A STUDY ON CONSUMER PREFERENCES AND SATISFACTION IN CLOTHING RETAIL: A CASE OF SHREE SHIVAM, RAIPUR

Name - Ankit Rathi

Course - BBA-6-C

Enrollment no. - A80306422087

Guide - Dr Gazala yasmin Asarf

1. Abstract

This study aims to examine consumer preferences and satisfaction levels in the clothing retail industry, with a specific focus on SHREE SHIVAM, a popular retail chain in Raipur. As the retail clothing sector grows rapidly in India, understanding consumer behavior becomes vital for customer retention and business sustainability. The study utilizes both primary and secondary data, incorporating surveys and interviews to evaluate customer experiences, purchase motivations, product preferences, service quality perceptions, and overall satisfaction. The findings reveal key drivers of customer loyalty and offer strategic insights for improving product offerings, store environment, and service delivery. Recommendations are provided to enhance customer satisfaction and maintain competitive advantage in a dynamic retail landscape.

In today's dynamic and competitive retail environment, understanding consumer preferences and ensuring customer satisfaction have become crucial for business sustainability and growth. This study focuses on evaluating the consumer preferences and satisfaction levels in the clothing retail sector, with special reference to SHREE SHIVAM, a prominent apparel retail outlet in Raipur. The objective of the research is to analyze the key factors that influence customer preferences such as product variety, pricing, quality, brand availability, and in-store experience. It also aims to assess the level of customer satisfaction with regard to service quality, ambiance, staff behavior, and post-purchase services.

A structured questionnaire was administered to a sample of customers visiting the store, and both quantitative and qualitative data were collected. The study employs statistical tools to analyze patterns, correlations, and significant trends in consumer behavior. The findings suggest that product quality, diverse range, and courteous service are primary drivers of satisfaction, whereas pricing and waiting time are areas with potential for improvement.

This research provides valuable insights for SHREE SHIVAM to refine its marketing and customer service strategies. It also contributes to the broader understanding of consumer behavior in the Indian retail clothing industry.

Keywords: Consumer preferences, Customer satisfaction, Clothing retail, SHREE SHIVAM, Raipur, Retail strategy.

2. Introduction

The retail industry in India has witnessed tremendous growth over the past decade, especially in the apparel and fashion segment. Changing lifestyles, rising disposable incomes, urbanization, and growing fashion consciousness have transformed the way consumers shop. SHREE SHIVAM, with its expansive presence in Raipur, has established itself as a destination for ethnic and western wear, catering to diverse age groups and fashion preferences. This study explores how consumers engage with the brand, what factors influence their purchasing decisions, and how satisfied they are with their retail experience.

1. Background of the Study

In recent years, the Indian retail industry has experienced unprecedented growth, driven by a dynamic and expanding consumer base, changing demographics, and a surge in income levels. Among various segments within this sector, the clothing and apparel industry stands out as a major contributor to the country's economic development and consumer engagement. With increasing awareness of fashion trends, a shift toward branded products, and a growing inclination toward both online and offline retail platforms, consumers today are more selective, quality-conscious, and value-driven than ever before.

The transformation of India's clothing retail landscape is marked by the emergence of large-format retail stores and organized players that have redefined how people shop. This transition has fostered competition and innovation, especially in tier-2 and tier-3 cities, where aspirational middle-class consumers demand a wide variety of products at competitive prices. In this context, the role of consumer preferences and satisfaction becomes crucial in determining the success or failure of a retail brand.

SHREE SHIVAM, a leading clothing retail store located in Raipur, Chhattisgarh, offers an ideal case for studying consumer behavior and satisfaction in a semi-urban environment. Known for its expansive collection of ethnic, western, formal, and casual wear, SHREE SHIVAM serves a diverse clientele ranging from young professionals to homemakers and senior citizens. The store positions itself as a one-stop destination for family shopping, offering both affordability and premium choices across multiple brands.

2. Importance of Studying Consumer Preferences and Satisfaction

In the modern retail environment, understanding consumer preferences is no longer optional—it is a strategic imperative. Retailers who fail to grasp their customers' evolving needs, expectations, and behavior risk losing them to competitors offering better value, experience, and personalization. Consumer preference refers to the subjective tastes, likes, and choices individuals make while selecting products. Satisfaction, on the other hand,

measures how well a retailer meets or exceeds customer expectations in terms of product quality, availability, ambiance, price, service, and overall experience.

The interplay between preference and satisfaction forms the cornerstone of customer loyalty and brand advocacy. Satisfied customers are more likely to return, spread positive word-of-mouth, and contribute to the long-term sustainability of the retail business. In an era where customer empowerment is amplified by digital platforms and social media, a single negative experience can have widespread repercussions.

This study, therefore, aims to provide an in-depth understanding of what consumers want when they visit SHREE SHIVAM and how they evaluate their shopping experience. By collecting and analyzing data directly from the consumers, the study offers valuable insights into buying patterns, satisfaction levels, service gaps, and areas of improvement for the store.

3. Clothing Retail in India: An Overview

The Indian clothing retail industry is one of the largest globally, contributing significantly to GDP and employment. According to the Indian Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF), the apparel market in India is expected to grow to USD 135 billion by 2026. Factors such as increasing urbanization, the rise of nuclear families, growing youth population, and exposure to global fashion through media and e-commerce platforms have contributed to this trend.

Organized retail, which includes branded stores like SHREE SHIVAM, is gaining momentum, especially in tier-2 cities like Raipur. While traditional unorganized retail still holds a significant share, consumers are increasingly drawn toward organized formats due to factors such as better infrastructure, wider product range, promotional offers, and improved customer service.

Raipur, being the capital city of Chhattisgarh, has become a growing hub of commercial and retail activity. The retail ecosystem in the city has evolved rapidly in the last decade, with several malls, branded stores, and multi-brand outlets catering to the aspirations of the region's consumers. SHREE SHIVAM, with its emphasis on quality, variety, and customer experience, is a prominent player in this evolving retail landscape.

4. About SHREE SHIVAM

SHREE SHIVAM was established with the vision of offering a holistic clothing solution under one roof. The brand is known for its curated collection of apparel that caters to men, women, and children, and covers both traditional Indian wear and contemporary styles. The store houses products ranging from sarees, salwar suits, lehengas, sherwanis, kurtas, to casual shirts, jeans, and accessories. It serves not just as a clothing outlet but as an experience center where families can shop for multiple occasions like weddings, festivals, office wear, and casual outings.

What sets SHREE SHIVAM apart is its commitment to quality, customer service, and store aesthetics. The outlet in Raipur is well-lit, spacious, air-conditioned, and equipped with trained staff to assist customers throughout their shopping journey. The store also engages in seasonal sales, loyalty programs, and fashion events to connect with customers and build long-term relationships.

3. Literature Review (LR)

The literature review covers:

- Theories of consumer behavior in fashion retail
- Models of customer satisfaction (e.g., SERVQUAL)
- Brand image and store loyalty
- Importance of visual merchandising and service quality
- Studies on Indian clothing retail and consumer segmentation

4. Objectives

- To identify consumer preferences while shopping at SHREE SHIVAM.
- To measure customer satisfaction with products, services, and in-store experience.
- To examine factors influencing repeat purchases and brand loyalty.
- To analyze the effectiveness of store layout, staff behavior, pricing, and promotions.
- To suggest improvements for enhancing customer satisfaction.

5. Research Methodology (RM)

- **Type of Research**: Descriptive
- **Sample Size**: 120 customers of SHREE SHIVAM, Raipur
- **Sampling Technique**: Convenience sampling
- **Data Collection**: Structured questionnaire and face-to-face interviews
- **Data Analysis Tools**: Excel, SPSS (for frequency distribution, cross-tabulation, mean analysis)
- **Variables Studied**: Age, gender, income, shopping frequency, product preference, satisfaction scores, service quality, repeat purchase intent

6. Analysis and Interpretation

Data Analysis

The data for this study was collected through structured questionnaires administered to 150 respondents who visited SHREE SHIVAM in Raipur. The responses were analyzed using statistical tools such as percentages, averages, charts, and cross-tabulation to interpret consumer preferences and satisfaction levels.

1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Category	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	56%
	Female	44%
Age Group	Below 20	18%
	21–30	40%
	31–40	25%
	41 and above	17%
Occupation	Students	32%
	Working Professionals	38%
	Homemakers	18%
	Others	12%
Monthly Income	Below ₹15,000	21%
	₹15,001 – ₹30,000	36%
	₹30,001 – ₹50,000	27%
	Above ₹50,000	16%

2. Consumer Preferences

a. Factors Influencing Purchase Decisions

Factor	Highly Important (%)	Moderately Important (%)	Not Important (%)
Product Variety	68%	26%	6%
Brand Availability	60%	33%	7%
Price	55%	35%	10%
Quality of Fabric	72%	24%	4%
Store Ambience	46%	40%	14%
Staff Behavior	50%	38%	12%

b. Frequency of Visit

- Once a month – 45%
- Once in 3 months – 30%
- Rarely – 25%

c. Type of Products Purchased

- Ethnic Wear – 40%
- Formal Wear – 25%
- Casual Wear – 20%
- Accessories – 15%

3. Customer Satisfaction Levels

a. Satisfaction with Key Store Aspects

Store Aspect	Very Satisfied (%)	Satisfied (%)	Neutral (%)	Dissatisfied (%)
Product Quality	62%	30%	6%	2%
Variety & Availability	58%	34%	6%	2%
Price Range	40%	42%	12%	6%
Staff Courtesy	55%	35%	8%	2%
Billing & Checkout Time	30%	40%	20%	10%
Store Ambience	48%	37%	10%	5%

7. Findings

- Product range and brand image are major attractors.

- Staff courtesy and store layout enhance the shopping experience.

- Long billing queues and limited trial rooms are concerns.

- Loyal customers appreciate seasonal discounts and festive collections.

- Most consumers prefer offline shopping due to better product examination.

8. Suggestions

- Introduce a loyalty program to reward frequent shoppers.

- Improve checkout efficiency with digital kiosks.

- Expand trial room capacity during peak hours.

- Launch a mobile app or online catalog to support hybrid shopping.

- Regularly train staff for better customer interaction.

9. References

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