the state as well as central government. So, the governments are trying to supply the quality goods to the people through consumers cooperative stores. 55 consumers (12 per cent) and 42 Consumers (10 per cent) opined better service and availability of all goods respectively. About the 40 consumers (08 per cent) only give the opinion in favour of better quality. It is concludes that the majority of consumers satisfied the reasonable prices.

Type of Products Bought by the Consumers

As mentioned earlier, the CCWS are supplied both the controlled and non-controlled commodities to the consumers. The controlled goods may be plentiful or just sufficient or insufficient. The stores at the prices fixed by the government sell the controlled goods. The stores have a small margin on controlled and non-controlled goods.

Table 2: Type of Products Bought by the Consumers

S.No.	Type of Commodities	No. of Consumers	Percentage
a	Rice	177	40
b	Sugar	99	22
c	Kerosene	60	13
d	Groceries	14	03
e	Cosmetics	10	02
f	Textile	17	04
g	Textbook	54	12
h	Drugs	09	02
i	Others (Toys)	10	02
Total		450	100

Source: Primary data Computed

It is observed from the Table 2 depicts the type of products purchased by the consumers. Among the nine items, first three items come under the controlled commodities. Out of 450 consumers, 40 per cent, numbering 177 consumers were purchasing rice. Rice was the most wanted commodity by the consumers. Sugar and kerosene were the second and third most required commodities, which were purchased by 99 and 60 consumers respectively. Other than the first three items, others are the non-controlled items. Among these items groceries required commodity by 3 per cent, numbering 14 consumers was purchased them from the CCWS. Other items like, cosmetic, textile, textbook, drugs and others were purchased by 10, 17, 54, 9 and 10 consumers respectively. From this observation, the consumers preferred the CCWS only for the purchase of controlled goods.

Periodicity of Purchase

Periodicity of purchase is one of the indicators of sales in the business concern. Generally, the consumers prefer to visit the stores more frequently when they are satisfied with the services offered by them. Based on this assumption, an attempt is made to relate the frequencies of visits of consumers in the CCWS and so on are analyzed and given in Table 3.

Table 3: Periodicity of Purchase by the Consumers

S. No.	Mode of Purchase	No. of Consumers	Percentage
a	Daily	17	04
b	Weekly	98	22
c	Fortnightly	187	42
d	Monthly	113	25

e	Occasionally	15	02
f	Festival Time	20	05
Total		450	100

Source: Primary data Computed

It is noted from the Table 3 shows the 42 per cent, numbering 187 consumers buying the goods fortnightly, because, the CCWS's are distributing the ration goods to the people only fortnightly. About 25 per cent numbering 113 consumers bought once a month and 22 per cent, numbering 98 consumers purchase once in a week. Five per cent, numbering 20 consumers bought only in the festival time and 17 consumers (3 per cent) the goods daily. They were the regular customers about 15 consumers (2 per cent) only bought occasionally.

Consumers Satisfaction towards Monthly Consumption form CCWS.

Products or services are produced for purposes of consumption and purchasing power is used to correct production into consumption. Disposable incomes of respondents are potential purchasing power in the hands of he buyers. Thus the income and the purchase are co-related with each other. The family expenditure may influence the individuals' opinion of various events and functioning of the stores. The expenditure may be for the purpose of expenses such as rent, clothing, food, medicines, education, travel etc., these expenses also relating to purchase in CCWS. The data relating to expenditure are collected from the sample respondents, compiled and given below.

Table 4: Consumers Satisfaction towards Monthly Consumption from CCWS

S. No	Expenditures	No. of Consumers	Percentage
1	Up to Rs.1500	197	44
2	Rs.1501 to Rs.2000	147	33
3	Above Rs.2000	106	23
Total		450	100

Source: Primary data Computed

Table 4 clearly shows the monthly consumption from consumer stores. Among the 450 respondents, 197 respondents (44 per cent) are spent up to Rs.1500 per month in the consumer stores for their family. About 147 respondents (33 per cent) are spent amount of Rs.1501 to Rs.2000 and 106 respondents (23 per cent) only spent more than Rs.2000 in the CCWS. Mostly, the CCWS's are sold only the reasonable value products to the consumers, such as, rice, wheat, sugar, kerosene, soap, tooth paste etc., These commodities expenditure are not exceed the amount of Rs.2000 per month. In the rural and semi-urban people are prefer only the rice, sugar, wheat and kerosene from the CCWS. The urban people are preferred to purchase all the household consumer goods from the CCWS, because of the fair price and quality.

Suggestions

Based on the findings the following suggestions of the present study:

- ❖ Wholesale stores should take up both manufacturing and processing activities on a large scale. When this is done they will be able to strengthen their business.
- ❖ The quality of rationed commodities, especially rice, was poor during rainy season. The quality of rice suffers due to inefficient purchasing, processing and storing methods. So, efforts should make to streamline the system to provide good quality rice to the consumers.
- ❖ The consumer cooperative wholesale stores should have better location either in a predominant residential area or busy business centres to serve the consumers effectively. Apart from finding suitable locations to the stores, the business premises should be re-modeled and re-designed fashionably in order to attract more and more customers.
- ❖ Regarding the purchases, outside the state, the financially strong co-operative wholesale stores can undertake such purchase of pulses, spices and rice in collaboration with or in consultation with Tamil Nadu Consumers Cooperative Federation.
- ❖ The joint purchase committees are played a vital role in the purchasing of consumers goods from the supplying to consumers stores in Tamil Nadu. The JPCs are fulfilling the main objective of the public distribution system in India. They are regularly supplying the essential commodities to the weaker section of the people at fair price.

Conclusion

The present article concludes that, it is proved beyond that most of the consumers are satisfied on the services rendered by the CCWS under study. Many consumers opinion **agrees** get satisfaction in several aspects of functioning of the stores. Already pointed out the level of consumers' opinion (satisfaction) is the measuring rod about the performance of the stores. Therefore, it can be safely concluded that the performance of the CCWS is for from satisfactory directly to the consumers' perception and satisfaction.

References

1. Administrative Reports of the Registrar of Cooperative Societies, Chennai (Tamil Nadu) 31 March 2009.
2. *Consumer confrontation*", Vol. 10, No.4, July - August 2004. Ahmadabad, Consumer Education Research Centre, p.31.
3. Gopalan, M. "*The Sales Management of Trading and the Distribution Enterprises*", Tamil Nadu Journal of Cooperation Vol.82 No.7 January 1999, p.617-623.
4. Philip Kotler, "*Marketing Management*", Prentice Hall of India (P) Ltd., New Delhi, 1999, p.17.
5. Sivaprakasan "*Membership Participation in a Cooperative Supermarket*", Tamil Nadu Journal of Cooperation Vol.82, No.2, May 1990, p.98.