

OPEN ACCESS

Volume: 7

Issue: 1

Month: July

Year: 2019

ISSN: 2321-4643

Received: 04.06.2019

Accepted: 24.06.2019

Published: 01.07.2019

Citation:

Swapna Chander, T., and Anil Karanjkar. "A Study on the Strategies and Practices Adopted by Consumer Cooperative Store for Sustainable and Resilient Society: A Case of Bharati Madhyawarti Sahakari Grahak Bhander Ltd."

Shanlax International Journal of Management, vol. 7, no. 1, 2019, pp. 9-24.

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.34293/management.v7i1.544>



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

A Study on the Strategies and Practices Adopted by Consumer Cooperative Store for Sustainable and Resilient Society: A Case of Bharati Madhyawarti Sahakari Grahak Bhander Ltd.

T.Swapna Chander

Research Officer, Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of Cooperative Management, Pune

Anil Karanjkar

Professor, Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of Cooperative Management, Pune

Abstract

Historically, the Indian retail sector has been dominated by small independent players such as traditional, small grocery stores and others. Especially Consumer cooperatives played a vital role to safeguard the consumers from the charge of intermediaries and to provide quality goods to consumers in the desired quantity and at reasonable prices. Recently organized, multi-outlet retail concept has gained acceptance and has since then accelerated. Information Communication Technology has also transformed the consumer buying behavior. Indian cities are witnessing a paradigm shift from traditional forms of retailing into a modern organized sector. In spite of several obstacles, there are some consumer cooperatives which have withstood and recovered from difficult conditions to stay in competition and performing well. Bharati Madhyawarti Sahakari Grahak Bhander Ltd is one such Consumer Cooperative store which is battling with modern retail environment. This study brings out the strategies and practices of Bharati Consumer Cooperative store to be sustainable and resilient. The study also analyzes the customer's perception towards the consumers' cooperative store and identifies the Store Choice Behaviour among the Consumers.

Keywords: Consumer Cooperative, Customer's Perception, Store Choice Behaviour among the Consumers.

Introduction

Consumer cooperatives in India have been serving as an important institutional structure in the distribution of various items of essential consumer goods throughout the country and thus put forth a healthy influence on prices of commodities of mass consumption. In early days, the consumer cooperatives stores were mainly utilized for the distribution of controlled and subsidized goods. With the development of consumer awareness, consumer cooperatives have now become an indispensable part of retail trade in the country. Consumer cooperatives in India had a glorious past and had played a pivotal role in safeguarding and promoting the interest of consumers who are exposed to various problems such as rising prices, under-weight, and adulteration of goods, false labelling and the like. The purpose of the Consumers' Co-operatives is elimination of the middlemen. The greater the indulgence of the middlemen, in adding unreasonable margin of profits at various levels of the trade channels.

The consumer co-operative societies support the government in distributing the essentialities to rural and urban areas of our country. These Consumer Cooperative Societies have become very important day by day. The emergence of Consumer Cooperatives has saved the consumers from financial exploitation and hardship. According to Banishree Das., et al (2006)¹, consumer cooperatives were a role model and public were mostly depended on these consumer cooperative stores which resulted cooperatives an extra edge over the private traders. Until the 2000s, these consumer cooperatives stores were the go-to places not just for grocery but also for the branded goods. A lot of old-timers even now visit Consumer Cooperatives looking to buy pulses, rice and spices at subsidised rates. But the new generation does not know what the consumer cooperative stores are all about. After liberalisation, every foreign brand arrived in India and imported items lost their lure, and cooperative stores lost their customers. The market economy in the post-liberalisation era made difficult to cooperative stores to cope up.

After Liberalization and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in retail, shopping habits of Indian customers have drastically changed. The shopping priorities, decision-making approach of the consumers are changing every day. Consumers are shifting from traditional stores like Kirana, Consumer Cooperative Store and street side vendors to malls, supermarkets and hypermarkets. Consumers prefer malls, supermarkets and hypermarkets which intends pollution free, air-conditioned shopping ambience. For the consumers lacking confidence on bargaining and preferring to avoid crowded places and crammed market spots, shopping malls come in handy (Khan, F. et al (2015))².

According to Kshirsagar, R. (2016)³ large supermarkets have changed the retail business landscape in the country. Supermarkets fascinated

- 1 Das, B., Palai, N. and Das, K. (2006). Problems and Prospects of the Cooperative Movement in India under the Globalization Regime.
- 2 Khan, F. and Sharma, S. (2015). A Study of Consumer Behavior towards Grocery Retailing In Delhi Region of National Capital Region of India.
- 3 Kshirsagar, R. (2016). An Analysis of Factors to Consumer Buying Behaviour towards Organized Retailing.

the public through larger store formats, more shelf space, an increased variety of goods and services with extensive marketing strategies. These supermarkets were then the crowd pullers. After Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) policy permits in retails in 2012, large private players like Reliance, Big Bazaar, Star Bazaar and E commerce giants like Flipkart, Snapdeal entered into the retail market and has totally conquered the market. Apart from Indian players, foreign retail giants like Wall-Mart, TESCO and online giants like Amazon and eBay have become huge competition for the consumer cooperatives.

The Indian retail industry has emerged as one of the most dynamic and fast-paced industries due to the entry of several new players. Total consumption expenditure is expected to reach nearly US\$ 3,600 billion by 2020 from US\$ 1,824 billion in 2017. It accounts for over 10 per cent of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and around 8 per cent of the employment. India is the world's fifth-largest global destination in the retail space. At the same time, online retail is also expected to be at par with the physical stores in the next five years and it has grown 23 per cent to \$17.8 billion in 2017. India is also expected to become the world's fastest growing e-commerce market, driven by robust investment in the sector and rapid increase in the number of internet users. Indian e-commerce sales are expected to reach US\$ 200 billion by 2026 from US\$ 39 billion in 2017⁴. Such huge retail corporate has made the survival of Consumers Cooperatives very difficult. In spite of several hurdles there are some consumer cooperatives which have withstood and recovered from difficult conditions to stay in competition and performing well. The study will analyze the customer's perception towards the consumers' cooperative store and identify the Store Choice Behaviour among the Consumers. The paper will bring out the strategies and practices of Consumer Cooperative store to be sustainable and resilient.

Literature Review

S. Kumar (2015) stated that consumers are concerned not only with the merchandise, physical surroundings, promotional schemes and personal

4 <https://www.ibef.org/industry/retail-india.aspx>

interaction but also with after sales services⁵, entertainment and security arrangements. Organized retail outlets need to enhance product quality and store convenience, and after sales services to improve customer satisfaction. Organized retail outlets must assure quality and availability of new products and attractive promotional schemes, sufficient security arrangements and enhance consumer satisfaction.

Norazlan, H, (2015) studied the challenges faced by The Malaysian Consumer Cooperatives. He examined the challenges faced by the consumer cooperatives in conducting its retail activities in Peninsular Malaysia⁶. He mentioned that the sustainability of the cooperatives in the future is very crucial especially in promoting the social wellbeing and uplifting the economics and living of the members as it was purported on the agenda of the establishment. Vital strategies need to be regenerated, while certain practices of cooperatives need to be revamped. More professional and educationally qualified candidates to hold position in cooperatives, Effective HRM practices, networking and cooperation with other cooperatives and the local industries and support from the Government Agencies especially on the review the government's policy on cooperative to instigate healthy competitions between them and private operators. Goswami and Mishra (2009) found that consumer patronage behaviour positively related to store location, helpful & trustworthy sales personnel, cleanliness, offers, quality and suggested that the organized retailer is preferred for their cleanliness, offers and exclusive store brands. Organized retailers score better over the kiranas, which is indicative that the consumers need for better attributes in terms of their demand for offers, cleanliness and store brands. Furthermore promptness in store service, multiple counters, long working hours, handling consumer complaints, hassle free sales transactions, parking facility, home delivery facility are the dimensions identified for retail store choice

L. Bhatti, et al (2015) studied the components effecting customer store decision. Results

5 Kumar, S. (2016). A Study On Consumer Attitude And Buying Behaviour Towards Organized Retail Stores In Erode District, Tamil Nadu

6 Norazlan, H, (2015). Challenges facing the Malaysian Consumer Cooperatives: A Case Study

demonstrated that the purchaser's decision of store conduct is essentially identified with area of the outlet; children play territory and shopping zone. The study recommends that variables like area of the store, children play territory and shopping zone serve as solid jolt, impacting and moving the client and lean toward the store. Effectively this study shows estimation of area of the store, children play range and shopping region in accommodating purchaser' store decision.

Carpenter and Moore, (2006) Demographic factors such as age, gender, marital status, income, female working status, education, occupation and family size exert enormous influence on choice of store format in grocery retailing .

Research Objectives

The objectives of the study are

1. To analyze the customers perception towards the consumers' cooperative store.
2. To identify the Store Choice Behaviour among the consumers of cooperative store.
3. To explore the strategies and business practices of the Consumer Cooperative store to be sustainable and resilient.

Research Methodology

The study aims to know the customers perception towards the consumers' cooperative store and Store Choice behaviour among the consumers of cooperative store and find out the strategies and business practices of the Consumer Cooperative store to be sustainable in the market. To study these objectives, following methodology was adopted:

Pune city was selected for the study, due to its retail boom. In Pune city, giant retailers like D-Mart, Megamart, Shopper's stop, Pantaloons, Zodiac, Westside, Lifestyle and Globus have stepped in, at the same time Pune has 5 wholesale and 32 primary consumers cooperatives like Apna Bazar, Poona Taximen Consumers Co-Op Society Limited, Shyadri Mdhyavarti Sahakari Grahak Sang Myradit, Bharati Madhyawarti Sahakari Grahak Bhander ltd etc giving a hard-hitting fight against such huge players. The study was conducted on one of the well-established Cooperative Consumer Store "Bharati Madhyawarti Sahakari Grahak Bhander ltd". The Consumer store

was selected purposively based on its profitability, large capital base and reliable network of branches in Pune city. The BMSGBL store was established in the year 1973 in pune. The most important factor about the consumer this Store is that it was the first to establish the self service centre/department store in Pune. The primary data was collected from the customers of Bharati Madhyawarti Sahakari Grahak Bhandar in Pune city. The survey was conducted on the randomly selected 60 respondents from the BMSGBL customers. Primary data were collected with the aid of pretested interview schedule during the month of October 2018. The Secondary data was collected from Bharati Madhyawarti Sahakari Grahak Bhandar ltd annual reports from 2015 to 2018, other BMSGBL reports, documents, pamphlets, written material on the consumer cooperatives and text book, articles, journals periodicals. The parameters investigated in the study were:

1. Customers responsible for the choice of retail outlets.
2. Do BMSGBL alert and rational for the development of the Consumer Store?
3. Do BMSGBL provide satisfactory facilities and services to their members and customers?
4. What are special schemes are offered to attract the customers?
5. What are the strategies implemented to overcome the competition of giant players and E commerce players?

A simple easy to understand questionnaire consisting of close ended questions were used for data collection from Consumers and officials of the Consumer Store. Questionnaire seeking personal information and socio economic status about the respondent like the name, age, sex, qualification, occupation, Marital status, and Income level. Questionnaire related to factors influencing the

buying behaviour and factors affecting the consumer buying process were interviewed to customers. Data was collected and analysed using SPSS package. The percentage analysis, ANOVA Test and Independent t-Test are used to analyze the data and to examine the relationship between store image, store brand factors, consumer satisfaction and store loyalty.

Bharati Madhyawarti Sahakari Grahak Bhandar Ltd

Dr. Patangrao Kadam is an educationist and founder of Bharati Vidyapeeth established Bharati Central Cooperative Consumer Store locally called as Bharati Madhyawarti Sahakari Grahak Bhandar Ltd (BMSGBL). The Consumer cooperative store was established in the year 1973 with a view to make the items of daily consumption available to the common man at reasonable prices at his door steps. The Cooperative Consumer Store is located in the heart of Pune city. Bharati Madhyawarti Sahakari Grahak Bhandar was the first Consumer Store in Pune to establish Self Service Centre/Department Store. The area of operation of the store is extended to the whole of Maharashtra state through its branches. The store has two branches in Pune, one in Sangli and one at Kadegaon. The Store also runs other allied units, which include Bharati Medical Store (Pune), Bharati Gas Agency (Pune), Bharati Wholesale Trading Agency, Bharati Krishi Seva Kendra (Kadegaon).

All the branches of the Store and its constituent units are rendering quality services to their customers. Its annual turnover was Rs. 43 crores at the end financial year 2017-18. The consumer store offers home delivery system to their customers which are highly recognized. The Store organizes various sale festivals, like Annual Rice Festival. However, this Store and its branches have won the confidence of their clients and have established their reputation.

Table 1 Glimpse of Bharati Madhyawarti Sahakari Grahak Bhandar Ltd

Year	Membership (in no's)	Growth Rate	Share Capital (Rs. in lakhs)	Growth Rate	Gross Profit (Rs. in lakhs)	Net Profit (Rs. in lakhs)
2015	4093	1.34%	16.04	2.93%	349.53	-23.08
2016	4861	15.80%	23.62	32.09%	349.08	8.14
2017	5049	3.72%	23.09	-2.30%	364.91	24.66
2018	5213	3.15%	23.32	0.99%	374.52	25.51

Source: BMSGBL Annual Report 2017-18

Table 1 (a) Membership and share Capital

Sr. No.	Particular	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
1.	Total Membership (in no's)	4093	5044	5049	5213
	Individual Membership	4043	4994	4999	5163
	Cooperative Societies	49	49	49	49
	Government of Maharashtra	1	1	1	1
2.	Paid up share capital (Rs in Lakhs)	16,03,695	23,62,070	23,09,445	23,32,420
	Individual Membership	11,93,195	20,15,570	20,26,945	21,13,920
	Cooperative Societies	23,500	23,500	23,500	23,500
	Government of Maharashtra	3,87,000	3,23,000	2,59,000	1,95,000

Source: BMSGBL Annual Report 2017-18

The Table 1 shows the details of membership, share capital, gross and net Profit of Bharati Central Cooperative Consumer Store Ltd. From the table it's clear that membership has steadily increased from 4093 in the year 2015 to 5213 in the year 2018. The maximum growth rate was at 15.80 % in the 2016, which is considered to be highest achieved growth rate. As far as share capital is concerned, the share capital during the year 2015 was at 16.04 lakhs and has increased to 23.32 lakhs till March 2018. The Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) for share capital is 11.7%. The share capital declined from 32.09% in 2016 to -2.30% in the year is due decrease in government share from Rs 3,23,000 in the year 2015-15 to Rs 2,59,000 in the year 2016-17 and thereafter the share capital has creeping up by 1% which is indicated in table 1(a). The Gross Profit has increased gradually from Rs.349.53 lakhs in the year 2015 to Rs.374.52 lakhs in the year 2018. The Net Profit had wide fluctuation, during the years 2015. The store has sustained a loss of Rs 23.08 lakhs during 2015 is due to some expansion plan initiated by the Store. At the end of March 2018, the net profit of the store was Rs 25.51 Lakhs.

Business Practices of Bharati Central Cooperative Consumer Store

Akshay Deposit Scheme

Akshay Deposit Scheme was introduced on 13th April 1994. In Akshay deposit scheme a Member can deposit minimum of Rs.10, 000/- for a period of 12 months. The rate of interest for this deposit is 12 per cent. Each Member is given 12 coupons worth of Rs.100/- each for each deposit of Rs.10, 000/- in

the opening of deposit. The interesting observation to be noted that the Member is getting cash coupons in the beginning itself which is in fact the interest paid in the end when the amount is deposited. These coupons are used for purchases of products from the Bharati Central Cooperative Consumer Store. During March 2018, there were 836 depositors with Rs 251.45 lakhs. Compared to 2017, the store has increased the deposits by Rs 9.25 lakhs.

Table 2 No. of Depositors and Deposits

(Rs. in lakhs)

Year	No of Depositors	Deposits
2011-2012	600	182.10
2012-2013	642	203.60
2013-2014	637	214.90
2014-2015	640	224.10
2015-2016	636	230.70
2016-2017	819	242.20
2017-2018	836	251.45

Source: BMSGBL Annual Report 2017-18

The Table 2 shows the status of Akshay Deposit Scheme. The number of depositors during 2011-12 were 600 and in 2017-18 its 836. The 28 percent of depositors have been increased since 2011. The total amount of Akshay Deposit is Rs.2.51 crores and there are approximately 836 depositors. It was observed during the discussion that some of the members have a deposit of Rs.4 lakh and every month they purchase goods worth Rs. 4000/-. It is interesting to note that the Store is depending on the Loyal Members who always buy from the store only.

Deepavali Gift

As a part of sales promotion and to attract the customer during Deepavali festival, Bharati Central Cooperative Consumer Store has incited an unique strategy to attract the customers. The Store sells Deepavali Gift package which included 18 products like pulses, foodgrains, soaps, etc. As per the market price the total cost of that particular products are Rs.675/-, but BMSGBL offers at Rs 575 as a Deepavali gift package along with gift items like shopping bag etc. During the current year nearly 2,288 customers have benefited by this gift scheme.

Food grain & School Notebook Festival

Bharati Central Cooperative Consumer Store as sale promotion activity prompted food grain and school notebook festival. During the food grain festival, different types of special variety of rice and grain are available for the customers. The customers are attracted to buy rice and grain in bulk quantity as the quality is good. During Food grain & School Notebook Festival, the total sales was at Rs.43,30,000/-. In notebook festival, well-known Company's notebooks, school bags and school stationeries were also available for the sale at wholesale rate.

Purchases

Bharati Central Cooperative Consumer Store has a licensed wholesale market at the Market Yard, in Pune. This enables them to procure the agriculture produce directly from the farmers and enables them to pay a better price thus avoiding middleman. The benefit of paying lesser prices for the produce is passed on to the consumers. The Distributors visit the store every week and the stock is maintained in Godowns for eight days. The General Manager and Managers of all branches decide the items to be purchases based on the requirements. The Dealers periodically visit the store and supply the articles.

The Price Fixation is done on the basis of the products. The margin normally ranges from 5 to 25 per cent. In certain cases, it was observed that the margin was even 200 per cent. The Manager of the Store revealed that certain items which cost very low they keep higher margin as the consumer will not feel the pinch of it. It needs to be mentioned here that the

cooperative being a Business Institution and it needs to look into the Enterprise Values. It is suggested that other stores can follow this practice of price fixation.

Store Outlets

The Store has four outlets at different places namely Kadegaon, Sangli, Hadapsar and the Head Office at L.B. Sastri Road, Pune. It also operates Gas Agency and deals with Groceries, Food and Non-Food Items, Cosmetics, Household, Hosiery and Stationary etc. The store accepts debit cards/all Credit Cards which is a pointer for other consumer cooperatives in the country to follow suit. Separate offers are provided on Saturday and Sunday to attract customers.

Free Home Delivery

Bharati Central Cooperative Consumer Store offers free home delivery for the benefit of the customers who physically visit the store. Free delivery is practiced by distributing the consumer articles to the customer's resident within the range 10 kilometers subject to the condition that they need to purchase for at least Rs. 2,000/- or more. The Store charges a nominal fee of Rs.40/- as service charges for delivering goods at the houses of the Members.

Mobile Call & Whatsapp Orders

The consumer store for the benefit of the customers has introduced shopping through Telephone/Mobile phone and through whatsapp. The price list of the products is sent to regular customers through mobile phones and whatsapp. Seeing the price list, the customer's order their products through phone/whatsapp and the products will be delivered to their respective home. To render this facility, the customer has to order products on and above Rs 2000 within the range 10 kilometers. The store has provided this facility to more than 1,300 to 1,400 regular customers.

Employees Welfare Fund

Bharati Central Cooperative Consumer Store is always keen in interest of the Employee's self-development and self-respect. The BMSGBL has provided schemes like Pension Fund, Group Gratuity, and accident Insurance etc. Without the support of the employees as well as from the grass

root level staff it would not be possible for BMSGBL to develop and improve its functions. BMSGBL has provided unique uniform to all Staff giving them identity in the Store. This has also created the brand image of the store. There are about 130 employees working in Cooperative Consumer Store.

Technology Adoption at Bharati Central Cooperative Consumer Store Ltd

Bharati Central Cooperative Consumer Store is working on the ERP solution called SANVIK Retail-whizz based on ORACLE RDBMS. The store integrated with modules like: Integrated Financial Accounting with Consolidation, Reconciliation, Cheque printing and Management Information System, Barcode Adapted Stock & Inventory Control System, Automated Purchase Ordering and Forecasting, Customer Relationship Management (CRM), PayGoal - Complete Payroll, Attendance & Leave Management and Human Resource Information System and Shareholder Information and Dividend Processing System. The consumer store also accepts all payment cards (debit/credit).

Data Analysis and Discussion

General Information and Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Respondents

General Information and Socio-economic characteristics are a combined measure of an individuals or family’s economic and social position based on education, income, and occupation. Respondent’s age,

Table 3 General Information and Socio-Economic Characteristics

Variable	Attribute	Frequency	% of Respondents Frequency
Age	Below 20	4	6.7
	20-29	18	30.0
	30-39	22	36.7
	40-49	12	20.0
	50-59	2	3.3
	Over 60	2	3.3
Gender	Male	22	36.7
	Female	38	63.3

Marital Status	Married	46	76.7
	Unmarried	14	23.3
Education	Below SSC	2	3.3
	SSC/Diploma	4	6.7
	Graduate	48	80
	PG and above	6	10
Profession	Housewife	28	46.7
	Salaried	19	31.7
	Business	10	16.7
	Others	3	5.0
Monthly Income	Up to 10,000	0	0
	10,000- 20,000	2	3.3
	20,000-30,000	32	53.3
	30,000- 40,000	18	30.0
	Above 40,000	8	13.3
Family Type	Nuclear Family	49	81.7
	Joint family	11	18.3

Source: Primary data

Gender, education level, income, profession, marital status, family type was found to have statistically significant effect on consumer belief to purchase from cooperative consumer store. Total respondents interviewed were 60. The information about the respondents are discussed below in Table 3. For the purpose of analyzing the impact of socio-economic factors on consumer choice attributes such as age, gender, marital status, education, profession, Monthly income and family structure were considered. It was found that the dominating age group of respondent was 30-39, that contributes 36.7 percent of the sampled population, followed by 20-29 age (30.0 percent). The study showed that the 76.7 percent of the respondent were married. Sampled population also showed varieties of profession (i.e business, salaried, housewife, consultant, educationist etc.) out of the 60 respondents 28 respondents representing 46.7 percent were housewives. 19 respondents representing 31.7 percent were salaried. Another interesting aspect was that 90 percent of the population was holding the graduate or above degree.

Table 4 Distance travelled to BMSGBL Store

Variable	Attribute	Frequency	% of Respondents Frequency
Distance travelled to store	< 1 Km	13	21.7
	1 to 2 Km	22	36.7
	2 to 3 Km	18	30.0
	3 to 4 Km	4	6.7
	> 4 Km	3	5.0
	Total	60	100

Source: Primary data

To know the catchment area of the store, the respondents travelling distance was taken into consideration. It was found that 7 respondents representing 11.66 percent were travelling more than 3 Km for the store. 88.33% of the respondents were within the radius of 3 Km. It's evident from the table no. 4 that 85 percent of the customers were nearby residents.

Table 5 Commodity-Wise Purchases of BMSGBL

Variable	Attribute	Frequency	% of Respondents Frequency
Commodity- Wise Purchases	Grocery / Provisions	52	86.0
	Textile/Readymade	NA	NA
	Stationary	13	21.6
	Cosmetics	16	26.6
	Household appliance	26	43.3
	Electrical/Electronic	NA	NA
	Medicines	NA	NA
	Fruits & vegetables	NA	NA

Source: Primary data

It is observed from Table No. 5 that out of total 60 respondents 52 respondents which constitute 86.0 percent purchase groceries / provisions from BMSGBL which is recorded the single largest group. While second, third and fourth largest commodity wise groups are that of household appliances (43.3 percent), cosmetics (26.6 per cent) and stationary (21.6 per cent) respectively. Remaining commodities textile, Electrical/Electronic, medicines and Fruits & vegetables were not available in the store.

Table 6 Reasons for Buying Goods from BMSGBL

Variable	Attribute	Frequency	% of Respondents Frequency
Reasons for Buying Goods	Nearer to Resident	28	46.67
	Nearer to Office	11	18.33
	Attractive Display	21	35.00
	Value for Money	49	81.67
	Good Brand Name of the store	55	91.67
	Availability of Specific Products	12	20.00
	Affordable Prices	25	41.67
	Trust Worthy Products	12	20.00
	Service of Employees	22	36.67
	Extensive Varieties of Products	05	8.33
	Wide Range of Promotional Offers	51	85.00
	Emotional Attachment	53	88.33

Source: Primary data

The reason for buying goods from BMSGBL is depicted in Table 6. It is clear from table that the most important reasons for buying goods from cooperative consumer store is Good Brand Name of the store (91.67 percent), Emotional Attachment (88.33 percent), Wide Range of Promotional Offers (85.00 percent), Value for Money (81.67 percent), Affordable Prices (41.67 percent) and Nearer to Resident (46.67 percent). It is worth noting that Good Brand Name of the store alone contributed to more than 90.0 per cent of total preferences.

Table 7 Door Delivery of Goods

Variable	Attribute	Frequency	% of Respondents Frequency
Door Delivery of Goods	Yes	49	81.6
	No	11	18.4

Source: Primary data

From Table No. 7, it appears that 49 respondents representing 81.6 per cent, consumers availed of this facility. While minority of consumers i.e. 18.4 per cent did not avail such facility. Thus, it seems that extending of door delivery facilities to the regular customers.

Table 8 Door Delivery of Goods ordered through Phone/ Whatsapp

Variable	Attribute	Frequency	% of Respondents Frequency
Order through Phone/ Whatsapp	Yes	07	11.67
	No	53	88.33

Source: Primary data

The Table No. 8 clearly states that only 7 respondents out of 60, representing 11.67 percent has availed the facility of Free home delivery order through phone/Whatsapp. It is also clear that 53 respondents representing 88.33 per cent, consumers did not avail such facility. Thus, it seems that awareness about the facility should be made to customers.

Table 9 Availed Credit Sales in BMSGBL

Variable	Attribute	Frequency	% of Respondents Frequency
Credit Facility to Consumers	Yes	00	0
	No	60	100

Source: Primary data

The respondents were asked whether the cooperative consumer store allow credit facilities to them. The Table No. 9 shows that the Cooperative consumer extended very megerely the credit facilities to the consumers. It was observed that the consumer store is not in favour of credit sales, as there are risks in credit trading.

Table 10 BMSGBL Accept Back the Goods

Variable	Attribute	Frequency	% of Respondents Frequency
Accept Back the Goods	Yes	46	76.6
	No	14	23.4

Source: Primary data

It is a well known practice in every business to accept back goods once sold to the customers and replace them with new ones. It could be understood with the help of Table No. 10 that 46 consumers replied positively that the store accepts back goods.

Table 11 Reasons for Returning the Goods to BMSGBL

Variable	Attribute	Frequency	% of Respondents Frequency
Reasons for Returning the Goods	Bad Quality	2	3.34
	Damages	5	8.33
	Unsatisfied product	0	0
	Adulterated	0	0
	Expiry of Product	0	0
	Never Returned	53	88.33

Source: Primary data

The table 11 infers that 53 respondents representing 88.33 percent never returned any product to the consumer store, which is a positive sign for the store. Only 7 respondents mentioned by the consumer's i.e. bad quality of goods and damages were the reason for returning the goods. None of the respondents found returning the product due to expiry date of product or adulteration.

Table 12 Opinion about Quality of Goods of BMSGBL

Variable	Attribute	Frequency	% of Respondents Frequency
Quality of Goods	Standard	52	86.6
	Medium	8	13.4
	Lower	0	0
	No conscious	0	0

Source: Primary data

Table 12 depicts that out of total consumers 86.6 per cent consumers are fully satisfied with the standard quality goods. 13.4 per cent consumers are moderately satisfied. It is a matter of satisfaction that not a single consumer expressed their dissatisfaction i.e. lower quality. Thus, on the whole majority of consumers are satisfied with the standard quality and not a single consumer is dissatisfied.

Table 13 Prices of Goods at BMSGBL

Variable	Attribute	Frequency	% of Respondents Frequency
Prices of Goods	Lower than Market	6	10
	On par with Market	51	85
	Higher than Market	0	0
	No conscious	3	5

Source: Primary data

The Table 13 depicts that 51 respondents representing 95 percent are fully satisfied with the price of the goods, 85 percent respondents found that the prices of the product is on par with market. 6 respondents representing 10 percent felt that prices are lower than other market. Whereas 3 out of 60 respondents did not record any response, due to unawareness.

Table 14 Weighment of Goods at BMSGBL

Variable	Attribute	Frequency	% of Respondents Frequency
Weighment of Goods	Correct Weighment	60	100
	Under Weighment	0	0
	No conscious	0	0

Source: Primary data

Regarding the weighment of goods in Cooperative Consumer stores, Table No. 14 reveals that all the consumers (100 per cent) are satisfied with the weighment.

Table 15 Employees' Honesty in BMSGBL

Variable	Attribute	Frequency	% of Respondents Frequency
Employees' Honesty	Yes	60	100
	No	0	0

Source: Primary data

With view to know the attitude of consumers towards employees, respondents were asked whether the employees are honest in business dealings. From the Table 15 it can be inferred that almost all 100.0 per cent consumers are satisfied about the honesty of

employees in business dealings.

Table 16 Services of Salesmen in BMSGBL

Variable	Attribute	Frequency	% of Respondents Frequency
Services of Salesmen	Good	56	93.3
	Satisfactory	4	6.7
	Poor	0	0

Source: Primary data

Table No. 16 shows that out of total consumers 93.3 percent are fully satisfied about the services of the salesmen. While 6.7 per cent consumers are moderately satisfied and none of the consumer expressed his dissatisfaction.

Table 17 Convenience of Building and Layout of the BMSGBL Store

Variable	Attribute	Frequency	% of Respondents Frequency
Convenience of Building And Layout	Yes	38	63.3
	No	22	36.7

Source: Primary data

Analyzing the Table No. 17 it is noticed that substantial number of the consumers i.e. 63.3 percent fully satisfied, while 36.7 per cent of the total consumers are dissatisfied.

Consumers' Satisfaction of BMSGBL

The success and the popularity of the consumer store depend much on the satisfaction derived by their consumers. Consumers' satisfaction towards the Consumer store largely depends on the quality, price, weighment of goods and employees honesty, service of salesman, and convenience of building and lay out. Here consumer's satisfaction in respect of the above mentioned aspects examined with the help of tables from numbers 7.10 to 7.15.

Store Choice Behaviour among the Consumers

Customer's choice of a particular store depends on shopping orientation as well as satisfying experience. In addition, a customer's attitude towards the store results from his / her evaluation of the perceived importance of store attributes which are molded by direct experiences with the store's overall offerings. The selection of a specific retail outlet involves a

comparison of the available alternative outlets on the evaluative criteria of a consumer. ANOVA test was conducted to analysis the Store Choice Behaviour among the consumers of cooperative store.

Attributes Leading to Choose the Store among Gender wise Classification

A number of earlier researchers have identified that gender plays a vital role while selecting a retail outlet. It is included as one of the variables to study the behavior of consumers on the store choice attributes which completely differs from male to female. By analyzing the gender wise classification, the retailers promote the business activity by providing specialized gender based service to the consumers. In order to find the significant difference between the genders, the one way ANOVA has been tested and the mean score of the various attributes is computed below:

Table 18 Store Choice Attributes among Gender wise Classification

S. No.	Store Choice Attributes	Mean Score		T-test
		Male	Female	
1.	Attractive Display	3.98	4.12	-3.452
2.	Value for Money	4.97	4.99	-1.307
3.	Good Brand Name of the store	4.12	4.12	0.040
4.	Availability of Specific Products	2.41	2.66	-2.119
5.	Affordable Prices	4.29	4.13	2.239
6.	Trust Worthy Products	4.39	4.38	0.085
7.	Employees Service	4.19	4.29	-1.534
8.	Extensive Varieties of Products	4.74	4.75	-0.335
9.	Wide Range of Promotional Offers	4.86	4.87	3.281

10.	Nearness to Residence	4.24	3.99	3.018
11.	Emotional Attachment	3.12	4.89	-3.562

Source: Primary Data ; Significant at 5% Level.

The Table 18 shows that the most important store attribute influencing as per the male respondents is 'Value for Money' factor with a score of 4.97 and it is followed by 'Wide Range of Promotional Offers' and 'Extensive Varieties of Products' for which the mean scores are 4.86, and 4.74 respectively. But for the female respondents most influencing store attributes is 'Value for Money' with a score of 4.99 and it is followed by 'Emotional Attachment with store' mean at 4.89 and then follows 'Wide range of Promotional Offers', 'Extensive Varieties of Products', since the mean scores are 4.87, and 4.75 respectively. The table also indicates that the attributes that are related to 'Attractive Display', 'Availability of Specific Products', 'Affordable Prices' and 'Nearness to the consumer's Residence' shows there is a significant difference in the influencing factors of store choice of consumer based on the gender.

Implication

One way ANOVA has been tested on various attributes to choose the store choice behaviour among gender wise. The T-test infers that there is a significant difference among the male & female in choosing the consumer store. It indicates that the attributes 'Attractive Display', 'Availability of Specific Products', 'Affordable Prices' and 'Nearness to the consumer's Residence' shows there is a significant difference in the influencing factors of store choice of consumer based on the gender.

Attributes considered choosing the store among the different age group of the consumers

The different age groups of customers will influence on the store choice attributes. The age groups of the respondents are confined from Below 20, 20-29 years; 30-39 years; 40-49 years, 50-59 years and above 60 years. As the means to observe the significant difference among the different age group means of the consumers, the one way ANOVA has been administered. The mean score of the various attributes also examined and the level of

importance on attributes leading to choose the store has also been identified.

Table 19 Store Choice Attributes among Age group

S. No.	Store Choice Attributes	Mean score						F-test
		Below 20 Year N = 4	20-29 years N = 18	30-39 Year N = 22	40-49 years N = 12	50-59 years N = 2	Above 60 years N = 2	
1.	Attractive Display	4.26	4.06	4.05	4.08	3.98	4.13	4.367
2.	Value for Money	4.98	4.94	4.99	4.98	4.96	4.93	1.184
3.	Good Brand Name of the store	4.19	4.12	4.07	4.13	4.16	4.20	1.674
4.	Availability of Specific Products	2.52	2.56	2.55	2.58	2.69	3.33	1.536
5.	Affordable Prices	3.97	4.10	4.18	4.26	4.12	4.13	1.799
6.	Trust Worthy Products	4.32	4.41	4.38	4.43	4.38	4.33	0.567
7.	Service of Employees	4.45	4.21	4.22	4.25	4.19	4.26	1.974
8.	Extensive Varieties of Products	4.79	4.76	4.77	4.70	4.79	4.46	2.546
9.	Wide Range of Promotional offers	4.84	4.85	4.88	4.87	4.88	4.73	0.812
10.	Nearness to Residence	4.27	4.10	3.85	3.95	4.00	4.60	2.614
11.	Emotional Attachment	3.33	3.79	4.70	4.45	4.77	4.45	2.145

Source: Primary Data; Significant at 5% Level.

From Table 19 it is inferred that as per the perception of consumers aged below 30 years the most influencing store choice attributes is 'Value for Money' followed by 'Wide Range of Promotional Offers' and 'Extensive Varieties of Products', with mean scores of 4.98, 4.84 and 4.79 respectively. The consumers aged between 30 and 39 years are very much influenced by 'Value for Money' followed by 'Wide Range of Promotional Offers' and 'Extensive Varieties of Products', with mean scores of 4.99, 4.88 and 4.77 respectively. The consumers aged between 40 and 49 years are very much influenced by 'Value for Money' followed by 'Wide Range of

Promotional Offers' and 'Extensive Varieties of Products', with mean scores of 4.98, 4.87 and 4.70 respectively. The consumers aged between 50 and 59 years are much influenced by 'Value for Money' followed by 'Wide Range of Promotional Offers' and 'Extensive Varieties of Products', with mean scores of 4.96, 4.88 and 4.79 respectively. The consumers aged above 60 years are also more influenced 'Value for Money' followed by 'Wide Range of Promotional Offers' and Nearness to Residence, with mean scores of 4.93, 4.88 and 4.79 respectively. Thus the Table No. 19 concludes that there is a significant difference in some factors like 'Attractive Display', 'Extensive Varieties of Products' and 'Nearness to Residence' based on the age of the consumer.

Implication

ANOVA test has been tested on various attributes to choose the store choice behaviour based on age of consumer. The F-test infers that there is a significant difference among the age groups in choosing the consumer store. The test indicates that the attribute 'Attractive Display' 'Extensive Varieties of Products', Emotional Attachment and 'Nearness to Residence' plays a significant difference in the influencing factors of store choice of consumer based on the age group.

Attributes Considered Choosing the Store Among the Occupational Level of the Consumers

The occupation level of the customers will influence on the store choice attributes. The occupation of individuals determines the consumers' level of importance on the store choice of the retail outlets. It is also influenced by diverse occupations. Hence the present research has made an attempt to measure the important attributes leading to choose the store among the various occupation levels of consumers. In order to determine the significant difference among the occupational levels, the one way ANOVA has been tested. The mean score of the various attributes is determined to exhibit the influence level on attributes leading to choose the store.

Table 20 Store Choice Attributes Among Occupational

S. No.	Store Choice Attributes	Mean Score				F-test
		Housewives N = 28	Salaried N = 19	Business Business N = 10	Others N = 3	
1.	Attractive Display	4.03	4.08	4.19	4.10	1.230
2.	Value for Money	4.99	4.98	4.90	4.98	4.396
3.	Good Brand Name of the store	4.07	4.16	4.09	4.13	0.861
4.	Availability of Specific Products	2.54	2.60	3.14	2.57	1.425
5.	Affordable Prices	4.20	4.23	4.23	4.15	0.246
6.	Trust Worthy Products	4.42	4.39	4.23	4.38	0.848
7.	Service of Employees	4.24	4.16	4.00	4.31	2.306
8.	Extensive Varieties of Products	4.80	4.66	4.85	4.73	2.036
9.	Wide Range of Promotional Offers	4.84	4.89	4.85	4.88	0.452
10.	Nearness to Residence	4.02	4.16	4.42	3.89	1.912
11.	Emotional Attachment	4.82	4.60	4.56	4.30	2.066

Source: Primary Data ; Significant at 5% Level.

From the Table no. 20 it is inferred that the most influencing store choice attributes as per the perception of Home maker is 'Value for Money' followed by 'Wide Range of Promotional Offers', 'Emotional Attachment', 'Extensive Varieties of Products' with mean scores of 4.99, 4.84, 4.82 and 4.80 respectively. The consumer's salaries are more influenced by 'Value for Money, Wide Range of Promotional Offers, and Extensive Varieties of Products with mean scores 4.98, 4.89 and 4.66 respectively. The consumer's doing business are more influenced by 'Value for Money' followed by 'Wide Range of Promotional Offers' and 'Extensive Varieties of Products' with mean scores of 4.90, 4.85 and 4.85.

Thus from the Table No.20 it's clear that there is a significant difference in 'Value for Money' on the respondents' occupational level. In all the other attributes like 'Attractive Display', 'Brand Name', 'Availability of Specific Products', 'Affordable Prices', 'Trust Worthy Products', 'Services of Employees', 'Extensive Varieties of Products', 'Wide Range of Promotional Offers' and 'Nearness to Residence' there is no significance differences found.

Implication

ANOVA test indicates that the attribute 'Value for Money' shows a significant difference in the

influencing factors of store choice of consumer based on the occupation. The test implies that the attribute 'Value for Money' has a huge impact in choosing the consumer store.

Findings

The study has brought out the following findings:

- The dominant gender among the consumer is female. Majority of the consumers were married females.
- Majority of respondents visiting the consumer stores belong to the age category of 30-39 years.
- It is also seen that the maximum respondents visiting the consumer store are home makers and they visit along with some companions basically family members.
- The consumer store catchment area is within the radius of 3 Km.
- Most of the consumers of store fall into the category of salaried group.
- The customers preferred to purchase 'Grocery / Provisions' and Household appliance.
- The major drivers for choosing a Bharti consumer store are 'Good Brand Name of the store', 'Value for Money' and 'Wide Range of Promotional Offers'.
- The customers prefer to visit consumer store rather ordering through Phone/ Whatsapp.

- Majority of the customers never returned any product to the consumer store.
 - Whole majority of consumers were satisfied with the standard quality of the product in the store and also felt the prices of the product in the consumer store is on par with Market.
 - Majority of 93.3 percent consumers were fully satisfied with salesmanship. The sales personnel were polite, cordial and patient towards customers. They were very prompt in attending the consumers.
 - With regard to store choice attributes, the research indicates that all the respondents of the study perceive that their respective store is offering 'Value for Money'.
 - In this study 'Nearness to Residence' is one of the influencing factors other than 'Value for Money' and 'Wide Range of Promotional Offers' for store choice among the consumers.
 - Customers of consumer cooperative store are satisfied with its service delivery, variety, stock of products and staff behavior. This study also reveals that trust worthy products and best services of employees, which is also influencing factors to choose the store.
 - A substantial number of the consumers were satisfied about the neatness, attractiveness, proper interior and outer decorations, ornamentalations, painting with pleasant colours and proper ventilation, well planned layout of racks, shelves and other furniture inside the store. Dissatisfaction was seen mostly towards the parking facility.
 - Bharati Central Cooperative Consumer Store has invested in supply chain, it buy directly from the sources and eliminate middlemen.
 - All the consumers invariably by gender; age and occupation consider 'Value for Money', 'Wide Range of Promotional Offers', and 'Extensive Varieties of Products' as the most influencing store choice attributes.
 - The T-test infers that there is a significant difference among the male & female in choosing the consumer store. The test indicates that the attributes 'Attractive Display', 'Availability of Specific Products', 'Affordable Prices' and 'Nearness to the consumer's Residence' shows there is a significant difference in the influencing factors of store choice of consumer based on the gender.
 - F-test indicates that the attribute 'Attractive Display' 'Extensive Varieties of Products', Emotional Attachment and 'Nearness to Residence' plays a significant difference in the influencing factors of store choice of consumer based on the age group.
 - ANOVA test indicates that there is a significant difference in 'Value for Money' on the respondents' occupational level. In all the other attributes like 'Attractive Display', 'Brand Name', 'Availability of Specific Products', 'Affordable Prices', 'Trust Worthy Products', 'Services of Employees', 'Extensive Varieties of Products', 'Wide Range of Promotional Offers' and 'Nearness to Residence' has no significance differences.
 - It was also found that Bharati Central Cooperative Consumer Store has incited sales promotion activities through membership discounts, loyalty schemes, festive occasion sales, wide discounts on FMCG products.
 - The consumer store has also adopted the technology for sales activities. Order on Phone and Whatsapp are also accepted by store.
- Finally the respondents agreed that location and wide offers are the most important criteria to choose Bharati Central Cooperative Consumer Store. The wide range of product attributes, fast billing process, customer service, attracts the consumers to buy from Bharati Central Cooperative Consumer Store. On the other hand, standard product on par with market and goodwill were most common criteria which influenced the consumers to buy from Bharati Central Cooperative Consumer Store.

Limitations and Implications for Further Research

The present study has certain limitations which should be considered. First, the sample was only recruited from only one Cooperative Consumer Store located in Pune city only. It is important to note that this study does not represent the entire population. Second, due to the non-probability nature of sampling and its inherent limitations in terms of

size of sample, the findings cannot be generalised. Several implications for further study arise from this research. First, since the study is focused on Cooperative Consumers store of Pune which generally target the upper middle and middle class consumers. The behavior of less affluent consumers could not be depicted. It is therefore suggested that a wider, more representative sample which includes some other stores of the city be considered to substantiate the differences in behavior of consumers. This could provide a deep understanding of store selection criteria among consumers.

This research study provides possible avenues for various future researches. Most of the studies done on Indian retail formats have focused on the attributes of stores and on overall consumer choice towards emerging retail formats. Consumer's product choice towards retail formats is an unexplored area. There is a lack of focus on the holistic view of shopping trends of Indian consumers and their choice of store formats. By understanding this picture, retailers can focus their strategies in the right direction. The future research could be done to examine the influences of consumer factors on store brand buying from Cooperative Consumer Stores and organized retail sector like Malls, super markets. The further study extends to examine the relationships between consumer factors and store choice decisions.

Conclusion

The following suggestions are proposed based on the findings of the research study in order to have sustainable and resilient Consumer Cooperative stores.

- Bharati Consumer Cooperative Store is concentrating only on essential commodities like grocery and house hold appliances. Hence, Consumer Cooperative Store should diversify the business. They should add more commodities in their business like Fruits & vegetable, electrical, fast food, textile, IT peripherals, leather goods etc.
- Retention strategies like understanding the consumers, customer delight, store image better environment, attractive merchandising and loyalty programs and customized technology needs more attention. Cooperative Consumer Store needs more attractive visual merchandising

materials in their promotions.

- Cooperative Consumer Store should promote their store brand in order to create awareness as to why customers should purchase from them.
- Slow moving goods can be sold by clearance sales every year.
- There should be more promotional programmes in Consumer Cooperative Store in order to attract youths.
- SMS campaign can be done to frequent visiting consumers about the new arrivals and discount offers of the store.
- CRM (Customer Relationship Management) should be developed by regular meetings, home delivery, maintaining individual customer's particulars, festivals, discount sales etc.
- Consumer Cooperative management should bring to an end their traditional way of working. They should make organizational working more technically advanced.
- Consumer Cooperative store should spend more on advertising and marketing of the store as it will create buzz about their store in locality for that they should concentrate more on promotional programmes.
- Store executives can collect feedback of the store from their customers, which can be used for a continual improvement strategy.

Indian retail industry is emerging as one of the profitable and fastest growing industries; the level of competition has become intense. In the phase of fast changing lifestyle of the consumer, Bharati Central Cooperative Consumer Store need to be more innovative, attracts and retain the consumers in order to be sustainable and resilient society.

References

- Das, B., Palai, N and Das, K. "Problems and Prospects of the Cooperative Movement in India under the Globalization Regime." *XIV International Economic History Congress*, 2006.
- Khan, F and Sharma, S. "A Study of Consumer Behavior towards Grocery Retailing In Delhi Region of National Capital Region of India." *International Journal of Business and Management Invention*, vol. 4, no. 11, 2015, pp.37-45,

- Kshirsagar, R. "An Analysis of Factors to Consumer Buying Behaviour towards Organized Retailing." *International Journal of Application or Innovation in Engineering & Management*, vol. 5, no. 12, 2016, pp.71-77.
- Kumar, S. "A Study on Consumer Attitude and Buying Behaviour towards Organized Retail Stores in Erode District, Tamil Nadu, India." *Asian Journal of Research in Social Sciences and Humanities*, vol. 6, no. 5, 2016, P.1038
- Norazlan, H. *Challenges facing the Malaysian Consumer Cooperatives: A Case Study*, 2015.
- Paromita Goswami, Mridula S. Mishra, "Would Indian Consumers Move from Kirana Stores to Organized Retailers When Shopping for Groceries?", *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, vol. 21, no. 1, 2009, pp.127-143,
- L. Bhatti, K., Latif, S and Latif, R. "Factors Affecting Consumer's Store Choice Behavior." *International Journal of Application or Innovation in Engineering & Management*, vol. 4, no. 9, 2015, pp.71-77.
- Marguerite Moore and Jason Carpenter. "The Effect of Price as a Marketplace Cue on Retail Patronage", *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, vol. 15, no. 4, 2006, pp. 265-271,
- Bharati Madhyawarti Sahakari Grahak Bhandar Ltd Annual Reports 2015-18.

Author Details

T. Swapna Chander, *Research Officer, Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of Cooperative Management, Pune.*

Email ID: schander@vannicom.gov.in.

Anil Karanjkar, *Professor, Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of Cooperative Management, Pune.*