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Model of Store Patronage Behaviour using SEM Approach

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Abstract

Despite a number of studies investigating store patronage behaviour, few studies actually address the nature of the Store Patronage Behaviour in India. This may have implications for the generalization of much research on retail store patronage behaviour, as official estimates of the Indian retail market growth is estimated to grow about 13 to 16% in the FI 2015 and the worth of the market is approximately $700b to $750b (Indian Retail Trends – 2014, Tata BSS). This paper attempts to develop a model of store patronage behaviour of customers in India using Structural Equation Model (SEM). Particular focus is given on consumers' characteristics, buying intentions, store attributes and store patronage. Results from the study highlight the notion that how the retail store patronage behaviour should be conceptualized as a continuum rather than being regarded as dichotomous, and a statistical framework is proposed.

Key words: Store Patronage Behaviour, Store Choice, Structural Equation model

Introduction

Despite a number of studies investigating store patronage behaviour, few studies actually address the nature of the Store Patronage Behaviour in India. This may have implications for the generalization of much research on retail store patronage behaviour, as official estimates of the Indian retail market growth is estimated to grow about 13 to 16% in the FI 2015 and the worth of the market is

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approximately $700b to $750b (Indian Retail Trends – 2014, Tata BSS). Entry of multinationals and their aggressive way of garnering market share becomes a major headache for corporate executives. Hence, they look for critical information relating to the factors influencing store choice. Research on store patronage/choice involving Indian consumers is the need of the hour, because the outcome of any such research work would help the corporate managers to introduce innovative changes in their product portfolio and thereby retain the existing customers.

It is a universally accepted fact that satisfied customers continuously patronize a particular brand. Studies conducted earlier reveal that price plays a pivotal role either in strengthening or weakening store choice. Pricing helps the corporate to build brand loyalty and it can also decrease brand loyalty. It is argued (Krishnamoorthy and Raj, 1991) that loyal customers tend to be less price-sensitive in the choice decision than non-loyal consumers. For marketers it is important to know the extent to which the price of a product can be increased (under unavoidable circumstances) without losing its loyal customers. Consumers change their brands due to several reasons, viz, availability of competitive brands with better features, influence of personal variables; location convenience, desire to try new products, strong sales promotion schemes, and stock out situation. Marketers are desperate to understand the ways and means of safeguarding their loyal customers from being attracted by competitors. Hence, there is a need for an understanding of the impact of these factors on store choice.

This paper attempts to develop a model of store patronage behaviour of customers in India using Structural Equation Model (SEM). Particular focus is given on consumers' characteristics, buying intentions, store attributes and store patronage. Results from the study highlight the notion that how the retail store patronage behaviour should be conceptualized as a continuum rather than being regarded as dichotomous, and a statistical framework is proposed.

Brief Review of Literature

From a behavioural perspective, patronage and store choice are intertwined concepts that marketing researchers have studied intensively (e.g., Martineau, 1958; Berry, 1969; Schiffman et al., 1977; Monroe and Guiltinan, 1975; Mazursky and Jacoby, 1986, Hansen and Deutscher, 1977;). The patronage behaviour and store choice literature basically focuses on studying the principal attributes that influence a customer's shopping decisions and on investigating the interactions among these attributes. The assumption of the stream of research is that the consumer's store

choice is not made on the basis of only one attribute; rather, a set of attributes (variables) collectively plays a critical role in how the customer chooses to patronize a specific store and comprises the store image (Abdulla Alhemoud, 2008).

Supporting this argument, there are number of studies conducted with the objective of store patronage studies was to explore the relative importance of store patronage motives (Arnold, et al., 1983; Woodside, 1973; Stephenson, 1969; Bellenger, Robertson and Greenberg, 1977). Store patronage motives are reasons for patronizing a store (i.e. elements of a retailer's merchandising mix that are critical in customer' patronage decision). Store choice and patronage behaviour involve a decision process related to where consumers shop, how they shop and what they purchase (Moye, 2000). Initiated by patronage motives, the selection of a store is highly influenced by retail store attributes, characteristics of consumer and store choice context (Haynes et al., 1994). The number of attributes a consumer would use when forming attitudes toward stores are highly contextual, varying considerably by store type (Schiffman et al., 1977; Hansen and Deutscher, 1977), purpose of purchase (Davies, 1992) and consumer segment (Pessemier, 1980). Mazursky and Jacoby (1986) emphasized the impact of the time dimension on store choice. The attitude and perceptions of consumers towards retail stores are not constant in the sense that they change over time in varying degrees. In a recent study by Thiruvenkadam and Panchanatham (2011) in examining the effect of price on store patronage, found that consumers switch stores mainly because of price. Mohammad Raza Shah (2011) argues that location of the store, wide range of merchandise and store ambience are the significant factors in attracting customers to the store. Thiruvenkadam and Panchanatham (2011) found that the influence of each store attribute varies widely in creating store patronage. The following attributes such as product quality and variety, sales promotions and store atmosphere are highly significant. Attributes such as sales men, convenience factors, brand image and adjustments are found having moderate influence. Location of the store, advertising, and reputation are the other factors have less significant in store selection.

Objectives of the Study

Based on the review of literature the following objectives have been formulated:

1. To explore the influence of:
    a. Consumer characteristics on Store Patronage,
    b. Buying intentions of shoppers on Store Patronage,
    c. Store attributes on Store Patronage,

d. Satisfaction of Shoppers on Store Patronage.

2. To develop a model for patronage behaviour.

Hypotheses:

Based on the objectives, researchers have formulated the following major hypotheses

H1: Consumer characteristics have influence on buying intentions.
H2: Buying intentions have an effect on store attributes
H3: Store attributes affects customer satisfaction.
H4: Satisfaction towards a store affects store patronage

Research Methodology

The study is descriptive in nature. A self-administered questionnaire was used to test the proposed model. The questionnaire was constructed and sequenced logically for the convenience of the shoppers. Respondents were briefed on the general purpose of the study, and were asked to complete the questionnaire without any fear. Total of five hundred and twenty two samples were used for the study. The idea to obtain responses through the database from the retailers was considered but most of them did not cooperate and database was not adequate to locate them easily. So it was decided to go for convenient sampling, where the survey was distributed to well-known and trustworthy individuals for redistribution amongst their relatives, friends and colleagues. This approach has limitations, if not properly administered. To avoid draw-backs in the convenient sampling approach, proper information was provided to the individuals to whom the questionnaire was given for distribution. Chennai city, the capital of Tamil Nadu, was taken as the research area where people have more exposure about organized retail outlets. Also, the availability of number of organized retail outlets is more. Develop a model based on the factors with the aid of smart PLS2.3.

Sample Description

Table 1 depicts the respondents profile and composition. Sixty eight percent of respondents are female and thirty two percent are male. Forty two percent belong to the age category of thirty one to forty; twenty fore percent are belongs to the age group of forty one to fifty. Forty three percent shoppers are having school education; twenty five percent are completed graduation. Thirteen percent are post graduates and fourteen percent were professional degree holders. Only five percent shoppers are not having formal education. Forty one percent of respondents are earning between ten

thousand rupees to twenty thousand rupees; sixteen percent are below ten thousand rupees as monthly income. Fifteen percent of respondents are earning twenty thousand to thirty thousand and fourteen percent of respondents belong to the income category of thirty to forty thousand.

Table 1: Sample Description

S. No.	Respondents Profile	Frequency	Percentage
	Gender		
1	Male	167	32
2	Femals	355	68
	Age		
1	less than 20	12	2.3
2	21 to 30	84	16.1
3	31 to 40	223	42.7
4	41 to 50	127	24.3
5	51 and above	76	14.6
	Education		
1	No formal education	24	4.6
2	School education	222	42.5
3	Graduate	132	25.3
4	Post graduate	70	13.4
5	Professional	74	14.2
	Monthly Income		
1	Below 10000	85	16.3
2	10001-20000	215	41.2
3	20001-30000	76	14.6
4	30001-40000	74	14.2
5	40001-50000	28	5.4
6	50000 and above	44	8.4

Structural Model

The researchers developed a comprehensive model on retail patronage behaviour. The model has five phases. First phase includes the consumer's characteristics dimensions covering the personal variables, social variables and psychological variables. The second phase includes the buying intention dimensions of consumers; the third phase is the store attributes; fourth phase is the satisfaction of customers towards a retail store and the fifth phase is the dependent variable, that is, store patronage.

The consumer characteristics include the following three variables affecting store patronage: Personal variables, social variables, and psychological variables. The personal variables include age, gender, education, occupation, economic status and personality of the shoppers. The social variables include family type, marital status and religion of the shoppers. The psychological variables include decision making style and shopping involvement of shoppers. In the second phase, i.e., buying intentions include the following variables: frequency of shopping, average expenditure, items of purchase and frequency of changing stores.

The third phase of the model talks about the eleven key store-attributes which influence the store patronage of shoppers. This includes store location, merchandise quality and variety, price, store atmosphere, sales men, brand image, advertisements, sales promotions, reputation and adjustments, other convenient factors. The fourth phase of the model describes the satisfaction of shoppers. The satisfaction depends on the eleven store attributes shown at the third phase in the model. Only when shoppers get satisfied on the store elements they will continue to patronage in the same store else they will switch stores until they find a store which meets their expectations.

The fifth phase is the dependent factor, i.e., store patronage. The store patronage will increase or decrease based on the extent of gap between the expectations of the shoppers and the store attributes present. When the customers get more value from the store attributes than the cost they spend to attain the values, the satisfaction will increase, and the end result is that the shopper will continue to show patronage towards the store.

The eighteen constructs of the study are conceptually related to each other by the structural model as shown in the figure: 1. A PLS model is analyzed and interpreted in two stages: 1) The assessment of the reliability and validity of the measurement model and 2) The assessment of the structural model. This sequence ensures that the constructs' measures are valid and reliable before attempting to draw conclusions regarding relationships among constructs. Structural model specifies relations between latent constructs. Estimating and analyzing the path coefficients between the constructs test the structural model. Path coefficients are indicators of the model's predictive ability.

Measurement Model

The measurement model for reflective constructs is assessed in terms of Individual item reliability, Construct reliability, and Convergent validity and Discriminant validity. Initially the relationships were displayed between the

constructs of personal variable, social variable and psychological variable with buying intention which the relationship with store functional elements and store image elements and also the relationship with customer satisfaction and store patronage. PLS algorithm was applied and the resultant relationship, coefficients and values of loadings are shown in figure 2. In PLS, loadings of respective factors on their respective latent constructs are examined to assess the reliability of the factors. Since the final model was decided after dropping out insignificant factors having factor loadings of less than 0.5.

Fig. 1: Store Patronage Model

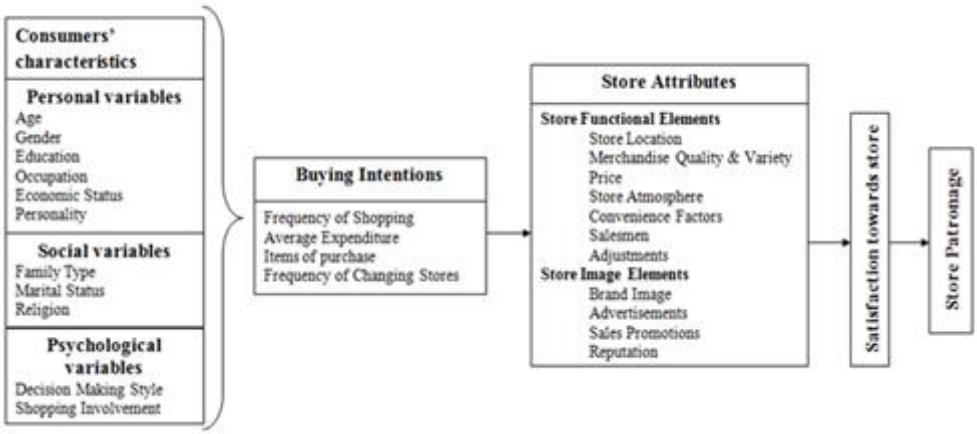
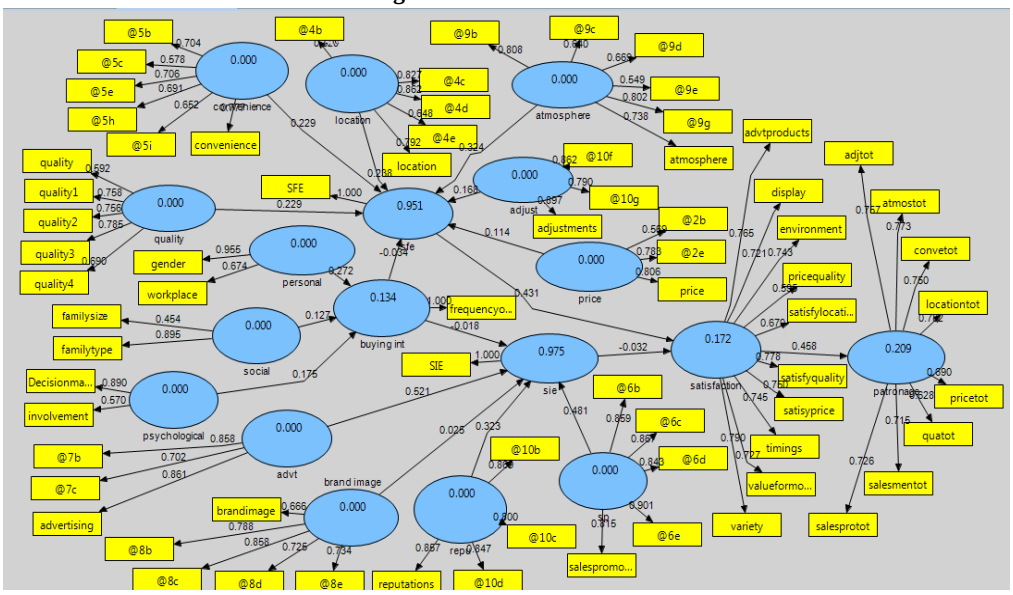


Figure 2: Final Path Model



Reliability

Referring to table 2, for factor loadings, the cut-off criterion of 0.5 was considered as a strong factor loading coefficient (Hair et.al 2010; Hulland 1999). In addition to Cronbach's alpha, reliability of each variable was assessed through Fornell and Larcker's measures of composite reliability. This measure is preferred over Cronbach's alpha because it offers a better estimate of variance shared by the respective indicators and because it offers a better estimate of variance shared by the respective indicators and because it uses the item loadings obtained within the homological network (Hair et.al, 2006). In this study the composite reliability values construct range from 0.86 to 0.94 which is exceeded the standarded value of 0.70 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Hair, Anderson & Black,1998). The factor loadings, Cronbach's alpha, Composite reliability and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values calculated by PLS algorithms are tabulated in table 2

Table 2: Factor loadings, Cronbach's alpha, Composite reliability and AVE values

Constructs	Factor loadings	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	Average variance Extracted
Adjustments		0.8077	0.8868	0.7237
Adj10a	0.8971			
Adj10f	0.8618			
Adj10g	0.7897			
Advertisement		0.7352	0.851	0.6575
Ad7a	0.8614			
Ad7b	0.8584			
Ad7c	0.7025			
Atmosphere		0.7949	0.8548	0.5000
At9a	0.7375			
At9b	0.8081			
At9c	0.6395			
At9d	0.6686			
At9e	0.5488			
Brand image		0.8138	0.8695	0.573
Bi8a	0.6657			
Bi8b	0.7881			
Bi8c	0.8576			
Bi8d	0.7254			
Bi8e	0.7342			
Buying intension				
Frequency of changing	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Convenience		0.7772	0.8419	0.4996
Co5a	0.7768			
Co5b	0.7039			

Co5c	0.5776			
Co5e	0.7064			
Co5h	0.6906			
Co5i	0.6516			
Location		0.8091	0.8689	0.5739
Lo4a	0.792			
Lo4b	0.6278			
Lo4c	0.8274			
Lo4d	0.8623			
Lo4e	0.6479			
Patronage		0.8749	0.9005	0.6319
Adjustments	0.7574			
Atmosphere	0.7734			
Convenience	0.7497			
Location	0.7819			
Quality of Merchandise	0.6279			
Salesmen	0.7155			
Sales promotions	0.7261			
Personal		0.5972	0.8075	0.6836
Gender	0.9553			
Workplace (occupation)	0.6742			
Price		0.5427	0.7672	0.5289
Pr2a	0.8062			
Pr2b	0.5693			
Pr2e	0.7826			
Psychological		0.5328	0.7068	0.5581
Decision making style	0.8897			
Shopping involvement	0.5698			
Quality		0.7642	0.8417	0.5177
Q1	0.5925			
Q2	0.7577			
Q3	0.756			
Q4	0.7851			
Q5	0.6895			
Reputation		0.8652	0.908	0.7119
Re10a	0.8569			
Re10b	0.8691			
Re10c	0.8003			
Re10d	0.847			
Satisfaction		0.902	0.9191	0.5334
S1	0.6699			
S2	0.7447			
S3	0.743			
S4	0.7903			
S5	0.7498			
S6	0.7777			
S7	0.7265			

S8	0.7211			
S9	0.7649			
S11	0.5948			
Social		0.5035	0.6469	0.5463
Family size	0.4536			
Family type	0.8951			
Sales promotions		0.9097	0.9328	0.7352
Sp6a	0.8152			
Sp6b	0.8593			
Sp6c	0.8668			
Sp6d	0.843			
Sp6e	0.9007			

Convergent validity

The evidence of convergent validity was assessed by examine the variance extracted for each factor. The AVE also exceeded the recommended value of 0.50 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Barclay et at. 1995; Hair, Anderson & Black,1998) which range from 0.6215 to 0.8644 and results indicated that variance extracted from the constructs possessed convergent validity.

Discriminant validity

Discriminant validity is the extent to which any single construct is different from the other constructs in the model (Carmines and Zeller, 1979; Cheung & Lee 2010). Discriminant validity was assessed by measuring the pair-wise correlations between factors obtained were compared with the variance extracted estimates for the constructs making up each possible pair. To assess the discriminant validity AVE should be greater than the variance shared between the construct and other constructs in the model (Chin, 1998). In addition, discriminate validity is is confirmed if the diagonal elements are significantly higher than the off-diagonal values in the corresponding rows and columns. The diagonal elements are the square root of the AVE score for each construct.(Teo, 2009; Roldan & Sanchez – Franco, 2012). These values are shown in table 3. Result revealed that all the constructs possess Discriminat validity.

From table 3, the measurement demonstrates that there is adequate discriminant validity, since the diagonal elements are significantly greater than the off-diagonal elements in the corresponding rows and columns. In total, the measurement model has demonstrated adequate convergent validity and discriminant validity.

Table 3: Showing the Discriminant Validity Results

Constructs	Adjust	Advt	Atmo sphere	Brand ima	Buying int	Conv	Locat	Patr	Personal	Price	Psyc	Quality	Repu	Satisfac	Social	Sales pro
Adjustment	**0.8507**															
Advt	0.0594	**0.8108**														
Atmosphere	0.4578	0.3759	**0.7071**													
Brand image	-0.035	0.5805	0.5012	**0.7569**												
Buying int	0.2222	0.038	0.2511	-0.0469	**1.000**											
Convenience	0.4406	0.2558	0.5905	0.2873	0.2107	**0.7068**										
Location	0.4905	0.1756	0.4963	0.0749	0.2012	0.6646	**0.7575**									
Patronage	0.7577	0.2427	0.778	0.2462	0.2892	0.7738	0.7763	**0.7949**								
Personal	0.1859	-0.0876	0.0212	-0.1971	0.3014	0.1351	0.1954	0.163	**0.8268**							
Price	0.5172	0.0439	0.3868	-0.0073	0.2221	0.4382	0.4681	0.6678	0.207	**0.7272**						
Psychological	0.3171	0.1134	0.4508	0.2117	0.1465	0.2872	0.3188	0.3994	-0.0748	0.2779	**0.7470**					
Quality	0.4095	0.1079	0.4912	0.2989	0.0556	0.3792	0.3403	0.6437	-0.1552	0.4334	0.132	**0.7175**				
Reputation	0.2455	0.3014	0.5335	0.4756	0.1292	0.3478	0.1841	0.4181	-0.084	0.2601	0.2845	0.2911	**0.8437**			
Satisfaction	0.4568	-0.0074	0.3301	-0.0434	0.2662	0.2724	0.3878	0.4576	0.3224	0.2155	0.1448	0.2475	0.1718	**0.7303**		
Social	0.0502	-0.0933	-0.1461	-0.2382	0.2184	-0.0369	-0.0193	-0.0302	0.339	0.1311	-0.0657	-0.1668	-0.1506	0.0415	**0.7391**	
Sales promotion	0.419	0.2477	0.5765	0.2479	0.2319	0.6384	0.5175	0.7256	0.2737	0.4575	0.2063	0.3406	0.3923	0.3153	-0.0252	**0.8574**

Structural Model Analysis

In PLS method, structural model and hypothesis were tested by computing path coefficients (β). PLS provides to determine how well the model fits the hypothesized relationship is the squared multiple correlations (R^2) for each dependent construct in the model. R^2 values of the dependent constructs indicate whether a particular PLS model accomplishes the objective of maximizing the variance explained (Chin, 1998). The bootstrapping technique was used (using 1000 sub samples) to evaluate the statistical significance of each path coefficient. The t-values of the parameter indicate the strength of the relationship in the parameter represents; therefore the higher the t-value, the stronger the relationship (Huang, Lin & Chuang, 2007)

Table 4: Showing the path coefficients along with their 'T' values

H	Constructs	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	S. Dev.	S. Error	T Statistics (|O/SE|)	Path coefficient (β)	Result
H1	Personal -> Buying intention	0.2716	0.2701	0.0502	0.0502	5.4101***	0.2716	Supported
H2	Social -> Buying intention	0.1265	0.1323	0.0506	0.0506	2.4979*	0.1265	Supported
H3	Psychological -> Buying intention	0.1751	0.181	0.0538	0.0538	3.2531***	0.1751	Supported
H4	Adjustment -> SFE	0.1681	0.1691	0.0156	0.0156	10.7843***	0.1681	Supported
H5	Atmosphere -> SFE	0.3243	0.3241	0.0165	0.0165	19.679***	0.3243	Supported
H6	Convenience -> SFE	0.2286	0.2275	0.0154	0.0154	14.8053***	0.2286	Supported
H7	Location -> SFE	0.2375	0.2358	0.0197	0.0197	12.0646***	0.2375	Supported
H8	Quality -> SFE	0.2292	0.2285	0.0165	0.0165	13.8621***	0.2292	Supported
H9	Price -> SFE	0.1136	0.1146	0.015	0.015	7.5856***	0.1136	supported
H10	Advt -> SIE	0.5209	0.5217	0.0178	0.0178	29.32***	0.5209	Supported
H11	Brand image -> SIE	0.0252	0.0246	0.0113	0.0113	2.218*	0.0252	Supported
H12	Reputation -> SIE	0.3228	0.3232	0.0128	0.0128	25.2852***	0.3228	Supported
H13	SP -> SIE	0.4811	0.4804	0.0186	0.0186	25.9312***	0.4811	Supported
H14	Buying int -> SFE	-0.0343	-0.0356	0.0128	0.012	2.6783***	-	Supported

					8		0.0343	
H15	Buying int -> SIE	-0.0184	-0.0186	0.0093	0.0093	1.9837*	-0.0184	Supported
H16	SFE -> Satisfaction	0.4312	0.4381	0.0422	0.0422	10.2087***	0.4312	Supported
H17	SIE -> Satisfaction	-0.0324	-0.0275	0.0582	0.0582	0.5567	-0.0324	Not Supported
H18	Satisfaction -> Patronage	0.4576	0.4697	0.042	0.042	10.895***	0.4576	Supported

Note: ***p<0.01 at t-value= 2.58, * p<0.05 at t-value= 1.96

The results in table 4 indicated that the path was supporting the hypothesis that personal variable (β = 0.2716, p<0.01) social variable (β = 0.1265, p<0.05) and psychological variable (β = 0.1681, p<0.01) have a direct and positive influence on buying intention, explaining 13.4% (R^2) of the variance present in buying intention.

Further it was observed that Adjustment (β = 0.1681 p<0.01), Atmosphere (β = 0.3243, p<0.01), Convenience (β = 0.2286, p<0.01), Location (β = 0.2375, p<0.01), Quality (β = 0.2292, p<0.01), and Price (β = 0.1136, p<0.01), were positively related and supported to stores functional element (SFE) explaining 95.1% (R^2) of the variance present in stores functional element and also Advertisement (β = 0.5209, p<0.01), Store image (β = 0.0252, p<0.05), Reputation (β = 0.3228, p<0.01) and sales promotion (β = 0.4811, p<0.01) were positively related and supported to stores image element (SIE) explaining 97.5% (R^2) of the variance present in stores image element. Buying intention was negatively related and supported to both store functional elements (β = -0.0343, p<0.01) and store image elements (β = -0.0184, p<0.05).

From the table, it was examined that store functional elements (β = 0.4312, p<0.01) was positively related and supported to satisfaction whereas store image elements (β = -0.0324, p>0.05) was negatively related but do not support the hypothesis of customer satisfaction, explaining 17.2% (R^2) of variance present in satisfaction. Moreover, satisfaction (β = 0.4576, p<0.01) was positively related and supported the store patronage, explaining 20.9% (R^2) of variance present in store patronage.

Model Evaluation

Structural model is mainly evaluated by Goodness – of-fit (Gof) and by using Stone-Geiser Q^2 test for predictive relevance. Goodness-of-fit (GoF) was used to measure the overall fit of the model. For this model the GoF index was 0.56585 (see

table 5). Further the quality of path model can also be evaluated by cross –validated redundancy index (Q^2) for the endogenous variable. A Q^2 greater than zero implies that the structural model has satisfactory predictive relevance for the model (Roldan & Sanchez – Franco, 2012). In PLS two kinds of Q^2 statistics are estimated by using Blind fold method of calculations. They are cross-validated communality (H^2) and cross-validated redundancy (F^2). The results are shown in table 5 and figure 3. It is observed from the table 5 that for this model all the constructs had high values of H^2 ranging from 0.2784 to 0.9999 and F^2 ranging from 0.0822 to 0.9744. All H^2 and F^2 values were positive, hence the model had acceptable relevance.

Table 5: Showing Model Evaluation results

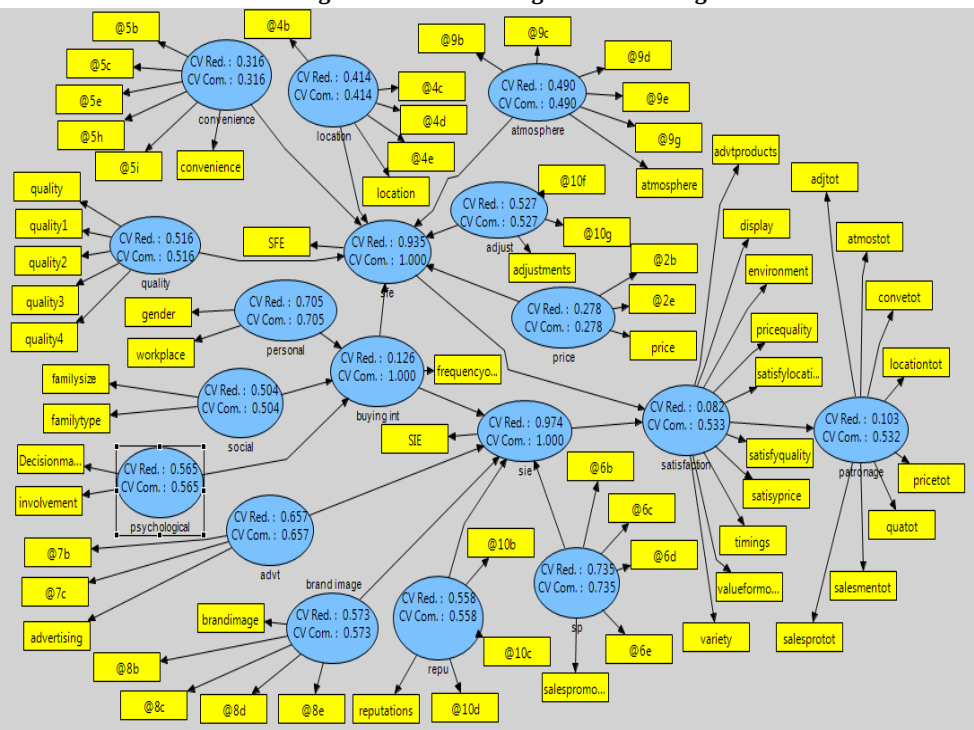
Constructs	R^2	Communality	H^2	Redundancy	F^2
Adjustment	-	0.7237	0.527	-	-
Advertisement	-	0.6575	0.657	-	-
Atmosphere	-	0.4996	0.4899	-	-
Brand image	-	0.573	0.5726	-	-
Buying intention	0.1337	1	0.9999	0.0899	0.1263
Convenience	-	0.4722	0.3158	-	-
Location	-	0.5739	0.4135	-	-
Patronage	0.2094	0.5319	0.5319	0.1027	0.1027
Personal	-	0.6836	0.705	-	-
Price	-	0.5289	0.2784	-	-
Psychological	-	0.5581	0.5653	-	-
Quality	-	0.5177	0.5164	-	-
Reputation	-	0.7119	0.5577	-	-
Satisfaction	0.1715	0.5334	0.5333	0.0881	0.0822
SFE	0.9507	1	0.9999	0.2	0.9351
SIE	0.975	1	0.9998	0.5113	0.9744
Social	-	0.5035	0.5036	-	-
Sales promotion	-	0.7352	0.7352	-	-
Average	0.48806	0.65606		0.1984	
GoF = √average R^2 x average communality = √0.32019 = 0.56585					

Discussions and Conclusion

The present model seeks to investigate the variety of factors influencing store patronage in a holistic manner rather than as isolated study. Most of the previous studies conducted in this area were focused mainly on studying the impact of store factors on store patronage such as store location, store layout, merchandise and so on (Abdulla Alhemoud (2008), Mintel (1996), Greenberg et al. (1985), Bearden (1977)

Kunkel and Berry (1968), Fisk (1961), Martineau (1958)). There are few studies focused on the other aspects of store patronage such as shopping costs and functional utility (Kim and Kang, 1995) consumer characteristics and choice context (Haynes et al., 1994).

Figure: 3 Blind Folding Path Modeling



Subhashini Kaul (2006) linked the store image with consumer's self image to study store patronage. Pierre Martineau (1958) attempted to study the link between the psychological factors and store patronage. However, relatively little research has been published to include all the perspectives of store patronage behavior. In this context, this proposed model is better in terms of coverage of number of factors that affect store patronage. The model links the consumer's characteristics and buying intentions with store attributes and the result is satisfaction towards the store that leads to retail store patronage. Since, the proposed model covers utmost all the attributes lead to store patronage, it will be useful in understanding the holistic nature of store patronage. Since, the competition becomes tough nowadays due to the entry of corporate chain stores in Indian retail market on one hand and on the other hand, the consumer expectations are also widely changing, it is important for any retailer to understand the significance of each and every aspect of store patronage to attract new

customers and also to retain the existing customers, failing which, the potential customers of a retail store will be doing their shopping elsewhere!

Limitations and scope for future research

The study does not cover the store loyalty of shoppers in this study. Since store loyalty comes only after store patronage, the researcher limited this study only up to store patronage and satisfaction not loyalty. The researchers thought studying store loyalty is beyond the scope of the present study and separate study is required to study store loyalty. Field of store patronage behaviour provides enormous scope to carry out continuous research. There are several areas that require further research. Further research should investigate the link between consumer perceptions of retailers' performance, satisfaction, store loyalty, purchasing outcomes and store performance, as well as the link between in-store stimuli and purchasing behaviour in the Indian retailing scenario. The study investigated only a few psychological factors such as personality of shoppers, decision making style and shopping involvement on studying store patronage behaviour. There are so many other psychological factors such as perception, attitude, motivation, values, etc, to be studied in the context of retail store selection and store patronage behaviour. Future research can also identify major constructs motivating the individuals to switchover, measure these constructs, and experiment with different product groups and consumers.

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