

A Study on Customer Experience in Retail Marketing at RR Trading, Puducherry

AUTHOR NAME: **.SANGEETHA.P**

UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF MS. **S. JEEJA** ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES, MANAKULA VINAYAGAR INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY PUDUCHERRY

ABSTRACT

Customer experience has become a critical factor influencing success in the competitive retail marketing environment. This study examines customer experience in the retail sector with specific reference to RR Trading, a retail firm specializing in glass fabrication and interior products in Pondicherry. The research aims to understand customer perceptions related to product quality, service efficiency, pricing transparency, staff professionalism, and overall satisfaction. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to 110 customers using simple random sampling. Secondary data were obtained from company records, journals, and relevant literature. The collected data were analyzed using statistical tools such as percentage analysis, Chi-square test, ANOVA, and correlation analysis with the support of SPSS software. The findings reveal that product quality, durability, and service support play a dominant role in shaping customer satisfaction and purchase decisions. Most respondents expressed satisfaction with product quality, installation services, and staff guidance, while pricing transparency and post-purchase services showed scope for improvement. The study highlights that positive customer experience significantly contributes to repeat purchases and recommendations. The research concludes that strengthening customer-centric strategies, improving communication clarity, and enhancing after-sales services can further improve customer loyalty and competitive advantage in retail marketing.

INTRODUCTION

In today's highly competitive and customer-driven marketplace, retail marketing has undergone a significant transformation. Retail businesses are no longer evaluated solely on the basis of product availability or price competitiveness. Instead, the overall experience delivered to customers throughout their interaction with a retail firm has emerged as a decisive factor influencing satisfaction, loyalty, and long-term business performance. As customers gain access to multiple brands, channels, and information sources, their expectations have increased substantially. Retailers are therefore compelled to move beyond transactional relationships and focus on delivering meaningful and consistent customer experiences.

Customer experience in retail marketing refers to the cumulative perception formed by customers through their interactions with a business across various touchpoints. These touchpoints include product quality, store environment, staff behaviour, service efficiency, pricing transparency, delivery processes, and post-purchase support. Each interaction contributes to shaping customer perceptions, emotions, and attitudes toward the brand. A positive customer experience enhances satisfaction, encourages repeat purchases, and promotes favourable word-of-mouth, while a negative experience can quickly result in dissatisfaction, customer churn, and reputational damage.

The growing importance of customer experience has positioned it as a strategic differentiator in the retail sector. When products and prices are largely similar across competitors, experience becomes the element that distinguishes one retailer from another. Retail firms that consistently deliver superior experiences are better equipped to build emotional connections with customers, thereby strengthening brand loyalty and competitive advantage. This shift has prompted retail marketers to invest in service quality improvements, employee training, personalised offerings, and technology-enabled solutions to enhance customer interactions.

The retail industry has also been significantly influenced by advancements in technology and changing consumer behaviour. Digital platforms, social media, online reviews, and mobile communication have altered the way customers search for information, evaluate alternatives, and engage with retailers. Customers now expect seamless communication, quick responses, clear information, and flexibility in purchasing and payment options. As a result, retail firms must

ensure consistency in experience across both physical and digital channels. Failure to meet these expectations can negatively impact customer trust and satisfaction.

Customer experience plays a crucial role in determining business outcomes such as sales growth, customer retention, and profitability. Satisfied customers are more likely to make repeat purchases and recommend the brand to others, reducing marketing costs and increasing customer lifetime value. Conversely, dissatisfied customers may shift to competitors and share negative feedback, which can adversely affect brand image. Hence, understanding customer perceptions and evaluating experience-related factors is essential for retail firms aiming to sustain growth in a competitive environment.

In the context of retail marketing for specialized products such as glass fabrication and interior solutions, customer experience becomes even more critical. Products like toughened glass, glass fittings, and interior hardware require professional guidance, customization, precise installation, and reliable after-sales support. Customers not only evaluate the physical quality of such products but also assess service competence, communication clarity, and trustworthiness of the retailer. Any shortcomings in service delivery or coordination can significantly affect customer satisfaction and perceived value.

Despite the growing recognition of customer experience as a strategic priority, many retail firms continue to face challenges in effectively managing and measuring it. Issues such as inconsistent service quality, lack of pricing transparency, limited customer engagement, and inadequate feedback mechanisms can weaken customer relationships. Therefore, empirical studies that examine customer experience in specific retail contexts are necessary to provide actionable insights for improving service performance and customer satisfaction.

This study focuses on analysing customer experience in retail marketing with special reference to RR Trading, a retail firm operating in Pondicherry. The study seeks to evaluate customer perceptions related to product quality, service efficiency, staff professionalism, pricing practices, delivery performance, and overall satisfaction. By analysing customer feedback using appropriate statistical tools, the research aims to identify key factors influencing purchase decisions and customer loyalty. The findings of the study are expected to assist retail businesses in designing customer-centric strategies that enhance satisfaction, strengthen relationships, and improve overall business performance.

MISSION STATEMENT

To deliver high-quality glass and interior solutions that combine innovation, durability, and design excellence. RR Trading is committed to providing reliable products and professional services that meet customer needs and enhance the beauty, safety, and functionality of every space we serve.

VISION STATEMENT

To be recognised as a trusted leader in the glass fabrication and interior product industry by setting new standards in quality, customer satisfaction, and modern design. RR Trading aims to expand its presence in the retail and construction sectors by adopting advanced technology, sustainable practices, and customer-centred approaches.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Primary Objective:

To analyse the overall customer experience in retail marketing.

Secondary Objectives:

- To study the demographic profile of retail customers.
- To evaluate customer satisfaction towards product quality and service
- To assess the pricing, delivery, and after-sales experience.
- To identify factors influencing purchase decisions.
- To understand customer preferences for future improvements.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- Grewal (2009) stated that customer experience management in retailing is the process of designing positive interactions across all customer touchpoints to build emotional connections and long-term satisfaction. He emphasized that a customer's perception is shaped by both functional and emotional elements, and that delivering consistent experiences leads to loyalty and profitability.
- Lemon and Verhoef (2016) highlighted that customer experience extends across the prepurchase, purchase, and post-purchase stages. They proposed that managing consistency across these stages is vital for enhancing satisfaction and loyalty.
- Yuen (2010) found that product quality and retail service quality have a direct influence on customer loyalty and repurchase intention. His study revealed that customers perceive high product quality as a sign of reliability, which improves trust and satisfaction in retail marketing.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

1. Research Design

The present study employed a descriptive research design to examine customer experience in the context of retail marketing. This design was considered suitable as the objective of the research was to describe and analyse customer perceptions, satisfaction levels, and behavioural responses based on their real purchasing experiences. Descriptive research allows for systematic collection of data related to customer opinions on product quality, service efficiency, pricing practices, and overall retail experience without manipulating any variables. The design helps in identifying patterns and relationships that exist among the variables influencing customer experience.

2. Data Collection Tools

Data for the study were collected using both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were gathered through a structured questionnaire specifically designed for this research. The questionnaire included multiple sections covering demographic details, purchasing frequency, product evaluation, service quality, staff behaviour, pricing transparency, delivery performance, and overall satisfaction. Most of the questions were closed-ended and measured using a five-point Likert scale, enabling respondents to express their level of agreement or satisfaction clearly and consistently. Secondary data were collected from company records, previous research studies, academic journals, textbooks, and online publications. These sources helped in developing the conceptual background of the study and supporting the interpretation of findings.

3. Procedures

The data collection process was carried out at RR Trading, Pondicherry, over a period of two months. A simple random sampling technique was adopted to select respondents in order to minimize selection bias. A total of 110 customers who had previously purchased products or availed services from RR Trading were surveyed. Respondents were briefed about the purpose of the study, and confidentiality of their responses was assured. After data collection, the questionnaires were reviewed for completeness and accuracy. Valid responses were coded and organized systematically for further analysis.

4. Analysis Methods

The collected data were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Descriptive statistical tools such as percentage analysis were used to summarize demographic information and general response trends. To examine relationships and differences among variables, inferential statistical techniques including Chi-square test, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), and correlation analysis were applied. These methods enabled the study to test associations between customer characteristics, service attributes, and satisfaction levels, thereby supporting meaningful interpretation and conclusions related to customer experience in retail marketing.

AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Age Group	Number of Respondents
20-30	69
30-40	17
40-50	14
Above 50	10
Total	110

TABLE.01

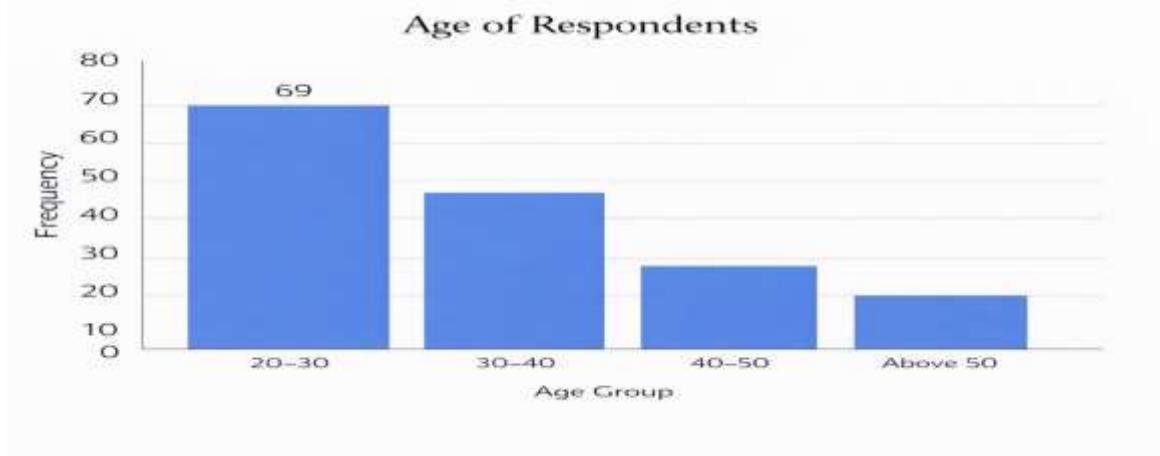


CHART.01

PRODUCTS PURCHASED BY RESPONDENTS

Product Category	Frequency
Glass Doors / Windows	34
Glass Sheets	30
Toughened Glass	23
Glass Design Services	13
Glass Fitting Services	10
Total	110

TABLE.02

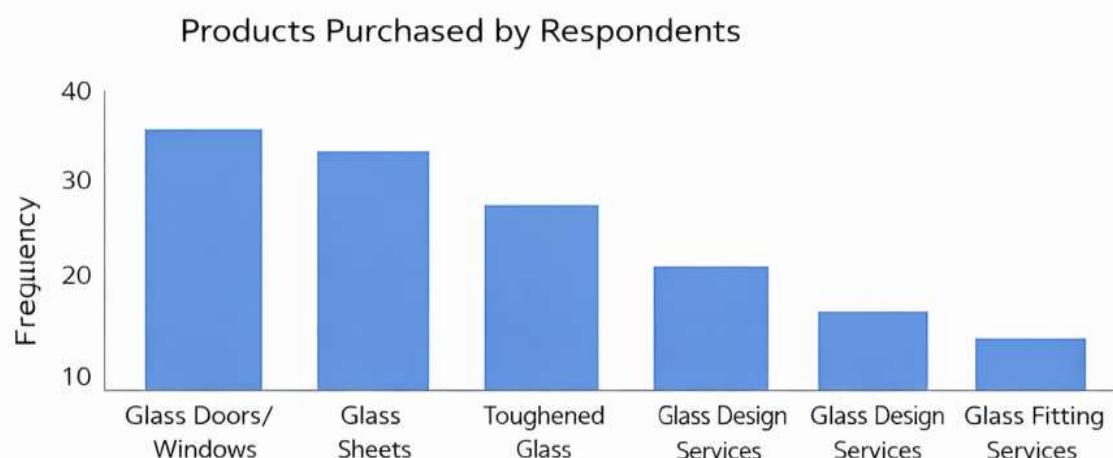


CHART.02

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION WITH PRODUCT QUALITY

Satisfaction Level	Frequency
Excellent	25
Good	45
Average	29
Poor	9
Very Poor	2
Total	110

TABLE.03



CHART.03

OVERALL CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Satisfaction Level	Frequency
Highly Satisfied	24
Satisfied	56
Neutral	24
Dissatisfied	6
Total	110

TABLE.04



CHART.04

INTERPRETATION

The analysis of the bar charts indicates that the customer base of RR Trading is largely dominated by younger individuals, particularly those in the 20–30 age group, suggesting strong demand from customers involved in residential construction and interior improvement activities. Product-wise, purchases are concentrated mainly on functional items such as glass doors, windows, and glass sheets, while customized design and fitting services receive comparatively lower preference. Customer responses reflect a generally positive perception of product quality, with most respondents expressing satisfaction, which highlights the reliability and durability of the materials offered. Overall satisfaction levels further confirm a favorable customer experience, though the presence of neutral responses indicates scope for service enhancement. The purpose of purchase data shows that home interior projects form the primary source of demand, followed by commercial and office-related requirements. Awareness about RR Trading is driven mainly through personal references and social media platforms, emphasizing the role of word-of-mouth and customer advocacy in business growth. Collectively, the findings suggest that product quality and service reliability are key strengths of the firm, while targeted promotion of value-added services and improved engagement strategies could further enhance customer experience and loyalty.

FINDINGS

- The customer base of RR Trading is largely composed of younger individuals, with the highest representation from the 20–30 age group.
- Residential customers form the dominant segment, indicating that home interior and renovation projects drive most purchases.
- Glass doors, windows, and glass sheets are the most frequently purchased products, reflecting higher demand for functional glass solutions.
- Customized services such as glass design and fitting are less frequently utilized, suggesting limited awareness or lower perceived necessity among customers.
- Most customers express satisfaction with product quality, indicating strong confidence in durability and material standards.
- Overall customer satisfaction levels are positive, with a majority of respondents reporting satisfactory experiences.
- Word-of-mouth through friends and relatives is the most influential source of customer awareness, followed by social media platforms.
- Pricing is generally perceived as acceptable, though some customers remain neutral regarding pricing transparency.
- Staff professionalism, product guidance, and installation services contribute positively to customer experience.
- A significant number of customers show willingness to recommend RR Trading and consider repeat purchases, indicating potential for long-term customer retention.

SUGGESTIONS

- The company should strengthen promotional efforts for value-added services such as glass design customization and fitting services to improve customer awareness and utilization.
- Clear and transparent communication regarding pricing structure and cost components can help reduce customer neutrality and improve trust.
- Expanding digital presence through social media marketing and regular online engagement can enhance brand visibility and attract younger customers.
- Introducing structured after-sales follow-up and feedback mechanisms can help address customer concerns and improve service consistency.
- Offering bundled service packages for residential customers may increase convenience and encourage repeat purchases.
- Training programs for staff should be continued and periodically updated to maintain professionalism and improve customer interaction quality.
- Special loyalty benefits or referral incentives can be introduced to leverage strong word-of-mouth promotion and customer recommendations.

CONCLUSION

The study highlights the growing importance of customer experience as a key determinant of success in retail marketing. The findings reveal that RR Trading has been able to create a generally positive customer experience through reliable product quality, professional service delivery, and effective installation support. Functional glass products such as doors, windows, and sheets form the core of customer demand, while residential projects remain the primary purchase driver. Although overall satisfaction levels are high, areas such as pricing transparency,

promotion of customized services, and post-purchase engagement present opportunities for further improvement. The strong influence of word-of-mouth and social media indicates that satisfied customers play a crucial role in attracting new business. By focusing on customer-centric strategies, enhancing service communication, and strengthening value-added offerings, retail firms like RR Trading can improve customer loyalty, encourage repeat purchases, and sustain long-term competitive advantage in the retail market.