ANALYSIS OF RETAILER SATISFACTION TOWARDS THE PRODUCTS OF LION DATES IMPEX PVT LTD WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THANJAVUR REGION

B.Adhirai [1] and Dr.S.T.Surulivel [2]

[1]II Year MBA student, School of Management, SASTRA University, Thanjavur, South India
[2] Senior Assistant Professor, School of Management, SASTRA University, Thanjavur, South India

Email: [1]adhirai.saggi@gmail.com, [2]drsts@sastra.edu

Abstract—*The entire focus of the present study is to understand the retailer satisfaction towards various products of lion dates and find out the areas where the company needs to improve the service quality. The study was conducted by the researcher in Thanjavur region and the areas around the city. The objective of the project is to identify the satisfaction of the retailer towards various Lion Dates products. The research is based on the major components such as Quality, Credit policy, packaging, providing offers, schemes, etc., The factors influencing the retailer satisfaction are its Quality aspects, Supply chain performance, Credit policy, Marketing support, Business relationship building and Perception of New product launch. The research is conducted with the help of a questionnaire, a sample of 270 was taken. After the data collection, researcher has identified the reliability of the scale was tested through Cronbach Alpha (0.82) and the respondents were mostly men as compared to women. The analysis was done by using the statistical tools which reveal that most of the retailers satisfied with the lion dates products and based on that suggestion the product packaging & more offers, schemes, discounts needs to be considered. The introduction of new product in the market is recommended by most of the retailers. Finally, these suggestions will help to develop the company performance in future.*

Keywords—*Lion dates, Offers, Quality, Retailer, Satisfaction, Supply chain.*

INTRODUCTION

Marketing is about winning this new environment with respect to identification and fulfillment of customer needs and desires. In order to fulfill the demands of all segments of consumers the marketing It includes all the activities like promotion, distribution, advertising. It also converts social needs into profitable opportunities. So, this topic provides all the essentials to the theoretical knowledge with practical knowledge and to inculcate the efficiency. It is also a requirement for the company to improve its service and product quality to achieve the ultimate goal. In supply chain the part of an integrated system is called Retailer. Retailer's satisfaction has now become a major concern of the service providers in our country.

A retailer or retail store is any business Enterprises whose sales volume comes primarily from Retailing. The retailer purchases goods or products in large quantity from manufacture directly or through a wholesaler and then sells smaller quantity to the consumer for the profit. Retailing can be done in either fixed location like stores or markets or door to door. In Lion Dates retailers are the part of marketing channels and perform the work of moving Products from the distributor to the customers. To stay competitive, manufacturers have to identify advantages and disadvantages in all aspects of their relationships with retailers who are their customers in a supply chain context. Retailers are also in direct contact with consumers and hence having an effective interaction with retailers is crucial for manufacturers to have for the success of the whole system.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY
The main objective of the study is to examine the retailer satisfaction towards Lion Dates Products
- To know the availability of Lion Dates Products in the retail market.
- To collect the effectiveness and credit policy of the company.

- To know the Lion Dates product quality and distribution channel efficiency of products towards retailers.
- To study retailer satisfaction with price, packaging, offer, scheme, timely delivery, complaints handling, feedback hearing, etc.,
- To know the lion dates marketing support, Business relationship building and product satisfaction in the retail market.
- To know the retailer's perception towards New product launch.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The study is limited to a particular geographical area that is Thanjavur region and only the areas around the city.
- Regarding the sampling, 270 Samples were taken which was collected and analyzed is restricted to the researchers' knowledge and ability.
- Cost and time were also other limiting factors that affected the study.
- As retailer expectations and experiences include more of psychological aspects the survey made during a particular time period will give the information about the retailers during that particular time period. In order to be up-to-date in understanding the level of satisfaction periodic surveys are necessary.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- Research is an art of scientific investigation. It is defined as "A careful investigation or inquiry, especially through the search for new facts in any branch of knowledge."
- This study adopted Quantitative data was collected via a questionnaire which was primarily conducted to the retailers through face-to-face.
- The project was based on the survey plan. The main objective of the survey was to collect appropriate data, which work as a box for drawing conclusions and getting results.
- The data were obtained through the use of a structured questionnaire, cluster and convenience sampling.
- The data were analyzed by percentage method, frequencies and correlation. Charts and tables are also prepared.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Davis-Sramek, Droge, Mentzer and Myers (2009)

The Quality of the service is offered by a supplier helps in creating commitment and loyalty among retailers. The service quality is independently determined by the quality of different services like trade credits, display units, discount on bulk purchases, regular visits, etc. This study fills a gap by investigating retailer evaluations.

Curhan & Kopp (1987)

Curhan & Kopp (1987) states that manufacturer with strong and weaker brands. A manufacturer with strong brands mainly depends upon customer demand and may not have to opt for developing a close relationship with the retailer. On the other hand, a manufacturer with weaker brands mainly depends upon to achieve retailer cooperation and less capable of depending on the market demand.

Goaill, Perumal & Nor Azila (2013)

Goaill, Perumal & Nor Azila (2013) examining the influence of manufacturer brands' strength which is to be considered as a moderator in the relationship between retailer's satisfaction dimensions and its commitment. So, the manufacturer satisfies the retailers by giving the Product quality, discount, Pricing policy, etc. The retailer satisfaction leads to customer satisfaction and towards customer loyalty.

Geyskens and Steenkamp (2000)

According to Geyskens and Steenkamp (2000) states that the retailer's economic satisfaction is defined by the retailer evaluation from the relationship with the supplier. It describes the positive reaction from the supplier that stems from the economic rewards obtained like volume, profit margins and discounts.

Glynn (2010)

According to Glynn (2010) states that an unstable relationship between suppliers and retailers influence the manufacturer's strong brand. They also added that brand strength linked with B2B relationship because the handling of B2B relationship by the retailer and manufacturers determine the strong brand.

Greasley, Assi (2012)

Greasley, Assi (2012) states that among quality, pricing, packaging and manufacturer-retailer relationship the most important factor is the delivery from retailers' view point. This theory describes two important attribute such as delivery and logistics which directly affects the retailers.

Hamister (2012)

Hamister (2012) explains that supply chain management practices are positively related to the retail and supplier levels. The goal of supply chain management is increasing customer value and achieving a sustainable competitive advantage in the supply chain. It covers all the activities such as product development, sourcing, production, and logistics, inorder to coordinate these activities the information systems also required.

Piercy (2010)

According to Piercy (2010) describes that competition strategy is primarily analysed based on the cooperative channel settings and contingently interpreted for competitive situations between channel. For a long time if the manufacturers have cooperated with retailers contact the end-users also satisfied with this approach.

Gueimonde-Canto (2011)

In Gueimonde-Canto (2011), the retailer satisfaction has huge impact on supply chain management so they maintain contingent cooperative relationships with both their suppliers and customers. To satisfy the retailers the manufacturers should concentrate in the supply chain system.

Ren, Oh, & Noh (2010)

In Ren, Oh, & Noh (2010), the developing countries the manufacturers and large retailer relationship significantly different from those of developed countries in many aspects. To assess the validity of existing marketing theories in the context of developing countries is a real need.

O'Brain (2010)

According to O'Brain (2010) talks about relationship quality between retail relationships and loyalty. The loyalty program quality and Page personal interaction quality are an antecedent to investigate the relationship quality in retail relationships. Credit policy plays an important role in relationship development between the retailer and supplier. This gap will be filled by the dissertation.

Vlachos and Bourlakis (2006)

According to Vlachos and Bourlakis (2006) in today's competitive markets, to develop joint marketing programs and to increase their performance channel members are increasingly looking for having fewer but stronger relationships with their partners. The strong relationship build up by the retailer satisfaction based on the products.

Ramanathan,V (2001)

Ramanathan,V (2001) states that the strategies adopted by the FMCG companies to satisfy the retailing channel by using various components and policies.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1- Frequency Analysis of Demographic Variables

Variables	*Category*	*Frequency*	*Percentage frequency*
Gender	Male	211	78.1
	Female	59	21.9
	Total	270	100
Age of the respondent	18-26	78	28.9
	27-40	134	49.6
	Above 41	58	21.5
	Total	270	100

Type of outlet	Grocery store	150	55.6
	Departmental store	38	14.1
	Super market	32	11.8
	Others	50	18.5
	Total	270	100
Educational qualification	Schooling	168	62.2
	UG	98	34.8
	PG	4	3.0
	Total	270	100
Industry experience	Fresher	48	17.8
	1-5 years	160	59
	Above 5 years	62	23
	Total	270	100
Monthly income	Below 20000	21	7.8
	20000-30000	161	59.6
	Above 30000	88	32.6
	Total	270	100

Source: Primary data

The demographic characteristics of the respondents are depicted in Table 1. The detailed analysis of descriptive statistics revealed that male respondents (78.1%) are more than female respondents (21.9%). The overall majority of the respondents age was in the range of 27-40 yrs, accumulating a total of 49.6%. Around 55.6% respondent's stores are grocery stores, 18.5% respondent's stores are other stores, 14.1% respondent's stores are departmental stores and 11.8% respondent's stores are supermarket. In terms of the respondents' educational level, the majority 62.2% indicated to have completed schooling, followed by U.G degree with around 34.8% influence on the survey. Most of the respondent's industry experience was in the range of 1-5yrs, accumulating a total of 59%. The monthly income level of most of the respondents are in the range of 20000-30000 with around 59.6%.

Table 2: **Relationship Between Product Awareness Level in The Market and Low Price Fixation of The Product**

| *Correlation*	*Product awareness level in the market*	*Low price fixation of the product*
Product awareness level in the market	1	0.005

Above table 2 shows that there is a weak relationship between Product awareness level in the market and Low price fixation of the product. This means that changes in Product awareness level in the market are not correlated with the changes in Low price fixation of the product. Finally, it concludes that these variables were not strongly correlated.

Table 3: **Correlation Between Quality of Lion Dates Product is Satisfying Customer Needs & Demands and Quality of Lion Dates Product is Consistent**

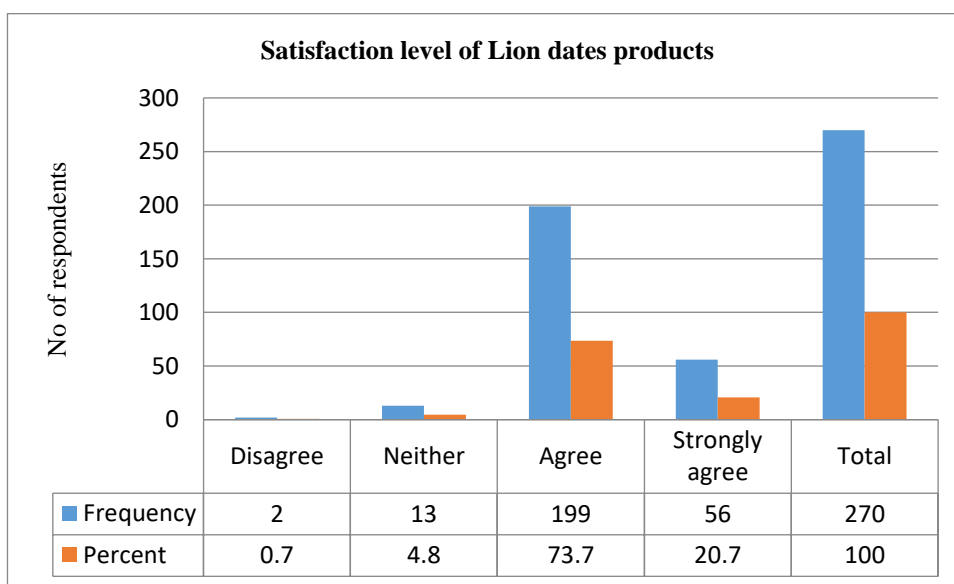| *Correlation*	*Quality of lion dates product is satisfying customer needs & demands*	*Quality of lion dates product is consistent*
Quality of lion dates product is satisfying customer needs & demands	1	0.676

Above table 3 shows that there is a strong relationship between Quality of lion dates product is satisfying customer needs & demands and Quality of lion dates product is consistent. This means that changes in consistent product quality are correlated with the changes in product quality satisfying customer needs and demands. Finally, it concludes that these variables were strongly correlated.

Chart 1: Frequency Analysis of Comfortable Offers, Discounts, Schemes Provided by Lion Dates

Comfortable offers,discounts,schemes provided by lion dates
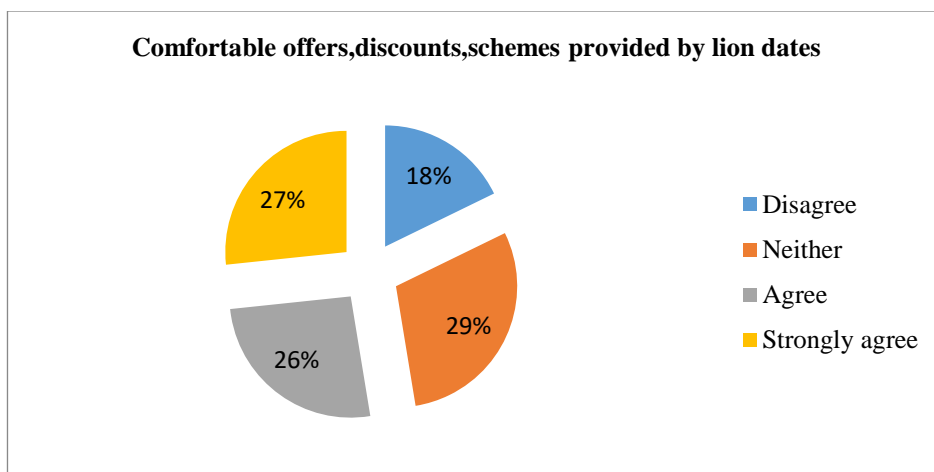
Above chart 1 indicates that 29% of respondents are moderately satisfied with the offers, schemes, discounts provided by lion dates. 27% of respondents are satisfied and 18% of respondents are disagree with the lion dates providing comfortable offers, discounts, schemes.

Chart 2: Satisfaction Level of Lion Dates Products When Compared to Other Brands

Satisfaction level of Lion dates products

|	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
■ Frequency	2	13	199	56	270
■ Percent	0.7	4.8	73.7	20.7	100

Above chart 2 shows that level of satisfaction with Lion dates products when compared to other brands. This reveals that 73.7% of respondents are satisfied with lion dates products, next to that 20.7% of respondents had strongly agree with the satisfaction level of lion dates products when compared to other brands.

Table 4: Based on Demand of New Product Introduction in The Market

Particulars	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Neither	55	20.4
Agree	134	49.6
Strongly agree	81	30
Total	270	100

Source**:** Primary data

Chart 3: Demand of New Product Introduction in The Market
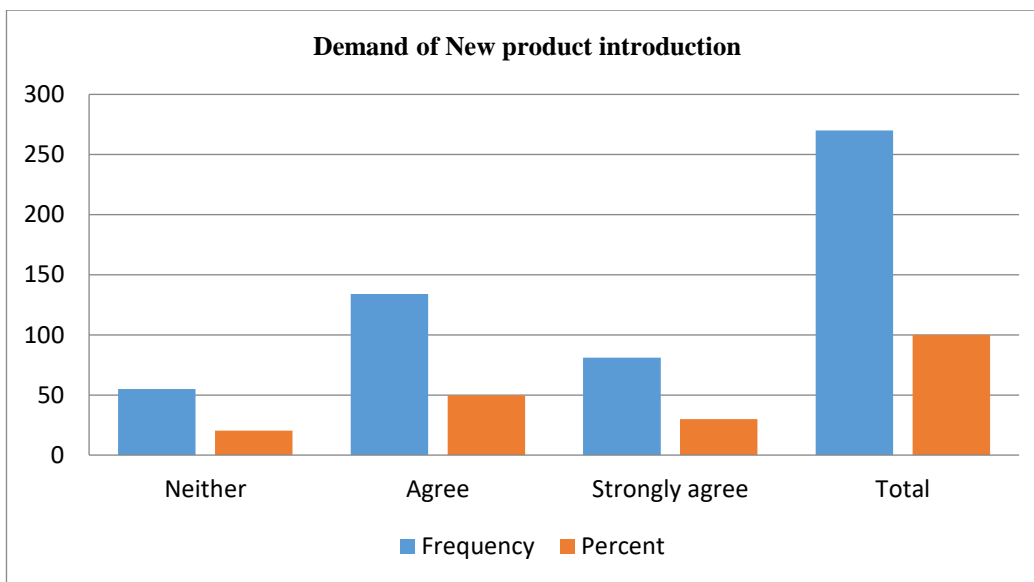
Above chart 3 resulted that 49.6% of respondents had strongly agree with the new product introduction in the market and 20.4% of respondents are moderately satisfied with the demand of new product introduction in the market.

Table 5: One Way ANOVA

Particulars	F	Sig (5%)
Gender	3.442	0.065
Type of outlet	0.674	0.412
Industry Experience	9.572	0.002
How long years the shop has been running	0.028	0.868
Any other products other than lion dates	0.555	0.457

Null Hypothesis: H_0 – There is no significant difference between the sales of lion dates products and other factors.

From the table 5 it depicts that the significance of F is more than 0.05 for these factors such as Gender (0.065), Type of outlet (0.412), Number of years the shop has been running (0.868) and sales of other products than lion dates (0.457). So, the null hypothesis is accepted and it is concluded that there is no significant difference between the sales of lion date products and other factors such as Gender, Type of outlet, Number of years the shop has been running, sales of other products than lion dates

FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS & CONCLUSION

From this study, it has been found that the retailers who had completed their schooling has higher impact of running the retail stores. Most of the respondents are running the grocery stores and higher number of respondents satisfied with the Lion Dates products. The Quality, Supply Chain Performance, Marketing Support has a greater influence on retailer satisfaction.

On the basis of data analysis and interpretations, the following suggestions can be made. As per retailers' suggestion the product packaging & more offers, schemes, discounts need to be considered. The introduction of new product in the market is recommended by most of the retailers with low price. All the factors considered in the study have a positive relationship with retailer satisfaction. The lion dates should consider these factors as important for overall development. Hence it is important to understand the retailer's suggestions for improvements in service levels. Implementing these improvements will not only promote positive attitude of the retailers, in turn, it will also pass on as positive word of mouth to the customers encouraging larger client base and profits to the company.

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