

Consumers' Expectation towards Quality Infrastructure in Cuddalore District

***Dr. C. Muralikumar**

*Assistant Professor, Dept of Business Administration, Annamalai University, Chidambaram,
Tamil Nadu, India

Abstract

The article tries to find out the level of rural youth and rural adult consumers' expectation towards quality infrastructure in Cuddalore district. One objective of this study is reached through proper methodology. Sample size is 1066 in all obtained through stratified simple random sampling technique in Cuddalore district. Researcher designed questionnaire is with 5 point scale in the continuum of agreeing. Reliability of this tool is 0.82. Z test and one way ANOVA were used for data analysis. The analysis found that the rural youth and rural adult consumers are having medium level of consumers' expectation towards quality infrastructure. The study also highlighted that there is significant difference towards consumers' expectation towards quality infrastructure with respect to gender, present occupation and income of the consumers. It is concluded that the officials of the consumer protection centres and voluntary consumer organization may approach the local VIPs and the businessmen to get the adequate infrastructural facilities for creating awareness among the rural consumers in all the taluks of Cuddalore District.

Keywords: rural youth and rural adult consumers'; consumers' expectation towards quality infrastructure; stratified simple random sampling technique and Cuddalore district.

Introduction

Each consumer possesses a different level of expectation between one another. This is due to the fact that every consumer has their own expectations, inspirations and experiences. A deeper understanding of the expected target will provide guidance in regards to the development of areas of attractions which will help enhance services. Infrastructure is deemed an important aspect in determining the development of an area. Meanwhile, heritage consumers concentrate on the story of a community and also the places of interest through interpretations of cultural landscapes and the conservation and preservation of historical appearance which are the elements found in the heritage site.

Review of Literature

Bhavanesh Kumar Grover (1999) in his study entitled "Strategic Marketing through Customer Service" highlights that excellent services, which enable businesses to differentiate themselves from the competitions by minimized Price sensitivity, increased customer satisfaction, motivated continuous improvement in operation and create a reputation for being a caring customer oriented company. Further the researcher recommended a few customer service strategies like link machine values and corporate objectives, evaluating correct position and steps in formulation and implementation of strategies. Further, it also covers the steps needed to create a customer focused culture. The need to include customer service as the organization's key objective has been stressed. Managers are the key to the successful implementation of strategy.

Narayana Reddy P. and Anil Ramesh (1999) have highlighted that consumerism is a movement to inform the consumers and protect their interests from the business malpractices. The movement focuses on inferior and dangerous merchandise, unfair practices and false or misleading advertisements. Unfair practices by businessmen, adulteration, unabashed unfair practices, and under-measurement are rampant; money is accepted in advance promising delivery of product within a specified time but seldom honored and after sales services is full of false claims and half-truth. The study has used primary data of 235 respondents from the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secundarabad to arrive at the conclusion on the role of an independent agency in protecting consumer interest.

Selvaraju R. (2000) studied "Consumerism in rural India with reference to fair price shops". The study made an attempt to know about the awareness of public related to cheating in fair price shops and their complaining behaviour. For this purpose, the researcher used 150 ration cardholders who were randomly chosen and interviewed. The author critically analyzed the complaining behaviour of consumers by using simple statistical method.

Karki and Mehrotra (2008) dealt in their article that to determine the level of awareness regarding standard marks (ISI, Agmark and FPO), consumer rights, acts and association of the

education of respondents with the awareness of standard marks, acts and rights. The study was conducted in Ludhiana city of Punjab state. A total of 120 homemakers were selected to collect the data on awareness regarding standard marks, consumer rights and acts. The results indicated that awareness of ISI mark was highest among respondents followed by Agmark. Association of education with the awareness of marks of the respondents was significant at 1% level of significance. Regarding awareness of rights revealed that awareness of right to choose was highest among homemakers. Further in case of consumer protection acts, awareness for Bureau of Indian Standard Act was highest. The association of education with the awareness of rights and acts was non-significant.

Kocha and Rumrillb (2008) in their article entitled, “Assessing consumer satisfaction in rehabilitation and allied health care settings”, describes the challenges that inhere to consumer satisfaction research in the fields of rehabilitation and health care, discusses strategies for improving the psychometric soundness and scientific rigor of research in this increasingly important knowledge domain, and cites several examples from the contemporary literature of measurement and design approaches that have been identified as particularly useful in gauging consumer satisfaction with services. Mixed-method and qualitative research strategies such as in-depth interviews and focus groups are emphasized as ways of broadening and deepening the field’s understanding of the multi-dimensional construct of consumer satisfaction.

Victor Iglesias, (2009) in his study entitled, “The attribution of service failures: effects on consumer satisfaction”, aim to analyse the effects of the attribution of service failures on consumer satisfaction. He analysed direct effects as well as indirect effects through cognitive processes and variables such as quality perceptions and overall quality evaluation. Basing the analysis on the attribution theories and information processing theories, four hypotheses are suggested. These are tested on a sample of 293 service encounters in which some type of failure is present (attributed to the firm or to some environmental factor). The results show that the attribution of the failure to the service firm causes a systematic reduction in all of the quality perceptions (even in service aspects not linked to the failure). But attribution also shows direct effects on satisfaction beyond the effect through perceptions. Attitude based processes as well as attribute-based processes are affected by attribution.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The validity of any research depends upon accurate and adequate data. Hence, due care was given for collecting the required data for this study. The present study is based on descriptive study between consumers’ expectation towards quality infrastructure and consumer social demographic variables like gender, present occupation and monthly income. The study is based on primary data as well as secondary data.

Research Gap

The existing researches have not focused on rural youth and rural adult consumers’ expectation towards quality infrastructure and its states the importance of research needs to identify interlink and integrated approach consumers’ expectation towards quality infrastructure among the rural youth and rural adult. None of the research shows the integrated approach of consumers’ expectation towards quality infrastructure and further no research is conducted both in rural youth and rural adult together in Cuddalore district of Tamilnadu.

Statement of the Problem

Majority of the consumers in the study area are unaware about the implications in consumers’ expectation towards quality infrastructure. Most of the rural consumer live below the poverty line and therefore are busy just keeping themselves alive. They mere struggle for survival uses up all their energy. They have neither the time nor the inclination to think of their rights. The literate and educated consumer feels helpless before the might of the exploiters and therefore acquiesces to condition.

Objective of the Study

➤ To study the rural youth and rural adult consumers’ expectation towards quality infrastructure in Cuddalore District

Hypothesis of the Study

- There is no significant difference between gender of rural youth and rural adult with respect to consumers’ expectation towards quality infrastructure.
- There is no significant difference among occupation of rural youth and rural adult based on consumers’ expectation towards quality infrastructure.
- There is no significant difference among income of rural youth and rural adult consumers based on consumers’ expectation towards quality infrastructure.

Sample Design

For collecting primary data, field survey technique was undertaken in the study area. First-hand information pertaining to the consumers’ expectation towards quality infrastructure and the data were collected from rural youth and adult consumers in Cuddalore district.

Sample Size

Under the provisional census report 2011, the rural population of Cuddalore district is 17,18,249 which is around 66.06 percent of the total population 2600880. The population has been stratified into two heads, viz., rural youth and rural adult by using simple random basis. In the seven taluks of Cuddalore District of the respondents were drawn from the two heads at the rate of 533 each and total of 1066 by using the following standard sampling size calculation for finite population.

Interview Schedule Design

The primary data has been collected from the respondents by using tools of interview schedule. Interview schedule contained questions regarding the personal data such as gender, present occupation and income. Five point scaling technique has been used for finding the consumers’ expectation towards quality infrastructure.

Tools of data collection

By virtue of mass data obtained from survey research, as well as data of secondary sources collected and presented in the thesis, a descriptive was done, since it is considered as most appropriate for the study. The research problem, interview schedule were all framed accordingly. The suggestions offered in the final chapter of the research report emerged from the inferences drawn by using simple statistical analysis among the data collected from the selected sample respondents.

Reliability

The Cronbach’s alpha of all the selected factors are having above 0.82 and the study is reliable to do the analysis. Further, the result of Cronbach’s alpha revealed that the study has good validity to explore the results.

Period of Study

The primary data were collected from November 2012 to April 2013 among the selected sample respondents in the study area.

Limitations of the Study

The study is confined to Cuddalore District of Tamil Nadu with the sample of 1066 rural consumers. Many of the respondents are indifferent and unwilling to response. They do not maintain proper records for their economic data and utilization of consumer protection centers and consumer forums. Therefore the information rendered by them is found biased and necessary cross verification was made to reduce the biased information.

Table Shows Gender and Level of Expectation towards Quality Infrastructure

Gender	Youth			Adult		
	Mean	SD	Z-value	Mean	SD	Z-value
Male	35.03	5.30	7.406*	36.45	5.72	6.710*
Female	33.83	6.14		34.91	7.12	

Source: Primary data

H₀ : There is no significant relationship between gender of rural youth and rural adult consumers with respect to level of expectation towards quality infrastructure.

From the above table it is observed that the expectation towards quality infrastructure is measured according to gender among rural youth and adult consumers. It is identified that male consumers are having more (35.03) expectation than female (33.83) in youth category. In the case of adult consumers, male respondents are having more (36.45) expectation towards quality infrastructure than male (34.91) in the study area.

The 'Z' value indicated that the null hypothesis is rejected in both youth and adult category of gender and hence, there is a significant difference in youth and adult category between gender and expectation towards quality infrastructure.

Table shows Occupation and Level of Expectation towards Quality Infrastructure

Occupation	Youth			Adult		
	Mean	SD	F-value	Mean	SD	F-value
Government Employee	33.73	7.48	28.916*	33.67	7.27	10.373 ^{NS}
Private employee	35.16	7.71		37.06	8.26	
Business	34.17	6.45		34.23	7.94	
Agriculturist	35.20	7.05		35.05	7.56	
Housewife	36.64	5.14		34.24	7.27	
Student	34.50	8.52		34.29	6.05	
Daily wages	34.63	6.93		35.85	6.76	

Source: Primary data

H₀ : There is no significant difference among occupation of rural youth and rural adult consumers with respect level of expectation towards quality infrastructure.

It is inferred from the above table that the expectation towards quality infrastructure is measured according to occupation among rural youth and adult consumers. It is identified that housewives are having more (36.64) expectation in youth category. On the other hand, private employee are having more (37.06) expectation towards quality infrastructure in adult category. The 'χ²' value indicated that the null hypothesis is rejected in youth category and accepted in adult category of occupation and hence, there is a significant relationship between occupation and expectation towards quality infrastructure among the rural youth consumers and no significant relationship in adult consumers.

Table shows Monthly Income and Level of Expectation towards Quality Infrastructure

Monthly Income	Youth			Adult		
	Mean	SD	F-value	Mean	SD	F-value
Less than Rs.10000	34.94	7.28	17.878*	35.20	7.35	21.197*
Rs.10001-20000	36.47	5.71		35.32	7.58	
Rs.20001 to 25000	33.55	6.89		34.16	8.19	
Above Rs.25000	35.21	7.90		36.80	5.70	

Source: Primary data

H₀ : There is no significant difference among monthly income of rural youth and rural adult consumers based on level of expectation towards quality infrastructure.

It is found from the above table that the expectation towards quality infrastructure is measured according to monthly income among rural youth and adult consumers. It is stated that the earning of monthly income from Rs.10001 to 20000 of the consumers are having more (36.47) expectation in youth category. In the case of adult consumers, the respondents with the earning of above Rs.25000

are having more (36.80) expectation towards quality infrastructure in the study area. The ' χ^2 ' value indicated that the null hypothesis is rejected in both youth and adult category of monthly income and hence, there is a significant relationship between monthly income and expectation towards quality infrastructure among the rural youth and adult consumers.

Findings of the study

- It is found from the analysis that Z test indicated that the null hypothesis is rejected in both youth and adult category of gender and hence, there is a significant difference in youth and adult category between gender groups with respect to expectation towards quality infrastructure.
- It could be found from the analysis that one way ANOVA analysis indicated that the null hypothesis is rejected in youth category and accepted in adult category of occupation and hence, there is a significant relationship among occupation with respect to expectation towards quality infrastructure among the rural youth consumers and no significant difference in adult consumers.
- It is found from the analysis that one way ANOVA analysis indicated that the null hypothesis is rejected in both youth and adult category of monthly income and hence, there is a significant difference among monthly income with respect to expectation towards quality infrastructure among the rural youth and adult consumers.

Recommendations of the Study

- Every businessman clearly knows about the rules and act according to their way of solving the problems. Everyone needs to create honesty and sincerity in their business. The policies of business enterprises should be consumer oriented and they should accept consumer protection as their social responsibility. However, business executives should be trained in consumer orientation programmes.
- The officials of the Consumer Protection Centres and Voluntary consumer organization may approach the local VIPs and the businessmen to get the adequate infrastructural facilities for creating awareness among the rural consumers in all the taluks of Cuddalore District.

Conclusion of the Study

The analysis found that the rural youth and rural adult consumers are having medium level of consumers' expectation towards quality infrastructure. The study also highlighted that there is significant difference towards consumers' expectation towards quality infrastructure with respect to gender, present occupation and income of the consumers. It is concluded that the officials of the consumer protection centres and voluntary consumer organization may approach the local VIPs and the businessmen to get the adequate infrastructural facilities for creating awareness among the rural consumers in all the taluks of Cuddalore District.

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