

**A STUDY ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION TOWARDS  
WILDCRAFT BRAND WITH REFERENCE TO COCHIN**

**PROJECT REPORT**

*Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award Degree*

**MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**



**University of Calicut**

**Thenhipalam, Malappuram District, Kerala**

**Pin code: 673 635, India**

By

**AKHILA V J**

**Roll No: YPAUMBA005**

Under the guidance of

**Prof. Dr. Jacob P M**



**Naipunnya Business School  
Pongam, Koratty East, Thrissur  
2020-2022**

# **UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT**

## **BONAFIDE CERTIFICATE**

Certified that this project report **“A STUDY ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION TOWARDS WILDCRAFT BRAND WITH REFERENCE TO COCHIN”** is the Bonafide work of AKHILA V J (YPAUMBA005) who carried out the project work.

Date:

Prof. Dr. Jacob P M

Place: Pongam

Director, NBS

# **UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT**

## **BONAFIDE CERTIFICATE**

Certified that this project report “**A STUDY ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION TOWARDS WILDCRAFT BRAND WITH REFERENCE TO COCHIN**” is the Bonafide work of Ms. AKHILA V J (YPAUMBA005) who carried out the project work under my supervision.

Date:

Prof. Dr. Jacob P M

Place: Pongam

Director, NBS

## **DECLARATION**

I, Akhila V J hereby declare that the Project Report entitled **“A STUDY ON CUSTOMER BEHAVIOR TOWARDS WILDCRAFT BRAND WITH REFERENCE TO COCHIN”** has been prepared by me and submitted to the University of Calicut in partial fulfillment of requirements for the award of the Master of Business Administration, is a record of original work done by me under the supervision of **Dr. Jacob P M**, Director of Naipunnya Business School, Pongam, Koratty East, Thrissur.

I also declare that this Project work has not been submitted by me fully or partly for the award of any Degree, Diploma, Title or recognition before any authority.

Place: Pongam, Thrissur

**AKHILA V J**

Date:

**(Reg. No: YPAUMBA005)**

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Place:

**AKHILA V J**

Date:

**YPAUMBA005**

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# **CHAPTER – 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

## **CHAPTER – 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

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## **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

In any firm, marketing is a dynamic and engaging activity. The marketing system includes the sellers, distributors, advertising agencies, consultants, transporters, financiers, and store agencies, all of which function as a counter. Any process of trade, including those involving commodities, services, ideas, or intermediary goods, falls under the purview of marketing.

It is commonly believed that market development and marketing development are the same as economic development, despite the fact that marketing is an action discipline. Marketing is becoming more and more crucial to a company's success as the commercial world expands. In view of the massive global, technological, economic, and social issues that presently confront today's organizations and nations, the marketing industry is receiving a fresh evaluation.

The “customer is king” philosophy has become one of those marketing fads and fashions that have continued to trail the growth and expansion of the product economy. In light of shifting consumer tastes and inclinations, the market environment has occasionally changed. This shifting market situation is the result of numerous causes. The reason for this significant evolution is the shifting tastes and preferences of the consumer. In comparison to earlier times, people's lifestyles, social classes, and wealth levels have all significantly changed. In today's customer-centered society, market demand has changed. Technology is one of the major factors responsible for this paradigm shift within the market.

My study is focused on the customer satisfaction with respect to the brand Wildcraft by conducting a responsive questionnaire survey among the customers who visited the Wildcraft brand store in Lulu International Shopping Mall, Cochin. Wildcraft is an Indian company that offers apparel and accessories especially concentrating on outdoor adventure and gears. The study is aiming at determining the customer satisfaction and to identify the factors influencing the purchase decision. It helps in finding the areas where Wildcraft lacks behind the customers' expectations and to find out what could be done to overcome such shortcomings.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM**

In this competitive world, we can see many problems in marketing of any product or service. Some problems can be solved, but so many problems may not be solved. India as a developing country, retail marketing is an important factor to develop its economy. Retailers, who are the connecting link between the producer and consumer, face many problems to market their products from various dimensions and many causes behind this. At present the customers are also more dynamic. The customers have certain expectations from the items they purchase such as its quality, price, good services etc. Hence, there is a need for research work in the field of problems of retail marketing from the point of view of retailers and consumers as well.

The purpose of the study is to understand the customer satisfaction level towards Wildcraft brand by measuring factors which are the backbone of services offered in retail stores of Wildcraft customers. From the studies, six factors have been identified

- Quality of product
- Fashionability of product
- Durability
- Variety/Range Available in the store
- Worth the money

The primary objective of the project is to study customer satisfaction with special emphasis on Wildcraft in the apparel and accessories retail industry.

### **1.3 OBJECTIVES**

Retailing covers a very wide range of products and services; hence the researchers have decided to focus only on the apparel and accessories segment. It is also relevant to mention here as the retail market is just growing in India, we will concentrate the whole analysis based on urban India. The agenda of the study is to know the customer. In order to achieve the said objective, the researchers need to have an understanding of the following:

1. To study the customer satisfaction towards Wildcraft brand with reference to Cochin.
2. To examine the level of satisfaction towards various parameters of Wildcraft products.
3. To identify the factors that encourage customers to buy Wildcraft products.

### **1.4 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

Retailers operate in a competitive environment facing changes in customer needs, demographics, types of retailing, technology and retail ownership, changes in retailing, technology and retail ownership, changes in merchandise. In this booming retail market in India, it became inevitable for the companies to learn how to retain their market share as well as to enhance it. With the entry of bigger players, competition will soon be very intense. In such an environment, the understanding and prediction of customer satisfaction and their purchase attributes are becoming an important subject. The retailers' intention is to increase repeat customers.

Nowadays, customers seek an experience, which is more than product variety and or quality: a synthesis of multi attributes which create a favorable retailer and store image. As a result, a critical issue for retail management is to determine the factors affecting satisfaction, to identify and target segments of customers (Sivadas and Baker-Prewitt, 2000).

## **1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The study shows customer satisfaction in the context of the Wildcraft brand located in Cochin. It provides guidelines for further research opportunities within the retail apparel and sports segments in Cochin. The study is quite significant in order to understand the major factors influencing the customers to make purchase decisions by clearly understanding the market size and trends. It also provides an overview about the future scenario of Wildcraft with respect to the current customer perspectives.

## **1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The scope of this research study is primarily to identify the level of satisfaction of customers who visited the Wildcraft store in Cochin. Here in this study, we focus on primary data collection and analysis based on the collected data. Therefore, only a limited number of customers' responses have been recorded with which the study is carried out. It only focuses on the Cochin based customers. Therefore the scope of the study is limited to Cochin and it does not include any idea about customer satisfaction level elsewhere. The study provides critical information and inferences regarding the customer base in a very small location as compared to its market size. The aim is to understand the strengths and strategies of the brand in terms of marketing and competition.

## **1.7 INDUSTRY PROFILE**

The history of the apparel industry dates back to the Second World War, when uniforms for the soldiers were a necessity. Since then, there has been a lot of growth and change in this particular industry in terms of technology, materials, patterns, quality, etc. India is one of the global leaders in the textile sector today. Each and every human being is well aware that clothes are a necessary need. The clothing industry meets our basic need for

cloth, and the textile industry provides the fiber, yarn, and other materials needed to manufacture that cloth.

Every industry has different needs to satisfy, just like the garment and apparel sector. They offer attractive and designer clothing to the general public that will make one look better. Each and every article of clothing made serves the single objective of meeting consumer demand and is the result of exquisite handiwork based on a particular subject and trends in style. Therefore, the fashion business is in charge of inventing fresh, original trends for each generation to adopt. They go through a very laborious procedure to connect and communicate with the market and the fashion designers, which jointly satisfies the demands and desires of the consumer. Clothes form a sign for:

- Identification
  
- Modesty
  
- Status
  
- Attitude
  
- Personality
  
- Protection

The cost to produce a piece of fashion and the consumer, who truly set trends, are the two key factors that determine the apparel sector. There are only a few other variables, which are a strong hold on the diverse market, on which this particular industry operates aside from these two key ones. Efficiency and commitment to negotiating profitable contracts with marketers and wholesalers in order to stay in the retail industries As they demand a sizable number of highly experienced artisans as well as equipment in the form of technology, this industry is a fertile ground for employment.

After several other sectors, the garment industry is currently one of the most significant contributors to the Indian economy. There is more room in the market for this particular industry to expand to its full potential with each new trend that emerges in technological

innovation, new fabric patterns, etc. Despite all obstacles, the garment business has consistently shown the market its greatest potential. Among other formidable competitors in the market, it has established itself as the leader of the sector and the one with the quickest growth in India.

The way that the general public shops for clothing has changed in recent days in a very noticeable way. Their purchasing habits, fashion choices, and other actions have revolutionized the industry and changed how people view shopping. Modern retailing uses innovative models that give customers a wide range of clothing shopping possibilities.

The market for sportswear is very fragmented, with many distinct brands competing. Even well-known brands like Nike must put in a lot of effort to preserve their position in the market. Retailers are under pressure to consistently develop their products and create new designs as consumer demand grows every day. The international sportswear market is very competitive, as was already noted in the previous sentence. Among the leading companies in this sector are Reebok, Adidas, Puma, and Nike. These significant players are compelled to use growth methods, such as product launches, collaborations, and other initiatives, to reach a wider market.

For instance, Adidas and Manchester United Football Club have a collaboration arrangement to sell Adidas' products abroad, which has greatly boosted the company's standing internationally. People in developing nations have become more health conscious over the past few years. They frequent the gym and play sports more frequently. This increased physical activity has led to an expansion in the sports gear sector. To meet the expanding needs of the consumer base, businesses are improving their products in this environment (by adding lightweight, breathable products, etc.). In the sportswear market, women in particular are becoming significant consumers. Companies are creating specific product lines for women as a result. Since the needs of the youth and female market have been rapidly expanding over the past year, the sport industry is now pushing partnerships between sport brands and the fashion sector to create new trends.

One of the biggest industries in the world is the sports sector. More and more people are engaging in sports and leisure activities across a wide range of pursuits. The retail sales of sports products in India have increased over time. The precondition for this rapidly growing business would be technology, paired with a few government efforts, leading to cost-effective production procedures. The Indian sports goods retailing industry is undergoing a profound shift and is becoming extremely competitive as more and more players compete for the same group of clients.

The country's surge in shops is a sign that the sports business will experience a significant boom in the not too distant future. The retail revolution has started in India with the entry of the new retailer. The rise in per capita income, shifting lifestyles, and shifting customer preferences are all contributing to the expansion of the retailing of sports goods in India. India has served as a major base for the production of sports goods, and sourcing from India has grown significantly. Sports, both live and in the media, are becoming more and more significant as passive entertainment. Cricket is the most popular "equipment" sport in India, followed by racket sports and volleyball. The market for sports equipment is incredibly fragmented beyond these. In terms of consumer spending, home exercise equipment comes in second place to cricket almost exactly. Clubs and gyms are the biggest buyers of exercise equipment. Although shoppers spend more on sportswear, their expenditures are inflated by the trend of dressing in athletic gear for all-purpose leisure time. A sport in the twenty-first century is, as always, a market full of extremes. Market research is currently a top priority for marketing sports goods since markets around the world are becoming more and more competitive. This means finding customers and offering services of the highest caliber in exchange for the best return on investments.

In general, a market that is expanding is more desirable because it has greater potential for sales and is typically simpler to enter and increase sales in. A large market, however, can be a double-edged sword for extremely tiny businesses. Of course, there is the potential for enormous sales, but on the downside, larger companies with established access to marketing channels and superior funding may be enticed to enter such an alluring industry. Sports goods are characterized as tangible, material goods that benefit customers. Services, on the other hand, are immaterial, non-physical products. The



majority of sporting goods and services share similarities. The sports goods industry is made up of all businesses that are primarily involved in the retailing of new sporting goods, exercise gear, clothing or hosiery, sportshoes, and other accessories that are offered for sale by sports goods retailers and distributors. It goes without saying that consumers engage in the sports activities for which they purchase various sporting goods, yet in some instances, the opposite may be true; e.g. Tread - mill or Jogger may not be used at Health clubs, Cricket Matting or Helmets may be shared by one or more teams. Table Tennis Table may be borrowed or rented etc. None less in many sports events participating trends are clearly correlated with consumer's products. One believes that a sports product is a good service or any combination such as (a) Product availability in the region, b) Geographic location of the region, c) Economic condition of the sports participants, etc. are the few points to be mentioned.

Indian sports products retail market is one of the least organized retail sports goods markets found in India. More than 90% of shops operate in spaces less than 500 square feet, making it traditionally a family business. Urban customers in India have more purchasing power, and branded sports goods are gradually evolving into recognised lifestyle items. In order to fight intense competition and capitalize on this expansion, Indian sports goods retailers must learn the value of creating their own brands for their stores in order to express quality and value for money as well as to strengthen their marketing posture.

The Indian sports goods retail market is undoubtedly developing, and in a short period of time, too many businesses have crowded into various categories without considering their key skills or having a well-thought-out branding strategy. Despite the entry of new competitors, some stores have nevertheless been able to hold their footing in the market. They are holding the line against the onslaught of the new companies on the horizon thanks to consumer insights developed through their many years of company expertise. According to a researcher, "Consumers increasingly play games with shops by waiting impatiently for the discounts to appear. Because individuals have more freedom over when to buy, purchases are not needed. Dec 20, 2018 (Herald keeper via COMTEX) -- Athletic Footwear Market size was USD 80 billion in 2015 and is forecast to grow at

approximately 3% CAGR from 2016 to 2023. Global shipments were over 3.5 billion units in 2015. The industry is segmented by consumer groups, category, and retail channels. Consumer Groups include men, women and kids. Category wise classification mainly comprises inserts used in aerobics, running, walking shoes, and at leisure. This segment accounted for nearly 35% of the global athletic footwear market size, with CAGR estimations of 1.7% from 2016 to 2023. Other categories include sports, which contains products suited for various sports such as baseball, basketball, soccer, tennis, cricket, etc. This application area occupied the majority of the overall volume share in 2015. Hiking includes trekking and walking boots, rugged footwear, mountaineering shoes, specialty boots, and seasonal boots.

Class-based fitness on account of the growing social fitness trend is forecast to drive the leisure segment and open new opportunities for companies operating in the industry. Retail channel is divided into store based, which includes discount stores, departmental stores and channels, specialty stores, franchise, and sports and athletic goods stores. Non store based segment includes distribution via the internet, catalogs, and teleshopping. The ecosystem is dominated by five leading brands that collectively account for around 80% of the global athletic footwear market share. Major players are Reebok, Puma, Nike, Adidas, Asics, New Balance Sketcher's, Converse, Vans, and Saucony. Nike, Adidas, and Asics led the industry in 2015. The key strategies adopted by these players are more retail outlets, large global customer base, and strong distribution channels.

Consumers' inclination for brands differs on the basis of region. For example, Asics and Puma dominate the European industry, while U.S. based companies VF Corp Skechers, and New Balance have strong presence in North America. The key deciding factors for gaining profitability and competitive advantage are enhancing R&D capabilities, building strong brand equity, strong capital resources and efficient network management which will help companies to stay ahead in the competition. The athletic footwear market incorporates sportswear, trekking shoes, aerobics shoes, walking shoes, and running shoes. Increased awareness regarding a healthy lifestyle that motivates people to engage into some kind of sports activity will drive the industry in the coming years. This motivated the leading brands to come up with innovative and comfortable sports footwear

products. Growth in wholesale and retail business, efficient supply chain, consumers' willingness and increased purchasing power have fuelled the global athletic footwear market. Presently, the men's athletic footwear market captures about 60% of overall revenue generated. Women's footwear accounts for around 25% share, with the rest occupied by products for children, which are estimated to witness rapid revenue growth. Asia Pacific athletic footwear market share was approximately 40% in 2015, with the region expected to continue dominating global industry revenue through the forecast timeframe. Europe is also forecast to remain a sizable regional industry in the coming years. U.S. athletic footwear market size is expected to grow at a slower pace, due to high labor and material cost and strong competition. Major driving forces for growth are increase in disposable income in developing economies, growing global population, rapidly spreading awareness about health and fitness, and the corresponding rise in demand for comfortable, innovative and affordable products.

## **1.8 COMPANY PROFILE**

Wildcraft is an Indian clothing and accessories company with its headquarters in Bangalore, India. More than 200 exclusive stores and 4,000 multi-branded outlets both in India and overseas sell the company's products. Gaurav Dubish and Siddharth Sood created the business.

Since its incorporation in 1998, Wildcraft India Pvt. Ltd. (WIPL) has served more than 3.5 million clients and generated sales of more than USD 100 million. WIPL is India's leading manufacturer and distributor of head-to-toe items for trek-to-travel solutions. In addition to having 5000+ retail points-of-sale in India, Wildcraft has an extended geo footprint of 200+ exclusive brand stores spread over 60+ cities. Additionally, there are more than 1000 places of sale spread between department stores and hypermarkets. Additionally, Flipkart and Myntra are significant partners with Wildcraft.

In the 1990s, a dome tent was Wildcraft's first offering. The business transitioned to producing packs and related outdoor equipment, and it later added outdoor clothes and

multi-terrain footwear. With the addition of 1,000 new staff across its Bangalore-based factories, it launched an extended line of equipment in 2014, including clothes and footwear. In 2016, it made a big revenue addition by entering the market for performance footwear and apparel. In order to diversify its product line during the COVID-19 lockdown in India, Wildcraft India produced items like Personal Protective Kits (PPE).

Among other things, Wildcraft manufactures rucksacks, backpacks, and camping and trekking gear. In India, the corporation has 4,000 multi-branded stores and 200+ unique stores, with 20–30 new stores opening each year. Additionally, Wildcraft items can be found in South Asian and Middle Eastern nations. More than 3,700 individuals were employed with Wildcraft as of March 2020. A few months later, it expanded its manufacturing facilities using a hub-and-spoke model of cooperation with more than 60 manufacturers. The business had roughly 30,000 employees by July.

In the past, Wildcraft was operated mostly for recreational purposes. Revenue has expanded more than 100 times in less than ten years thanks to an expansion plan pursued by the management team in charge of the company since 2008. The company grew at a compound annual growth rate of 75% from 2007 to 2012, continuing to grow at 50% a year until 2018, and is currently aiming for a 25% revenue CAGR, according to Dubliss. Private equity company Sequoia Capital, with headquarters in California, made an investment in September 2013 totaling 70 crore, giving the company a US\$50 million enterprise valuation. In order to reach a revenue run-rate of \$1 billion by 2020, Wildcraft, which had retail sales of \$400 crore in FY 2017, is planning a total investment of 350 crore.

### **Marketing Strategies**

Wildcraft's marketing strategy examines the brand using a framework for the marketing mix that includes the four Ps (Product, Price, Place, Promotion). There are numerous marketing tactics, such as pricing strategy, promotion planning, and product innovation. These commercial plans, which are based on Wildcraft's marketing mix, aid in the brand's commercial success. The Wildcraft marketing strategy aids in the brand's/competitive

company's positioning in the market and the accomplishment of its corporate goals & objectives.

### **1. Product Strategy:**

The product strategy and mix in Wildcraft marketing strategy can be explained as follows:

Wildcraft is one of the leading outdoor gear and accessories brands based out of India. When Wildcraft first began, it was primarily a service business that planned river rafting excursions and ran outdoor education programmes for both adults and kids. Up until 2003, the services Wildcraft offered were responsible for 70% of its revenue. Then it transferred its attention to the products that drove its expansion. Rucksacks, backpacks, hiking packs, duffle bags, campus gear and accessories, travel and outdoor accessories, and outdoor equipment make up the product portfolio of Wildcraft's marketing mix. Additionally, the company makes footwear, rainwear, and clothes for both men and women. Recently, Wildcraft has also dabbled in items with many uses for urban landscapes. According to the company's own assessment, only 20% of the time backpacks are used for outdoor activities, but they are the company's best-selling product. When Wildcraft extends to markets outside of India, it uses the same positioning but produces a product that is tailored for the local market.

### **2. Pricing Strategy:**

Despite growing competition from Chinese private labels and the presence of global companies like Decathlon, Wildcraft's products are priced affordably. However, because of its operational economies of scale and learning curve, it has been able to achieve operational efficiency and maintain profitability even when charging reduced prices. In order to alter consumer tastes and lifestyles, Wildcraft has lowered the price of its products, which has had a negative impact on the profit margin that it would otherwise have been able to achieve. Wildcraft adheres to the product line pricing approach, with products from the same line appealing to various buyer demographics. Its rucksacks cost between Rs. 1000 and Rs. 2000 in India as well as in the range of Rs. 9000 and above.

### **3. Place & Distribution Strategy:**

The UAE, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Taiwan all carry Wildcraft products. The company's branded goods are offered in India through exclusive shops, institutional channels, and multi-brand outlets. Multi-brand channels are used to sell the majority of Wildcraft's goods. The company had roughly 31 exclusive stores as of April 2015, and it planned to open 50 new stores annually. Wildcraft unique stores are just 400 to 500 square feet in size, with the goal of breaking even in 12 to 18 months due to the high cost of living in India, which reduces the size of the profit margin. The company is present through its retail distribution channels in more than 55 Indian cities. The business is also active on e-commerce platforms and operates its own e-commerce business in India and UAE. Wildcraft merchandise are available on multi-brand e-commerce websites such as amazon in countries where it has its distribution.

### **4. Promotion & Advertising Strategy:**

The promotional and advertising strategy in the Wildcraft marketing strategy is as follows:

Although Wildcraft has added versatile kits to its product line, the company still views itself as primarily an outdoor brand. Wildcraft uses a 360-degree marketing approach to advertise its goods. Paid media is used, including print and television advertisements. In 2015, the company launched "Come Alive" outdoor advertising campaigns in Hyderabad, Bangalore, Mumbai, Delhi NCR, Pune, and Bangalore. The branding for the Company was done by placing its gears against stunning scenery on billboards, mall facades, bus shelters, subway, and taxi cabs. Digital media has been utilized by Wildcraft through YouTube and other platforms. The business is interested in using newly acquired media channels that aid in word-of-mouth marketing, such as social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn. The company uses launch events to generate press coverage. The blog page on the Wildcraft website allows users to post travel-related articles. The company's ads include efforts to promote a culture of outdoor exploration as well.

## **SWOT Analysis of Wildcraft**

In order to strengthen its position in the market, Wildcraft might use a SWOT analysis to concentrate on enhancing its advantages and opportunities while resolving its disadvantages and threats.

### **Wildcraft Strengths**

The essential elements of Wildcraft's business that provide it a competitive edge in the market are examined in terms of its strengths. The strength of a brand can be attributed to a variety of things, such as its financial standing, skilled personnel, distinctiveness of its products, and intangible assets like brand value. The Wildcraft strengths are listed below in the SWOT analysis:

1. Distribution and Design
2. There are over 2500 multi-branded outlets and over 150 exclusive stores carrying Wildcraft Gear in over 400 important Indian cities.
3. India has a niche market for outdoor equipment
4. Benefits from being a powerful first mover in the category.
5. Has strong brand recognition internationally

### **Wildcraft Weaknesses**

A brand's vulnerabilities are specific areas of its business that can be strengthened to strengthen its position. Some flaws can be described as qualities that the business lacks or in which the competition excels. The Wildcraft SWOT Analysis has the following weaknesses:

1. In comparison to market leaders, the business is young.
2. Due to the abundance of options, market share growth is slow and brand switching is significant.

### **Wildcraft Opportunities**

Any brand has the potential to improve in certain areas in order to grow its customer base. Opportunities for a brand can include geographic expansion, product enhancements, improved communication, etc. The opportunities in the Wildcraft SWOT analysis are as follows:

1. To take advantage of being a pioneer and establish itself as the go-to source for all outdoor needs.
2. To develop a market by raising awareness
3. Increase marketing activities to attract international markets.

### **Wildcraft Threats**

Any firm may face risks in the form of elements that could harm its operations. Threats can come from a variety of sources, including increased rival activity, shifting governmental priorities, alternative goods or services, etc. The following are the dangers identified in the Wildcraft SWOT Analysis:

1. International brands are gradually gaining market share because of their experience and well-known names.
2. Imitations that are fake and imitation damage the brand.



## **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

A literature review is a thorough summary of earlier research studies on a given topic. The literature review examines scholarly books, journals, and other sources that are pertinent to a particular field of study. This prior research should be listed, described, summed up, impartially evaluated, and clarified in the review. It needs to provide a theoretical framework for the study and assist the author in defining its scope. By acknowledging the contributions of earlier researchers, the literature review reassures the reader that your work has been thoughtfully conceived. When a previous study in the subject is mentioned, it is assumed that the author has read, assessed, and incorporated that study into the current work. Review of the literature reveals the earlier research done by the researcher in this field.

A literature review provides the reader with a “landscape” allowing them to fully comprehend the field’s advances. The reader may be required as part of graduate and post-graduate student work, such as for a thesis, dissertation or journal article. In a research proposal or prospectus, literature reviews are also common (the document that is approved before a student formally begins a dissertation or thesis). Evaluative, exploratory and instrumental literature reviews are the three most common types. The systematic review, a fourth type, is typically classified separately, but it is essentially a literature review focused on a research problem, with the goal of identifying, evaluating, selecting, and summarizing all high-quality research evidence and arguments related to that question. A meta-analysis is a systematic review that employs statistical tools to efficiently aggregate the data from all of the studies in order to obtain a more reliable result. An integrative literature review is described by Torracco(2016). An integrated literature review’s goal is to develop new knowledge about a topic by reviewing, critiquing and then synthesizing the literature under consideration.

Here I have made a systematic review of literature for this study to have a better understanding about consumer buying behavior. The compiled list of studies have been mentioned in this section.

**Halstead, Hartman and Schmidt (1994)** found that customer satisfaction is a transaction specific affective response resulting from the customer's comparison of product performance to some pre-purchase standard.

**Webbook and Oliver (1991)** described customer satisfaction as a post choice evaluative judgment concerning a specific purchase selection.

**Oliver (1987)** examined whether satisfaction was an emotion and concluded that satisfaction is a summary attribute phenomenon coexisting with other consumption emotions.

**Fe and Ikova (2004)** added that the perception of the word "satisfaction" influences the activities, which a customer conducts to achieve it. Researchers have also identified customer satisfaction as multi-dimensional in nature and viewed overall satisfaction as a function of satisfaction with multiple experiences with the service provider.

**Giese & Cote (2000)** studied various literatures and indicated that customer satisfaction is a response (emotional or cognitive), the response pertains to a particular focus (expectations, product, consumption experience, etc) and the response occurs at a particular time (after consumption, after choice, based on accumulated experience, etc).

**Tse and Wilton (1998)** stated customer satisfaction as the customer's response to the evaluation of the perceived discrepancy between prior expectations (or some norm of performance) and the actual performance of the product as perceived after its consumption.

**Mano and Oliver (1993)** examined the three aspects of the post consumption experience product evaluation, product elicited affect and product satisfaction. Product satisfaction is best characterized as an attitude-like post consumption evaluative judgment (Hunt. 1977) with the evaluative aspect of that judgment varying along the hedonic continuum (Oliver 1989; Westbrook and Oliver 1991)

**Kumar and Oliver (1997)** indicated that satisfaction was associated with customers' expectations being met. feeling they got "fair" value and feeling contented.

**Oliver (1987)** defined customer satisfaction as an outcome of a purchase/ usage experience that would appear to be an important variable in the chain of purchase experience linking product selection with other post purchase phenomena including favorable word-of-mouth and customer loyalty.

**Cadotte et al (1987)** conceptualized customer satisfaction is widely accepted as a view of the process by which customers develop feelings from an evaluation of the use experience. Cote, Foxman and Bob (1989) suggest that satisfaction is determined at the time the evaluation occurs. In some cases, satisfaction assessment may be a naturally occurring, internal response such as after consumption, or prior to repurchase. In some cases the assessment of satisfaction may be externally driven.

**Kristensen et al. (1999)** states customer/customer satisfaction is an evaluative response of the product purchase and consumption experience resulting from a comparison of what was expected and what was received. The overall conclusion from his study is that expectations influence customer satisfaction and the effect can be positive, negative or non-existent.

**Krishna and Shylajan (2007)** stated that brand awareness and brand visibility plays an important role along with product features. It is concluded that for most of the products, brand awareness is a significant determinant for buying behavior. Kennedy & Schneider states that in the changing economy, knowledge is as important as product/Service which is becoming globally standardized. Companies gain competitive advantage through constant innovation: better targeting customers and additional service. Customer satisfaction has been an important aspect for every organization due to constant innovation in components or service.

**Simintiras, Anotonis (1997)** attempt to distinguish evaluation outcomes of likely future satisfaction from feelings or emotions prior to the act of purchase, and assess the impact of pre purchase satisfaction on the purchase behavior of first-time buyers. In their study after conceptualizing pre purchase satisfaction as the emotional outcome of anticipated satisfaction, it was hypothesized that; Pre Purchase satisfaction and anticipated satisfaction are related but. And pre-purchase satisfaction levels are higher for potential first-time buyers who buy than those who do not buy. The results provided support for both propositions, and suggest that anticipated satisfaction and pre purchase satisfaction are distinguishable constructs, and pre purchase satisfaction is a predictor of the purchase behavior of first-time buyers.

## **2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### ***Customer Satisfaction***

Customer satisfaction is a term used frequently in marketing. It is a measure of the extent to which the products and services offered by a company meet or exceed customer expectations. Customer satisfaction is defined as "the number of customers or percentage of total customers whose reported experience with that company, product or service (rating) exceeds specified satisfaction goals. In a survey of about 200 senior marketing managers, 71 percent replied that they found a customer satisfaction metric is very useful in managing and monitoring their businesses.

Customer satisfaction is the overall impression of a customer about the supplier and the products or services delivered by the supplier. The factors that affect customer satisfaction include department wise capability supplier, technological aspects and various other factors.

The factors could be widely classified into two categories i.e., supplier's behavior and performance of product and services. The supplier's behavior mostly depends upon the behavior of its senior subordinates, managers and internal employees. All the functional activities such as customer response, direct product and maintenance services, complaint management etc. are those factors that rely on showing skillful and trained internal and human resources of the supplier. The second category concerns all the products and services. This depends on the supplier's ability to nurture the products and services in an efficient manner and how skilled the employees are. It's all about how the skills are implemented to demonstrate the engineering, re-engineering and technological aspects of the products and services. The quality and effectiveness of the products is also an important factor that also enables compatible and hassle-free functions and operations. This bears to reduce maintenance and higher life of the product, which is highly admired by the customers. The steps to increase customer satisfaction which includes justifying the sale with social proof, surprise customers with a bonus and provide free product training and support.

Therefore, customer satisfaction should not be confused with customer loyalty. Customers are loyal because they are emotionally connected to your brand; competitor bribes in the form of a better offer or a single upset in the service delivery can drive otherwise satisfied customer to abandon from your brand, whereas a loyal customer is a rock solid and has the emotional capability to see beyond the upset and continue his unwavering support for your brand.

This is supported by a survey which was conducted in 2007 for a financial services provider. The customer satisfaction score consistently exceeds the 90% mark, yet, "Only" 41% of respondents (all customers) in that survey said that they would not switch to another provider if that provider offered better interest rate and/or lower fees. A loyal customer is certainly a satisfied customer, but a satisfied customer is not necessarily a loyal customer.

Unfortunately, the term loyalty has undergone some interpretive misadventure over the years as well-intentioned but uninformed marketers changed the meaning of the concept by creating so-called loyalty schemes. Fly Buys in New Zealand is a case in this point. These programmers succeed on the false premise that buying more from a particular supplier (repeat purchases) will lead to loyal customers and therefore improves profitability. Not so. Loyalty schemes are nothing more than a mechanism to incentivize customers into buying more products by offering them gifts, discounts, or other purchase rewards. These customers are not very loyal; they are just customers who haven't left-yet. True loyalty, as used in this essay, is when people have an emotional connection to your company or your brand. They don't need bribes, discounts, air points or other expensive incentives, they want a relationship with your brand and it's up to you as the brand owner to create an ambience in which that relationship can thrive. And here is the good news, customer engagement strategies lead to sustainable business growth, as we will demonstrate later.

"Within the organizations, customer satisfaction ratings can have powerful effects. They focus employees on the importance of meeting customers' expectations. In addition, when these ratings dip, they warn of problems that can affect the sales and profitability. These

metrics quantify an important dynamic. If a brand has loyal customers, it attains positive word-of-mouth marketing, which is both free and highly effective." Therefore, it is essential for businesses to manage customer satisfaction effectively. To do this, firms need reliable and representative measures of satisfaction. "In researching satisfaction, firms typically ask customers whether their product or service has met or exceeded their expectations. Thus, expectations are a key component.

***Customer Satisfaction is the Pillar of Marketing Concept.***

Satisfaction is the consumer's fulfillment response. It is a judgment that a product or a service feature or the product or service itself provides a comfortable level of consumption related fulfillment.

Customer's satisfaction influenced by specific products are the service features and by perception of quality. It is also influenced by certain service attributes and their perceptions. The key factor in the company's long run fortunes will be the amount of customer satisfaction that managers generate. But it doesn't not mean the company's only goal is to maximize Customer Satisfaction. If so, it should simply offer the best product and service in the world and prices below cost. Thereby it would be able to generate substantial customer satisfaction. But in the long run it will also go out of business.

Customer satisfaction is an essential tool for the success of any business. A high rate of customers' contentment is directly related to a low turnover rate. Therefore, keeping employee satisfied with their careers should be a top priority for every employer. This is a well-known fact in management practices, economic downturns like informed business decisions, managers require more than a leader of numbers to understand what is really taking place in the front line. The employees who interact with the customers can provide invaluable feedback drawn based on first-hand experience. By encouraging bidirectional communication in this issue can create an organizational culture that breaks down silos and fosters teamwork between management and their staff. This type of employee centricity has an effect that extends beyond the internal sphere of an organization. It actually impacts the company's bottom line with a direct noticeable impact on profit. Take for instance, the average annual turnover rate of the United States. Depending on

the industry, this range is 15%-40% with that in mind, considering also that it costs 10 times more to hire and train a new employee than it does to retain.

Further extensive research shows that motivated and satisfied customers are more likely to contribute more in terms of organizational productivity and maintain a commitment to custard satisfaction. Satisfaction is infectious and it needs to permeate across the employee customer boundary, where revenue and brand image are always at stake. Positive attitude towards the job is equivalent to customer satisfaction while negative attitude towards job has been defined variously from time to time. In short, customer satisfaction is a person's attitude towards customers. Customer satisfaction is the attitude which results from balancing & adding up of many specific likes and dislikes experienced in connections with the job. Their evaluation may be based heavily on one's success or failure in the achievements of personal objective and upon perceived combination of these ends.

Customer satisfaction in terms of one's feeling or state of mind regarding nature of their supervisor, quality of physical environment on which they work, degree of fulfillment in their works etc. The paper demonstrates the significance of customer satisfaction and how companies can successfully implement programs that positively impact both organizational culture and ultimate bottom line profits.

It is considered an important performance indicator in business and is often part of a Balanced Scorecard. In a competitive market where businesses compete for customers, customer satisfaction is seen as a key differentiator and is increasingly becoming an important part of business strategy.

"In organizations, customer satisfaction ratings can have a powerful impact. They alert employees to the importance of meeting customers' expectations. And, when these ratings drop, they warn of problems that can affect sales and profits. These indicators quantify an important dynamic. When a brand has loyal customers, it gains positive word of mouth marketing that is both free and very effective.

Therefore, it is imperative for businesses to effectively manage customer satisfaction. To do this, businesses need reliable and representative satisfaction. "In researching satisfaction, companies typically ask customers if their products or services met or exceeded their expectations. Expectations are therefore a key component of satisfaction. When customers have high expectations and the reality lags behind, they may be disappointed and rate their experience as less than satisfying. So, for example, a luxury resort may be less satisfying than a budget motel, even if it is considered "absolutely" excellent in terms of facilities and services.

As a company's bargaining power increases, customer satisfaction becomes less important. For example, wireless service providers such as AT&T and Verizon participate in an oligopoly industry with only a few providers of a particular product or service. Customer satisfaction is so low in so many cell phone rate agreements that customers can easily have the option to pay a better rate, so if you have 100 cell phone rate providers, you can never get away with it. It contains many terms of contract offer.

There is a substantial body of empirical literature that demonstrates the benefits of customer satisfaction to businesses. Ideally, businesses continuously seek feedback to improve customer satisfaction.

Customer satisfaction is a key indicator of consumer purchase intent and loyalty. Customer satisfaction data is one of the most frequently collected indicators of market perception. Their principal use is twofold:"

1. "Within your organizations, the collection, analysis and dissemination of this data sends a message about the importance of caring for your customers and ensuring that they have a good experience with the company's goods and services.
2. "Although Sales and market share can indicate a company's current performance, but satisfaction is perhaps the best indicator of the likelihood that a company's customers will make more purchases in the future. Research has focused on the relationship between customer satisfaction and retention. Studies specify that the ramifications of satisfaction are most powerfully realized at the extremes". In a five-point scale, "The individuals who



rate their satisfaction level as '5' are more likely to return customers and might even evangelize for the firm. (A second key metric related to satisfaction is willingness to recommend. This metric can be defined as "The percentage of surveyed customers who indicate that they would recommend a brand towards their friends." When a customer is satisfied with a product, he or she might recommend it to their friends, relatives and colleagues. This can be a strong marketing advantage.) "Individuals who rate the satisfaction level as '1,' by contrast, are unlikely to return. In advance, they can hurt the firm by making negative comments about it to potential customers. Willingness to recommend is a key factor in determining customer satisfaction.

Customer satisfaction (is a business term) is a measure of how well products and services supplied by a company meet or exceed customer expectations. It is considered as a key performance indicator in the business and it is a part of the four of a Balanced Scorecard. In a highly competitive market where companies compete for customers, customer satisfaction is seen as a key differentiator and increasingly has become an important factor in business strategy. However, as a company's bargaining power increases, customer satisfaction becomes less important. There is extensive empirical literature demonstrating the benefits of customer satisfaction to businesses.

### ***Customer Satisfaction Process***

#### Step 1 - Understanding Customer Expectations

We should recognise what our clients anticipate from us. We should work with our clients to precisely study their expectations. Customer Expectations be different by region by country

#### Step 2- Promises to the Customers

Set promises that can be kept

- Aim is to exceed expectations rather than to meet them
- Delight clients by surprising them (Surprise is not something promised, yet delivered)

### Step 3 - Execution

- Products and Services are provided to clients.
- Customers had some expectations before products/services were delivered
- Depending if those expectations had been met, not met, or exceeded customer experiences certain level of "Customer Satisfaction"
- Occasionally there are some problems with products/services provided
- A problem which can be fixed during the initial call or a visit (first contact resolution), or a ticket is opened
- Tickets are worked on. Customer problems are ultimately solved
- Depending on how the Problem Resolution is treated, customer reviews at certain level of "Customer Satisfaction"

### Step 4 - Ongoing Dialog with a Customer

- Executive meeting
- User Group meeting
- Other meetings

### Step 5 - Customer Satisfaction Surveys

- Customer Satisfaction Survey
- Event Driven Surveys
- Internal Indicators of the Customer Satisfaction
- Tickets Resolved Within the Objectives
- Tickets Overdue
- Resolve Time
- Response Time

### ***Features encourage customers to purchase***

#### 1. Location Facilities:

Retail store location is also an important factor that marketing teams must consider when determining their retail marketing strategy. Here are some reasons –

- The location of your business is a unique element that competitors cannot imitate. Therefore, a strong competitive advantage may exist.
- Choosing a retail location is a long-term decision.
- Requires long-term capital investment.
- Good location is a key factor in attracting customers to the store.
- Well-located stores facilitate delivery and distribution.
- Location can help change customer buying habits.

#### Factors Determining Retail Locations:

The marketing team should analyze retail store locations in terms of –

- Size of Catchment Area – primary (60-80% customers), secondary (15-25% customers), and tertiary (remaining occasional customers).
- Occupancy Costs – Lease/Ownership costs vary depending on different areas, property taxes and site maintenance costs.
- Customer Traffic – Number of customers visiting the site, number of private vehicles passing through the site, number of pedestrians visiting the site.
- Restrictions Placed on Store Operations – limited hours of operation, noise intensity at media advertising events.
- Location Convenience – close to residential areas and close to public transportation.

#### 2. Price:

Pricing sends an important message to your customers. Research shows that as prices rise, so do customers' perceptions of the quality of the products being sold. This is mainly

because people are skeptical of prices that seem "too good to be true". An extremely low price suggests to the customer that the product in question is not particularly valuable or may be of lower quality than a more expensive product.

When you price your products very low, customers generally become more quality conscious and are more likely to discover errors and potential flaws. This is a problem for customer satisfaction and leads to the belief that what customers are buying is not particularly special or valuable. That said, lowering prices can hurt your profit margins, especially if the lower prices fail to retain customers and offset other costs, such as order costs.

- **Changing Prices**

If a company adopts this low-price strategy from the start, it can cause problems down the road if they need to raise prices to offset "behind-the-scenes" costs such as ordering costs, freight costs, and manufacturing costs. There is nature. If you start with a very low price and suddenly raise it, you risk losing your entire customer group. Customers find that your product is no longer the best deal on the market.

- **Higher Prices**

There are a few things to keep in mind when deciding on a pricing strategy that will provide your customers with a product at a higher cost. A higher price may intuitively seem to drive customers away, but that may not be the case. A higher price may indicate that the product is very well made or of high quality. Yes, and this can attract a lot of people.

- **Reasonable Prices**

Given the problems that can arise with both low and high price strategies, we need a middle ground that avoids these problems. His 2004 study by the Solvay Brussels School found that customers are significantly more likely to be satisfied if the price is reasonable. This suggests that pricing products between "too

expensive" and "too cheap" is a good way to keep customers happy. A price that is neither too high nor too low gives the customer a positive message about the quality of the product and the value of the purchase.

A “reasonable” pricing strategy not only positively impacts customer satisfaction, but it also facilitates price increases when needed. Customers perceive they are still buying products of value, which allows us to maintain our customer base and offset the costs of transportation, machinery costs, or order costs.

### 3. Quality of product:

As marketers, we design products with the goal of meeting customer needs. An important attribute or characteristic of our products, whether they are goods, services, or a combination thereof, is the quality of that product.

Product quality is the extent to which good service, or a combination thereof, solves a problem or meets a need. For a product to have real value, it must be of a certain quality, preferably of high quality. In other words, it must actually solve a consumer problem or satisfy a need. This makes our products a source of value.

Just because something is different or new doesn't make it a product. It doesn't add quality to the product, so you really need to focus on solving a problem or meeting a need for the product to deliver value and achieve a high level of quality.

The dimensions of quality (how quality is determined) includes the following:

- Performance: Primary product characteristics, such as the brightness of the picture
- Features: Secondary characteristics, added features, such as remote control
- Conformance: Meeting specifications or industry standards, workmanship
- Reliability: Consistency of performance over time, average time of the unit to fail
- Durability: Useful life, includes repair
- Service: Resolution of problems and complaints, ease of repair
- Response: Human – to – human interface, such as the courtesy of the dealer
- Aesthetics: Sensory characteristics, such as exterior finish

- Reputation: Past performance and other intangibles, such as being ranked first

#### 4. Service:

Good customer service effectively supports and empowers customers throughout the buying process. From pre-purchase to purchase and post-purchase experience. The service a customer receives can be a big point of contention for people. Were they greeted with a friendly smile? Did the order arrive quickly? Do they appreciate their business? Or did they have a bad attitude? Had to wait 10 minutes for someone to help? It may seem like an unsatisfying act like not being able to hear someone clearly in the drive thru, but you get your food and order right away should be masked by being grateful to, but this is not always the case.

Understanding when a step in your business process is unsatisfactory is critical to improving customer satisfaction. It's a good way to understand where your business processes are falling short. A way to understand this is a customer satisfaction survey. By reading the responses of people who have had bad experiences, you can learn how to improve your processes, how to better train your employees to create a consistent image, and/or specific questions that can be costly to your business. You can learn that you should fire your employees.

9 reasons why customer service is important:

1. It adds value to your product or service
2. It increases customer Retention and Recurring revenue
3. Results in positive reviews and brand image
4. It boosts your employee's morale and reduces turnover Costs
5. It adds value to your brand
6. Builds customer trust and loyalty
7. Sets you apart from your competition

8. Makes it easy for customers to do business with you.
9. Encourages word-of-mouth marketing

### ***Benefits of Customer Satisfaction***

Benefit of creating highly satisfied (enthusiastic) customers who are loyal towards the organization is that they spread positive word-of-mouth. In: essentially, it becomes a walking, talking advertisement for the firm. If there are a lot of delighted customers spreading positive word-of-mouth communication, this then reduces the cost of promotion to attract the new customers. This benefit is particularly important among the professional services firms like lawyers and accountants where word-of-mouth and reputation are the key sources of information for new customers.

As we have already established, highly satisfied customers are more forgiving, so firms can occasionally make mistakes and lose customers. Therefore, having highly satisfied customers is like having an insurance policy against something going wrong in the service encounter.

Fundamentally, customer satisfaction can be seen as a source of sustained competitive advantage as well as a means to achieve business goals. Read here what the text says about customer satisfaction and how to measure it.

#### **Satisfaction Measurement: Perceived Quality Measures**

Perceived quality is often measured by three measures: overall quality, perceived reliability, and the extent to which a product or service meets customer needs. Customer perceptions of quality is the most important indicator of customer satisfaction.

#### **Satisfaction Measurement: Perceived Value Measures**

Perceived value can conceptually refer to total price divided by quality or the total quality divided by price. Perceived value is measured in a variety of ways, including an overall assessment of value, expectations of price paid, and more rigorous methods including the Van Westendorp pricing analysis, and conjoint analysis The customer behavior literature

shows that the price is a primary indicator of quality when the other attributes and benefits are relatively unknown. However, price may become less important if you make repeat purchases in some product categories.

#### Satisfaction Measurement: Customer Loyalty Measures

Customer loyalty reflects the likelihood of purchasing a product or service again. Customer satisfaction is a key indicator of repeat purchases, but it is heavily influenced by explicit evaluations of product performance, quality and value.

#### When to Conduct Customer Satisfaction Surveys

The best time to measure customer satisfaction and create a customer satisfaction survey is the type of product or service offered, the type of customers served, the number of customers served, the number of customers/vendors and Depends on the lifespan and frequency of your interactions, and you intend to do with the results.

As discussed in detail earlier there are three very different approaches that produce meaningful and useful insights:

- Post Purchase Evaluation Surveys
- Periodic Satisfaction Surveys
- Continuous Satisfaction tracking Surveys

#### Building a Customer Satisfaction Survey

Customer satisfaction surveys often include multiple measures of satisfaction, including:

- Overall measures of customer satisfaction
- Affective measures of customer satisfaction
- Cognitive measures of customer satisfaction
- Behavioral measures of customer satisfaction
- Expectancy value measures of customer satisfaction

#### Satisfaction Measurements



- Overall Satisfaction
- Reasons for Satisfaction Evaluation
- Satisfaction with attributes features, benefits
- Satisfaction with use
- Expected and Ideal Satisfaction-Performance Measures
- Likelihood of recommending
- Likelihood of repurchasing

### ***Customer Satisfaction Measurement Models***

Customer satisfaction is the most common of all marketing surveys and it is a part of the "big three" research studies in marketing that includes market segmentation and concept testing. Measuring satisfaction and building a satisfaction survey requires a basic knowledge of the satisfaction measurement literature, combined with your own customer satisfaction experiences.

This provides an introduction to the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of satisfaction research by first defining the concept of customer satisfaction and how satisfaction is used in the business. This satisfaction research tries to provide the basis for understanding what measures should be included in the satisfaction surveys and why these measures are of value to any business.

Three very different approach Models:

#### 1. Post Purchase Evaluation Model:

Satisfaction feedback is collected from individual customers at (or shortly after) the delivery of products or services. This type of satisfaction survey is typically used as part of a CRM (Customer Relationship Management System) and focuses on long-term relationships with individual customers.

#### 2. Periodic Satisfaction Survey Model:

Regular satisfaction feedback from customer groups to provide occasional snapshots of customer experience and expectations

### 3. Continuous Satisfaction Tracking Model:

Satisfaction feedback is obtained from the individual customer at the time of product or service delivery (or shortly afterwards). Satisfaction tracking surveys are often part of a management initiative to assure quality is at high levels over time.

#### Common Ingredients of a Customer Satisfaction Survey

##### Product Use

- Frequency of product use.
- Primary use of location
- Primary precipitating events or situations for product use or need
- Usage rates and trends

##### Product Familiarity

- Degree of actual product use familiarity
- Knowledge (read product information, read product label, etc.)
- Knowledge and Involvement with product and the purchase process
- Awareness of other brands Reasons for original product purchase (selection reasons)
- Primary benefits sought from the product

##### Product Evaluation

- Attribute evaluation matrix: (quality, price, trust, importance, performance, value)
- Perceived benefit associations matrix
- Importance, performance
- Identification of primary benefits sought
- Comparison to other brands (better, worse)

- What is the best thing about the brand, what could be done better

#### Message and Package Evaluation

- Packaging size, design
- Advertising Promise, message fulfillment evaluation.

#### Value Analysis

- Expectation of price
- Expectation of relative price (full price, on sale)
- Current price paid

#### Satisfaction Measurements

- Overall Satisfaction
- Reasons for Satisfaction Evaluation
- Satisfaction with attributes, features, benefits
- Satisfaction with use
- Expected and Ideal Satisfaction-Performance Measures
- Likelihood of recommending
- Likelihood of repurchasing

#### ***Reasons of Customer Satisfaction***

Customer satisfaction is a marketing term that measures how a company's products and services meet or exceed customer expectations.

Customer satisfaction is important because it provides a metric that marketers and business owners can use to manage and improve their business.

In a survey of nearly 200 senior marketing managers, 71percent said customer satisfaction metrics were very helpful in managing and monitoring their business.

Here are the top six reasons why customer satisfaction is so important:

1. Leading indicator of consumer repurchase intentions and loyalty
2. It is a point of differentiation
3. Reduces customer churn
4. Increases customer lifetime value
5. Reduces negative word of mouth
6. It's cheaper to retain customers than to acquire new ones

1. It is a leading indicator of consumer repurchase intentions and loyalty

Customer satisfaction is the best indicator of a customer's likelihood of making a future purchase. Asking customers to rate their satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 10 is a good way to see if they will become regulars or advocates.

Any customers that give you a rating of 7 and above can be considered satisfied and you can expect them to come back and make repeat purchases. Customers who give you a rating of 9 or 10 are your potential customer advocates who you can leverage to become evangelists towards your company.

Scores of 6 and below are warning signs that a customer is unhappy and at a risk of leaving. These customers need to be put on a customer watch list and followed up so you can determine why their satisfaction is low. See how satisfaction gives you more insight into your customers.

As such, it is one of the key metrics businesses use to measure consumer repeat purchases and customer loyalty.

2. It is a point of differentiation

A competitive market in which companies compete for customers. Customer satisfaction is seen as a key differentiator. Companies that thrive in such harsh environments make

customer satisfaction an important part of their business strategy. Imagine two companies offering exactly the same product. Why choose one over the other?

If you had a company endorsement, would that affect your opinion? Probably. So where did this recommendation originally come from? In most cases, it's due to a good customer experience. Companies that deliver great customer experiences create an environment of high satisfaction and customer advocacy. This is an example of customer satisfaction coming full circle. Customer satisfaction not only helps keep track of existing customers, but also helps differentiate new customers.

### 3. It reduces customer churn

A Global Customer Satisfaction Report by Accenture (2008) found that price was not the primary factor in customer churn. It's actually due to the overall poor quality of customer service.

Customer satisfaction is a metric that can be used to reduce customer churn. By measuring and tracking customer satisfaction, new processes can be put in place to improve the overall quality of customer service.

We encourage you to focus on exceeding customer expectations and delighting them at every opportunity. Do this for six months, then measure customer satisfaction again. See if the new initiative had a positive or negative impact on satisfaction.

### 4. It increases customer lifetime value

According to Info Quest research, "Completely satisfied customers generate 2.6 times more sales than partially satisfied customers. Moreover, a totally satisfied customer contributes 14 times more sales than existing customers."

Satisfaction plays an important role in how much revenue your customers generate for your business.

Successful businesses understand the importance of customer lifetime value (CLV). when CLV is raised. Make your marketing more cost-effective.

For example, let's say your CPC is \$500 and your CLV is \$750. This is a #50% ROI from marketing efforts. Now suppose the CLV was \$1,000. This is 100% ROI.

Customer lifetime value is the beneficiary of high customer satisfaction and excellent customer loyalty. What are you doing to keep your customers coming back and spending more?

#### 5. It reduces negative word of mouth

McKinsey found that dissatisfied customers tell 9-15 of her people about their experience. In fact, 13% of her dissatisfied customers have told more than 20 people about their experience.

That's a lot of negative word of mouth. How much will this affect your company and industry reputation? Customer satisfaction is closely related to sales and repeat purchases. What is often forgotten is how customer satisfaction negatively impacts your business. Losing a customer because they were unhappy is one thing. Losing 20 customers because some of them went viral is quite another.

To avoid word of mouth, you need to continuously measure customer satisfaction. By tracking changes in satisfaction, you can determine whether your customers are actually satisfied with your product or service.

#### 6. It's cheaper to retain customers than acquire new ones

This is probably the most published customer satisfaction statistic. Acquiring new customers cost him 6-7 times more than retaining existing ones. If you don't like this statistic, there's nothing more you can do to show why customer satisfaction matters.

Acquiring customers costs a lot of money. You and your marketing team spend thousands of dollars trying to capture the attention of potential customers, generate leads, and convert them into sales.

### **Importance of Customer Satisfaction**

Teams measuring customer satisfaction can easily calculate the expected risk of dissatisfied customers. By quantifying the importance of customer satisfaction, you can have more meaningful conversations with your manager and company about investing in your team.

Engage your entire team to improve customer satisfaction every day. Measure your progress and reap the benefits.

Satisfied customers recommend you in the network. Customer advocacy is a highly effective marketing technique. Small businesses estimate that 85% of new business comes from word of mouth.

Satisfied customers keep buying from you. Not only do loyal customers spend more money in the long run, it's actually cheaper to keep them happy than trying to get new customers. Six times more expensive than retaining an existing customer. (Think of how much money you spent on the first date of your life!)

Satisfied customers are better for your sanity. Just as a relationship fight can be mentally exhausting, a grumpy customer who keeps emailing her support team can lead to burnout and make the work environment even more unhappy.

### ***Factors influencing Customer Satisfaction***

#### **1. Accessibility**

Customers need to be able to efficiently find and access products and services on their preferred channels without barriers or friction. Also, make sure they reach out to your business for proper service if they have questions or need help making a purchase decision.

#### **2. Navigation**

Navigating and searching your store should be an easy and straightforward process. This includes not only providing effective keyword searches and filters for users who know

what they want, but also integrating solutions that guide unfamiliar shoppers to find the right product quickly. increase.

A website that is difficult to navigate will only lead to customer dissatisfaction and potential customer loss.

### 3. Page Load Speed

There are simple rules. The faster your website loads, the happier your visitors will be. When one of your pages doesn't load lightning fast, your customers switch to a faster online store. In fact, Aberdeen Group found that "a one-second delay in page load time leads to 11% higher page views, 16% higher customer satisfaction, and 7% lower conversions."

A study by Akamai and Gomez.com found that 70% of web shoppers who feel their website is slow say they won't visit the site again to make a purchase, and about 44% tell their friends about their bad online experience.

### 4. Language

Speaking to your customers in their preferred language is essential for your business. More than 50% of consumers will not buy if information about the product is not available in their language.

However, language does not only refer to language in terms of geography and demographics, but also how certain phrases and terms resonate with your audience and resonate with your business. Use user-friendly language and avoid industry-specific jargon that can be confusing and prevent you from connecting on a personal level.

There is no great customer experience without good communication.

### 5. Memory

According to Harvard Business Review, customers get frustrated when they have to repeat themselves. Consumers are comfortable moving from one channel to another and



expect their information and data to follow. They don't want to be asked the same details over and over again, regardless of which channel or department they interact with. Memory also means remembering customer needs and avoiding trying to sell products to customers they already have or are clearly not interested in.

#### 6. Personalized

It's ironic that shoppers want personalized experiences in a space where so many business and personal interactions can be anonymous.

By personalizing the experience and sharing the right content with the right people at the right time, you can interact with your customers faster, easier and more efficiently.

This improves customer satisfaction and increases the likelihood of repeat visits.

#### 7. Convenience

Convenience is an integral part of a positive customer experience. It influences how your customers decide what to buy, what services to use, where to go and who to connect with.

If you perceive it as less convenient, your customers will see their interactions with you as work. If they have trouble doing business with you in any of the above areas, they are more likely to go elsewhere.

#### 8. Intuition

Customers appreciate a company that "really understands" them. Some companies just have a good intuition or "sixth sense." Proactively anticipate customer needs and emotions. Companies that know what their customers want in advance, or solve problems before they even know they exist, create better, more convenient experiences and relationships based on trust. For example, Southwest Airlines has a team called

Proactive Customer Service that works with 14 other departments to ensure operational efficiency, effective communication, and better customer care. Her job is to assess flight

disruptions, determine the impact on customers, and proactively reach out to customers so they don't have to.

#### 9. Real-Time

If you want to capture the attention of your audience, think about how you can take advantage of real-time experiences. It's about showing up when your customers need you. Real-time interactions are becoming increasingly important to the modern consumer. They expect real time responses and faster resolutions.

For instance, "instant chat and chatbots have emerged as a highly popular marketing solution for companies that want to provide their customers immediate access to information and show the more human and authentic side of their business.

#### 10. Simplicity

Simplicity is key. Keeping the process as simple as possible is one of the easiest ways to increase your chances of winning your client's business. Advising and supporting customers throughout the customer journey should remove complexity and complexity from decision making.

According to a study of the Latin American life insurance market, it said 40% of people who bought life insurance and were satisfied with the experience said it was because of the simple purchasing process.

#### 11. Logic

There is a difference between emotional customer satisfaction and logical customer satisfaction.

Emotionally satisfied customers are highly satisfied with a company's products and services and have a strong emotional bond with the company.

It is logical for reasonably satisfied customers who are highly satisfied with the company but lack the strong emotional bond of emotionally satisfied customers.

Essentially, they act like a disgruntled customer. There is no reason for you to remain loyal.

To turn a logically satisfied customer into an emotionally satisfied customer, you need to give them a logical reason to do business with you over your competitors. It means understanding their expectations in order to meet and even exceed them.

## 12. Deliverability

According to the e-consultation report, 48% of her customers say he doesn't want to wait longer than 5 days for most purchases, and 23% say he will wait longer than 8 days. Not only does delivery time influence purchasing decisions, but it also has a significant impact on customer satisfaction.

## 13. Choice

The more choices you give your customers during the purchase process, the more likely they are to feel in control of their experience with your brand.

But if you offer choice, be sure to support your customers and help them make the best choices.

Choice overload and the paradox of choice are very real in today's environment and are an increasing concern for retailers and brands.

## 14. Community

Today, customers are increasingly conducting online research before making a purchase. It's important to consider the community that exists around your brand.

Even if you don't play an active role in community building, communities form around your business: social media, websites, review forums.

The best way to get a sense of your brand's reputation is to participate in communities whenever possible. If someone has something to say about your business, learn how to respond positively by offering a solution to the problem.

## ***Factors Affecting Retail Industry***

### **1. Demographic Characteristics**

Demography is the study of population characteristics that are used to describe consumers. Retailers can obtain information about the consumer's age, gender, income, education, family characteristics, occupation, and many other items. These demographic variables may be used to select market segments, which become the target markets for the retailer.

Demographics aid retailers in identifying and targeting potential customers in certain geographic locations. Retailers are able to track many consumer trends by analyzing changes in demographics. Demographics provide retailers with information to help locate and describe customers. Linking demographics to behavioral and lifestyle characteristics helps retailers find out exactly who their consumers are. Retailers who target certain specific demographics characteristics should make sure that those characteristics exist in enough abundance to justify locations in new countries or regions.

### **2. Economic Characteristics**

Businesses operate in an economic environment and base many decisions on economic analysis. Economic factors such as a country's gross domestic product, current interest rates, employment rates, and general economic conditions affect how retailers in general perform financially. For example, employment rates can affect the quantity and quality of the labor pool available for retailers as well as influence the ability of customers to buy. Normally, growth in a country's gross domestic product indicates growth in retail sales and disposable income. Retailers want to locate in countries or regions that have steadily growing gross national products. As interest rate rise, the cost of carrying inventory on credit rises for retailers and the cost of purchasing durable goods rises for consumers. Countries that have projected significant increases in interest rates should be evaluated very carefully by retailers. Retailers will also be affected by a rise in employment rates; this lowers the supply of available workers to staff and support retail locations.

### 3. Cultural Characteristics

Cultural characteristics impact how consumers shop and what goods they purchase. The values, standards, and language that a person is exposed to while growing up are indicators of future consumption behavior. Consumers want to feel comfortable in the environment in which they shop. To accomplish this, retailers must understand the culture and language of their customers. In a bilingual area, a retailer may need to hire employees who are capable of speaking both of the languages spoken by the customers. Some retailers have found it useful to market to the cultural heritage of their consumers, while other retailers seek to market cross-culturally. Normally larger cultures are made of many distinct subcultures. Retailers need to be aware of the different aspects of culture that will affect the location decision. For example, greeting cards sold in the United States normally have verses on the inside, while greeting cards sold in Europe normally do not. The preferences of consumers are used mainly to refer to a choice that has the largest expected value among many choices by consumer to fulfill her or his desires or requirements. Preferences represent options among more valued or neutral choices available. Consumer preference is the outcome of their behavior they indicate during buying, searching and destroying the products. A consumer is an individual who has the ability to pay for services and goods offered for sale by the institutions of market to satisfy the household or personal needs, desires and wants. A consumer is the important visitor on the premises. Consumers are not dependent on anybody. The sellers are only dependent on the consumer. Consumers are not an outsider to business. Consumers are like the blood of business. Therefore, the consumer is very important in the business cycle. Most of the customers are obsessed with names of brand products. The companies are offering quality products which customer's value the most. The customers are satisfied when they get quality.

### 4. Demand

The demand for a retailer's goods and services will influence where the retailer will locate its stores. Not only must consumers want to purchase the goods, but they must have the ability or money to do so as well. Demand characteristics are a function of the

population and the buying power of the population that the retailer is targeting. Population and income statistics are available for most countries and regions with developed economics. In developing countries, the income data may be little more than an informed guess. These statistics allow the comparisons of population and a basic determination of who will be able to purchase the goods carried in the store. The preferences of consumers are used mainly to refer to a choice that has the largest expected value among many choices by consumer to fulfill her or his desires or requirements. Preferences represent options among more valued or neutral choices available. Consumer preference is the outcome of their behavior they indicate during buying, searching and destroying the products. A consumer is an individual who has the ability to pay for services and goods offered for sale by the institutions of market to satisfy the household or personal needs, desires and wants. A consumer is the important visitor on the premises. Consumers are not dependent on anybody. The sellers are only dependent on the consumer. Consumers are not an outsider to business. Consumers are like the blood of business. Therefore, the consumer is very important in the business cycle. Most of the customers are obsessed with names of brand products. The companies are offering quality products which customer's value the most. The customers are satisfied when they get quality This is of utmost importance for retailers, whether they carry higher-priced goods such as durables, furniture, jewelry, and electronics or lower priced goods-such as basic apparels or toys.

## 5. Competition

Levels of competitions vary by nation and region. In some areas, retailers will face much stiffer competition than in other areas. Normally, the more industrialized a nation is, the higher the level of competition that exists between its borders. One of the environmental influences on the success or failure of a retail establishment is how the retailer is able to handle the competitive advantages of its competition. A retailer must be knowledgeable concerning both direct and indirect competitors in the marketplace, what goods and services they provide, and their image in the mind of the consumer population. Sometimes a retailer may decide to go head-to-head with a competitor when the reasons are not entirely clear.

## 6. Infrastructure

Infrastructure characteristics deal with the basic framework that allows business to operate. Retailers require some form of channel to deliver the goods and services to their door. Depending on what type of transportation is involved, distribution relies heavily on the existing infrastructure of highways, roads, bridges, river ways, and railways. Legal infrastructures such as laws, regulations and court rulings and technical infrastructures such as level of computerization, communication systems, and electrical power availability also influence store location decisions. Distributions play a key role in the location decision especially for countries and regions. There is a significant variance in quantity and quality of infrastructures across countries. A retailer whose operation depends on reliable computerization and communications would not need to even consider a country or a region that did not meet those criteria. The legal environment is a part of the overall infrastructure a firm must consider. For example, many countries require non-native businesses to have a native partner before establishing retail locations. The legal requirements a retailer operates under in one country will not be the same for another country or region and may be different from state to state within the United States. In conclusion, the demographic, demand, competition, cultural, infrastructure and economic characteristics are important in analyzing a country or region. Thus, the retail industry either in products or in services is the last stage of the distribution circuit, where the retailers assume an important role of intermediary between producers, wholesalers or other suppliers and the final consumers.

## 7. Color Schemes

Colors have psychological influence on buyers. In some cases, retailers use consistent color schemes simply to convey brand image and to remain consistent. Target's red theme is a classic example. In other situations, certain colors are used throughout the store, or in specific areas, to affect customers in different ways. Red coloring used in a lingerie or intimate apparel department can play up the fiery and intense feelings red invokes. In a bed department of a furniture store, blue or pink coloring can help customers imagine sleeping or connect the retailer's beds with sleep. Color schemes used in a retail store can

influence a shopper's store and merchandise image, arousal level, time spent in the store, purchasing rates, pleasant feelings, and the ability to attract a shopper toward a retail display (Turley & Milliman, 2000).

Different color schemes can also create different emotions from shoppers. There are two key color schemes that are known by shoppers around the world; cool and warm color schemes. A 'cool' color scheme includes colors such as blues and greens. This color scheme is labeled as 'cool' because blue is considered to be expressive of tranquility and tenderness. A 'warm color scheme includes colors such as reds and oranges. This color scheme is labeled as 'warm' because orange/red is considered to be expressive of desire and sexuality. Using the different color schemes in a retail store can mean different things to shoppers and can create different emotions from shoppers. For example, using blue, green and white close together is associated with peaceful, gentle, and calming meanings whereas using red, gold, orange, yellow and purple close together is associated with emotional, vibrant, hot, active, and sharp meanings. Studies have shown that shoppers have higher purchase intentions with 'cool' color schemes, specifically blues, than with 'warm' color schemes, specifically reds. The color schemes of a retail store can greatly impact and influence a shopper's shopping behavior and purchasing decisions.

## 8. Lighting

Lighting is one of the more commonly manipulated atmospherics. Many retailers simply maintain brightly lit stores because research suggests that it makes customers happier and more upbeat, which induces higher volumes of buying. Other retailers choose lighting to fit the store brand. A trendy, youthful fashion retailer may use moderate lighting, strobe lights or lighting effects to create energy or to attract young shoppers. Some retailers use dark or dim lighting because it goes with the store. Alternative specialty retailer Hot Topic has darker lighting, for instance. Lighting is a significant component of retail atmospherics because it affects the shopper's visual evaluation of everything in the store, including the merchandise, which can ultimately affect a shopper's shopping behavior. Lighting is primarily used to create an aesthetically pleasing atmosphere for shoppers as well as for function so that shoppers can see the merchandise and their way around the



store. Not only is lighting used to make a retail space more aesthetic and functional but it can also create certain behaviors without the shopper even knowing. The Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IES) Handbook states that the primary goals common in the lighting of merchandise are to attract the consumer, to initiate purchases, and to facilitate the completion of the sale.

Lighting is one atmospheric variable that does not directly influence sales but can influence the shopper's perception of store image and their examination and handling of merchandise (Turley & Milliman, 2000). Studies have shown that shopper's handle and examine significantly more items in a brightly lit room than in a dimly lit room because brightly lit rooms create a higher arousal for shoppers. The correct lighting of a retail store will create arousal and pleasure for shoppers which will also increase the approach behaviors of shoppers (Summers & Hebert, 2001).

## 9. Sounds

The type of music played on a store speaker system is often a good clue as to the target customer for the business. Fashion retailer Abercrombie & Fitch calls out to its teen and young adult casual wear fans with upbeat, current pop music. The sounds project the store's youthful image. Spas and massage parlors more often use new age or relaxation music to set a mood. An alternative fashion retailer would more likely use techno or fusion songs. Classic rock may be the musical choice for an apparel retailer targeting middle-aged and older buyers. Music is the most common atmospheric variable studied because it does have a major impact on a variety of shopper behaviors. This includes sales, excitement, perceptions and actual time spent in the store, in-store traffic flow, and the perception of visual stimuli in the retail store.

Music is a significant variable for retailers to focus on when deciding on the correct atmospheric variables of their store because music can actually influence a shopper's decisions and behaviors when they are not even aware of the music. There are many different aspects to music that can have an effect on shoppers. The age of the shopper; the tempo of the music; the volume of the music; the shopper's music preference and familiarity to the music; the use of background and foreground music can all have a

significant impact on a shopper's behavior and purchasing decisions (Turley & Milliman, 2000). Background music is known to be a tool for increasing sales and enhancing positive attitudes toward the store. Background music has been known to create soothing or arousal cognitive feelings from shoppers. Studies have shown that higher arousal music directly affects the attention span of shoppers. An increase in arousal can narrow the shopper's attention to a limited number of objects. Therefore, their capacity to process information is reduced which means they are more likely to use simpler decision rules. Studies have shown that shopper's involvement is low when soothing music is playing which helps the shopper concentrate on the task; it gives them the ability to focus their attention. Music plays a major role in shopper's shopping behaviors and should be an important atmospheric cue for retailers on which to concentrate.

#### 10. Fragrance

Smells are often among the less obvious but more impacting atmospherics. Casual fashion retailers often use scented candles to create a pleasant aroma in their stores. Spas and beauty salons often use scents to create a tropical aura. In some situations, retailers simply use pleasant aromas to attract and retain customer interest. Furniture and jewelry retailers often bake fresh cookies in store and offer them to guests. While the gift is a nice token gesture, a common motive is to project a pleasing smell in the store. The scents in a retail store can also strongly affect a shopper's shopping behavior. Studies have shown the biggest impact of scent comes from the presence or absence of a scent in a retail store whereas the nature of the scent does not have a significant impact on shoppers' behaviors. Scents in a retail store, whether they are good or bad, can affect and influence sales; processing time; variety seeking behavior; and the shopper's perceived time spent in the store (Turley & Milliman, 2000). As a scent becomes more intense, shopper's reactions and behaviors tend to become more negative. Scents are an extremely important atmospheric variable for retailers to focus on because they can create positive and negative shopping behaviors from shoppers

Cleanliness and store organization are also important factors for successful retail operations. Cleanliness of a store is the most controllable atmospheric element in a retail

store. Cleanliness is important because most shoppers associate the quality of a retailer and its products with the cleanliness of the store and it has a strong influence on shoppers' opinions of retail stores and services.

#### 11. Time perceptions

Time is an important factor in retail shopping, partially because studies show a simple correlation between time spent shopping and amount purchased (cf. Milliman 1982). Also, time is argued to be as much a constraint on consumption as money and that predictions that individuals would have more time at their discretion in the future than in the past have not proven to be true (Berry 1979). For example, dual career families with children coping with the transportation difficulties in dense metropolitan areas may feel intense time pressure when shopping. Consequently, it is reasonable to expect individuals to budget their time, including shopping times, and to be concerned when they believe they are spending too much time in a store. People simply don't enjoy waiting too long or wasting time. Hornik (1984), for example, reported that shoppers overestimated their waiting time less when they reported a high level of shopping enjoyment relative to other activities. Thus, retailers would be prudent to minimize perceived as well as actual time spent shopping for their patrons.

#### 12. Temperature

Temperature of a store is another atmospheric variable that can influence a shopper's shopping behavior. Temperature, however, is an atmospheric variable that goes unnoticed by shoppers unless it is set at unpleasant levels for the shopper. For example, temperatures set at unpleasantly high or low levels may be noticed by shoppers and can cause them discomfort while shopping, while comfortable temperatures will not be noticed by shoppers.

#### 13. Signage

Signage refers to the collection of signs, posters and labels that the retailer uses outside and inside the store to guide customers in their use of the store. These elements together fulfill a number of different functions:

(a) Organizational

The retailer uses signage to advertise the store; strengthen the retailer's image; protect its market and promote the products on offer. It will also communicate the retailer 's policy on various matters, such as the type of product, quality, price and customer services. This can also serve to support the retailer 's planned high-brand/own-brand mix.

(b) Locational

The retailer can vary in-storage signage to locate and identify the goods on offer. Large stores need to display directional signage in order to guide customers round the store and from one place to another. Directional signs should be large enough to be seen clearly by the customers when entering a store. They should tell customers where to go for any category of product or service. Even larger stores, particularly those on more than one level, also need to have a store guide. This should be clearly visible from the entrance and the path to the guide clearly marked out so that even the first-time customer can clearly see where to go. The store guide is often repeated on different floors for custom convenience. The colors used in directional signage should be easy to read and not clash with the store environment. The signs may also be visual, using symbols as well words, particularly where the symbol is widely used. Large three-dimensional signs are easily visible and can be used to promote the image of the store as well. Hanging signs from the ceiling are often used to enhance the visibility of the signs.

(c) Category Signage

It is used within the particular department or sector of the store. They are usually smaller than directional signs. Their purpose is to identify the type of products on offer and they are usually located near to the goods they refer to. However, they can often be promotional for one or more categories of product.

(d) Promotional Signage

It may refer specifically to special offers. These may be displayed in windows to entice the customer into the store. For instance, value fashion stores for the younger woman

may display large posters in their windows of models wearing the items on special offer. This draws attention to the products and does not get in the way of the customer peeking through windows. With the right color products, the posters can add the attraction of the store.

(e) Point of sale

These signs are placed near the items they refer to. This is so that the customer can see the price and other detailed information. Some of this information may already be on product labels or pack-aging. However, point-of-sale signage can quickly identify for the customer those aspects likely to be of greater interest, such as whether the product is on special offer.

(f) Lifestyle Images

The retailer may use various images, such as pictures of people and places to create moods that encourage customers to buy the products. These are part of the visual merchandising that the store uses.

To visualize the use of various signage we should begin with the customer entering the store and progress to the inspection of individual items. The marque or logo on the outside of the store is the first sign customers will see. This must be clear, distinctive and convey the image of the store in a manner attractive to its customers. Dark reserved greens with traditional lettering (in old book style) convey a no-nonsense approach to basic good quality products.that is reassuring to young and old alike. This has been used to good effect B U Marks & Spencer, with its dark green lettering on a creamy background. However, this can go too far and may persuade some of its younger customers that the store is not for them. This style can be contrasted with that of the supermarket chain Asda, which uses a boulder, lighter green logo in modern letters to welcome customers. A wide variety of stores use red in name signs as it is eye-catching, stimulating and reinforces the message of good value that the bold lettering uses. Different types of stores use this approach are supermarkets (Tesco), food discounters (Lidl). electrical retailers (Dixons, Currys, Comet), variety stores (Woolworth) and

similar stores. Some supermarkets, such as Morrison's and the discounters such as Netto use black on yellow. These colors can be contrasted with the orange color used by upper-end supermarket Sainsbury. Its color and rather anonymous logo indicated the kind of clientele this supermarket was aiming for and placed the emphasis more on quality rather than on value. As Sainsbury was forced in the mid-1990s to take note of the value movement in super- markets it also had to rethink its logo and use of color.

Signage is one of the most important ways used by retailers to convey their message to the customers. The retailer's store name, promotions, pricing, and product information may all be conveyed through signage. As a customer walks by any store, they have a few seconds to know what they will find inside. Professional signage will attract the customer, provide just the right amount of information and invite the customer to enter the store or try the product. Unprofessional signage is confusing to the customer and sends a negative message about any store and product. Common problems include too many signs, ambiguous or misleading messages, spelling errors or signs that are difficult to read.

We have said that perhaps no variables are more important to the retail manager than the demographic dimensions of a market. Whether the retail trade area is the central city, a growing suburb, or a quiet rural area, you must understand the people who live and work there. Once the basic characteristics are identified and a judgment is made as to how far one of the customers would travel for the goods, the total market has been determined. Factors, such as current population, potential population, population density, age, income, gender, occupation, race, proportion of home ownership, average home value, and proportion of single versus multifamily dwellings are important considerations. Where consumers live, their commuting patterns, and whether their numbers are increasing or decreasing are but a few of the dynamic characteristics of the trade area population that the retailer must consider. It may be quite helpful to construct maps that display where certain types of customers reside.

#### 14. Economic Factors

Economic characteristics have a significant impact on country and region selection. The impact on trade areas is even greater. The local unemployment rate will affect the local labor pool and the amount of money that consumers have to purchase products. The most important economic characteristics for the retailer are per capita income and employment rates.

#### 15. Subculture

Subcultures have more of an impact on market and trade area selection than on country or region selection. One must normally be at the market or trade level in order to accurately gauge the location and characteristics of a subculture. An ethnic subculture creates market segments for goods ranging from food and cosmetics to clothing and entertainment. At the same time religion, language, and family structure create both opportunities and problems. The economy of an area under consideration for location should provide a general indicator of the long –range retail opportunities present within an area. The number, type, trends, and stability of industries that might affect business in the market area need to be considered. Employment rates, total retail sales, segment retail sales, household income, and household expenditures all provide information from which the economic stability of the area can be ascertained. The buying power index (BPI) indicates the relative ability of consumers to make purchases. The BPI for most metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) in the U.S. is published yearly by Sales and Marketing Management in their survey of buying power. The BPI for potential markets can be directly compared to help make a choice of market area.

#### 16. Market Potential

Once the retail trade area has been identified and the relative segmenting variables applied, certain quantitative factors must be considered to decide if the area is suitable. These factors include the retail market potential of a retail trade area and the retail sales potential. Retail market potential is the total dollar sale that can be obtained by all stores selling a particular retail product, product line, or group of services within the retail trade

area if everything was maximized. Therefore, retail sales potential is a part of retail market potential. A retail sales forecast is the specific estimate of sales volume that a retailer expects. Because the retailer is new in the area or because of the entry of a new competitor, the sales forecast may be less than the estimate of retail sales potential. There are two major determinants of the market potential for a trade area: the number of potential customers within the area and the amount of money consumers spend for the product or product line in question. For example, a retailer can estimate the market potential by multiplying the number of potential consumers in the trade area by the average amount they spend for the product. Generally, market potential figures are based on yearly estimates. Suppose, for example, that 50,000 potential customers reside in the trade area. If it is known that each potential customer spends approximately \$79 per year on gifts, the retail market potential for gift sales in that retail trade area would be \$3,900,000.

According to Bitner (1992): “There is a surprising lack of empirical research and theoretically based frameworks addressing the role of physical surroundings in consumption settings “. In more recent times, although environmental stimuli have been found to influence shopping behavior, empirical knowledge of how these variables interact to affect shopper perceptions and actions is lacking. Population statistics are commonly used in arriving at market potential and are expressed on a per capita, a per household, or a per family basis. The other factor is per capita expenditure.

The domestic apparel market has been on an optimistic growth trajectory due to a number of reasons including increasing disposable incomes and urbanization, favorable consumer demographics, growth of organized retail with the entry of a large number of domestic and international players, and changing lifestyles. The domestic apparel market has grown consistently over the past decade at a CAGR of 9 percent. This growth is expected to continue with the apparel market.

The apparel market is one of the segments enjoying the highest modern retail penetration in India with a nearly 20 per cent share. The entry of various domestic and international players and the increased retail penetration through a multi-channel approach (i.e.



exclusive brand outlets, department stores, discount stores, hypermarkets and e-tailing) is driving the growth of the organized market, which is poised to contribute as much as 25 per cent of the total fashion market five years from now.

### 17. Sales Potential

You learned that the retail sales potential for a firm is the estimated dollar sales that a retailer expects to obtain in a particular retail trade area over a given period. An accurate appraisal of sales is important, because it will dictate the amount of inventory that will be purchased, the number of employees that will be needed, the dollars that can be spent for expenses, and the amount of debt capital the business can comfortably afford. To arrive at such a figure, one must consider.

- The competitive strengths in the market
- The amount of business that can be drawn from substitute products
- Management's own expertise

To assess the competitive strengths in the market, the retailer can start with an assessment of the total market potential. If the retailer assumes that the business will obtain at least average amount of sales being realized by the competitive business in the trade area, an estimate of the sales potential can be made. If there are five businesses (the new retail establishment makes six), each business might be expected to have one-sixth of the business available in the trade area. Although this approach may not seem as sound as that used in measuring market potential, it does provide an analysis of competitive strength, and the figure derived is usually conservative. This approach can be useful in particular situations.

### 18. Index of Retail Saturation

Competition exists when more than one store competes for the same market segment or target market. In some situations, a firm might like to be only one of its types in a given market area. This is particularly the case for specialty or convenience goods. On other occasions, however, good strong competition will enhance the overall business potential

of a given area because it will draw shoppers from a greater distance to compare prices or stores. This is particularly the case with goods for which people often make shopping comparisons. Maps may be developed to show retail locations of competitors by relative size and merchandise mix.

#### 19. Infrastructure

We have talked about how the infrastructure including roads and highways, distribution warehouses, communications facilities, and labor pool must be adequate for a country or region. The same is even more true for trade area analysis. The legal infrastructure can also impact the trade area selected for your store. State and local laws vary concerning advertising, zoning, and sign restrictions for retailers.

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter highlights the research methodology which was used in this study. It provides a detailed description of the research approach adopted in this study. Research design, population of the study, sampling, sample size, instruments used for the study, sources of data collection, software used for the analysis are presented in the subsequent sections.

Research in common parlance to search for knowledge. One can also define research as a scientific and systematic search for pertinent information on a specific topic. In fact, research is an art of scientific investigation. According to Redman and Moray (1923) research is a “systematized effort to gain new knowledge”. Some people consider research as a voyage of discovery that involves movement of information from the known to the unknown.

According to Kothari (2004), research design is a plan, a roadmap and blueprint strategy of investigation conceived so as to obtain answers to research questions, it is the heart of any study. Research methodology is the systematic, theoretical analysis of the procedures applied to a field of study (Kothari, 2004). Methodology involves procedures of describing, explaining and predicting phenomena so as to solve a problem. Research methodology comprehends perception such as research designs, target population, sample size and sampling procedures, data collection instruments and data analysis procedure. Research in a technical sense is an academic activity. ‘Clifford Woody (Kothari 1988) defined research as “an activity that define and redefine problems, formulating a hypothesis; collecting and evaluating data; making deductions and reaching conclusions; and carefully testing the conclusions to determine if they support the formulated hypothesis. According to D. Shlesinger and M. Stephenson (1930), in the encyclopedia of social science, defined it as the manipulation of things, concepts or symbols for the purpose of generalizing, extending, correcting or verifying the knowledge, whether that knowledge aids in the construction of theory or in the practice of an art. Research is thus an original contribution to the existing stock of knowledge making for its advancement.

Research is also a way of preparing the mind to look at things in a fresh or different way. Out of such an orientation would come new and innovative observations about everyday events and happenings. The formidable problem that follows the task of defining the research problems is the preparation of the design of the research project, popularly known as the “research design “. Decisions regarding what, where, when, how much, by what means concerning an inquiry or a research study constitute a research design.

### **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

A research design provides a framework for the collection and analysis of data. A research design is also known by different names such as outline. It implies the plan, structure and strategy of investigation proposed to be undertaken. According to Pauline V. Young, “A research is the logical and systematic planning and a piece of research”. Research designs provide a framework for the collection and analysis of data. Research design is, therefore, the base on which we proceed towards the study of the problem after formulating the hypothesis.

The methodology used in a study is integral to the reliability of the findings and validity of the study. Therefore, this section focuses on the research technique adopted and used for this study with the aim of achieving the research objectives. This section of the document also studies with the aim of achieving the research objectives. This section of the document also contains descriptions of instruments used to measure various constructs applicable to this study. Research design is basically classified as exploratory or descriptive research.

The method which I used for study is Descriptive research. Descriptive research is defined as a research method that describes the characteristics of the population or phenomenon that is being studied. This methodology focuses more on the “what” of the research subject rather than the “why” of the research subject.

In other words, descriptive research primarily focuses on describing the nature of a demographic segment, without focusing on “why” a certain phenomenon occurs. In other

words, it “describes” the subject of the research, without covering “why” it happens. Descriptive research, when a particular phenomenon is under study, the research is needed to describe it, to clarify and explain its inner relationships and properties. The descriptive research will portray an accurate profile of people surveyed and the method of analysis prior to beginning of data collection. In other words, people, events and situations. Descriptive research in contrast with exploratory research defines questions, people surveyed and method of analysis prior beginning of data collection.

### **3.3 POPULATION OF THE STUDY**

Population is a complete set of elements (persons or objects) that possess some characteristics defined by the sampling criteria established by the researcher. In this study we are mainly concentrating on the customers who visited the Wildcraft store at Lulu International Shopping Mall, Cochin.

### **3.4 SAMPLE SIZE**

A sample is a finite part of a population whose properties are studied to gain information about the population. When dealing with people, it can be defined as a set of respondents (people) selected from a large population for the purpose of a survey. A sampling method is a procedure for selecting sample members from a population. In this research study, 101 respondents were taken and these respondents have been considered for a comprehensive understanding of all the factors which impacts consumer behavior towards the brand Wildcraft. The 101 loyal respondents are taken from Wildcraft store customers and this document contains descriptions of instruments used to measure various constructs applicable to this study.

### **3.5 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE**

The primary data is collected using a non-probability sampling method where the selection of samples from a population using a non-random or subjective method. It does not require a complete survey frame. Also, it is a fast, easy and inexpensive way for obtaining data. Convenience sampling is a sampling technique which is used during the preliminary research efforts. As the name suggests, the elements of such a sample are picked only on the basis of convenience in terms of availability, reach and accessibility. I took this as a sampling technique, because the sample being drawn from that part of the population that is close to hand.

Convenience sampling is a sampling method that uses participants who are most conveniently available. This sort of sample is usually biased. It most likely does not fit the correct definition of random sample, where everyone in the population has an equal chance of being selected. Since it doesn't truly represent the population, it is limited when it comes to generalization. Valid inferences about the large groups cannot be made based on the result drawn from the convenience samples. Convenience sampling is an on-probability method, which may be appropriate when a researcher wants to get a gross approximation of the truth, while avoiding the time and cost of a random sample.

The scaling used for the study is 'Five Point Likert scale'. Scaling is the branch of measurement that involves the construction of an instrument that associates qualitative constructs with quantitative metric units. A Likert scale is a scale used to represent people's attitudes to a topic. It is the most widely used approach to scaling responses in survey research. The Likert Scales used to allow the individual to express how much they are satisfied or dissatisfied with a particular statement.

### **3.6 DATA COLLECTION**

Data collection is a term used to describe a process of preparing and collecting data. The purpose of data collection is to obtain information to keep on record, to make decisions about important issues. To pass information on to others. Primarily, data is collected to

provide information regarding a specific topic. The planning of data collection for research work is generally developed in the early stage of the research for its importance and impact on the research work. For this research, the data is collected from the respondents through a survey questionnaire.

### **3.7 PRIMARY DATA**

To accomplish the objective of the study, the researcher had to depend on the primary data. Primary data which are collected fresh and for the first time with the help of questionnaires. In order to give responses to the questions freely and frankly, honestly and sincerely, they made aware there are no right or wrong answers to these questions and their professional career would not be kept strictly confidential.

### **3.8 STATISTICAL TREATMENT**

Statistical tools are useful in analysis of collected data. Statistical analysis helps to provide conclusions with numerical evidence. Percentage analysis is used in research study.

### **3.9 SOFTWARE USED FOR ANALYSIS**

There could be the support of information technology and computers to speed up calculations all the way with acceptable accuracy of research study. After completion of a full-fledged survey with a finalized questionnaire, data was arranged in an orderly fashion in MS EXCEL software and the result was found.

## **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

Analysis of data is a process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming, and modeling data with the goal of discovering useful information, suggesting conclusions, and supporting decision making. Data analysis has multiple faces and approaches, encompassing diverse techniques under a variety of names, in different business, science, and social science domains.

Data analysis is engaged in after all data has been collected and is process used to analyze the collected data. The type of data analysis the tool that was used depended on the type of data. Before processing the responses, the completed questionnaire was edited for completeness and consistency. The data then coded to enable the descriptive analysis including percentage analysis and correlation analysis. The statistical tool SPSS helped the researcher to describe the data and determine the extent of use.

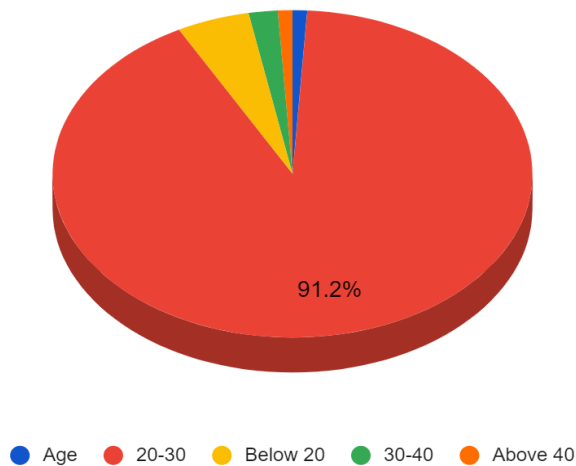


## 4.2 PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

**Table 4.2.1** Frequency Distribution based on the age of respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Below 20	5	5
20 - 30	93	92.1
30 - 40	2	2
Above 40	1	1

**Figure 4.2.1 :** Distribution based on the age of respondents

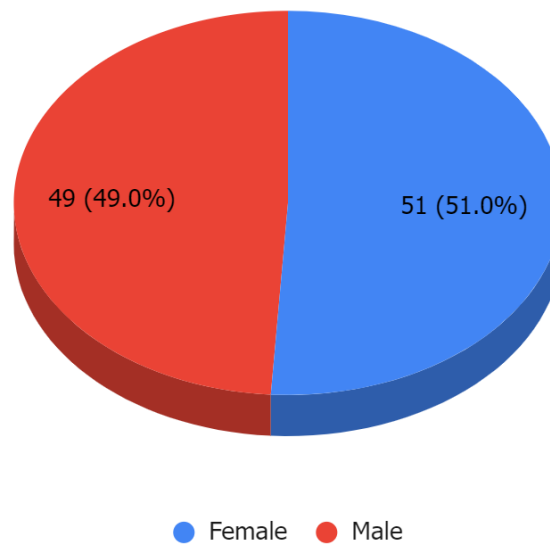


**Interpretation:** Here the data table shows that the majority of the respondents belong to the age group 20 – 30 that is 92.1%, and the rest include 5% below 20 years, 2% between 30-40 and 1% above 40 years

**Table 4.2.2** Frequency distribution based on Gender of respondents

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Total</b>
Male	50	50.5
Female	51	49.5

**Figure 4.2.2 :** Distribution based on Gender of respondents

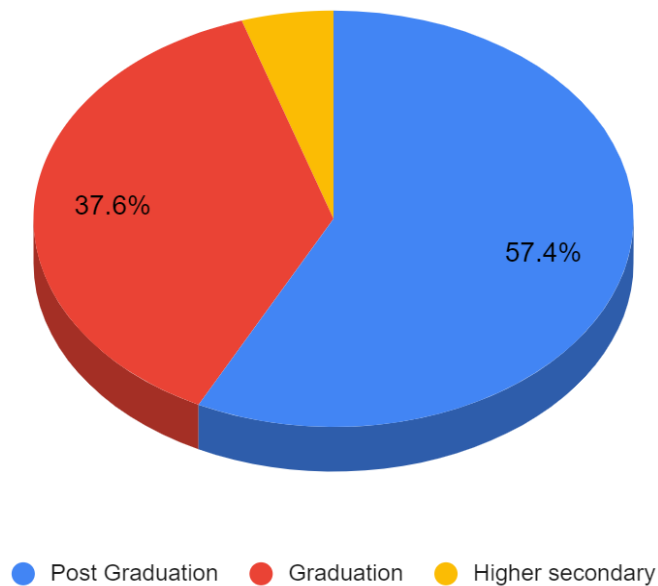


**Interpretation:** The above table shows that the respondents are equally male and female, that is, 49.5% are male and 50.5 % are female.

**Table 4.2.3** Frequency Distribution based on the educational qualification of respondents.

<b>EDUCATION QUALIFICATION</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Post Graduation	38	37.6
Graduation	58	57.4
Higher Secondary	5	5
Xth Grade	-	0
Below Xth Grade	-	0

**Figure 4.2.3:** Distribution based on the educational qualification of respondents

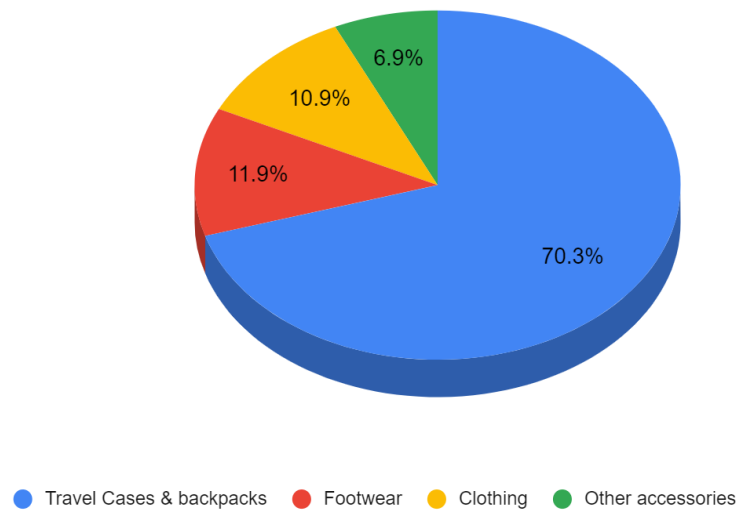


**Interpretation:** The above table shows the majority of customers are highly qualified since 57.4% are graduated and 37.6% have post graduation. Only 5% of respondents have higher secondary education.

**Table 4.2.4:** Frequency Distribution based on Product Category

<b>PRODUCT CATEGORY</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Travel Cases & Backpacks	71	70.3
Footwear	12	11.9
Clothing	11	10.9
Other Accessories	7	6.9

**Figure 4.2.4:** Distribution based on Product Category.

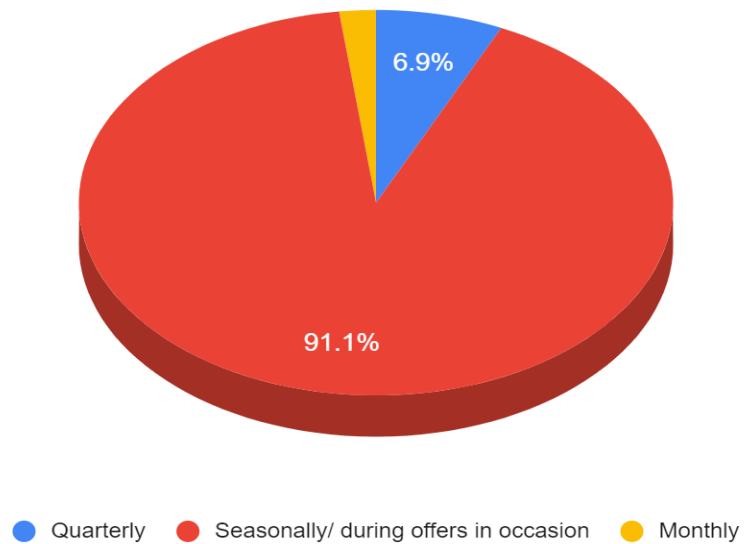


**Interpretation:** The major product category purchased by the respondents is Travel Cases and Backpacks which accounts to 70.3%. The category of Footwear comprises 11.9% and Clothing 10.9%. Other accessories include 6.9%.

**Table 4.2.5** Frequency Distribution based on the purchase repetition.

<b>PURCHASE OCCASIONS</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Monthly	2	2
Quarterly	7	6.9
Seasonally / During offers	92	92.1

**Figure 4.2.5:** Distribution based on the purchase repetition.

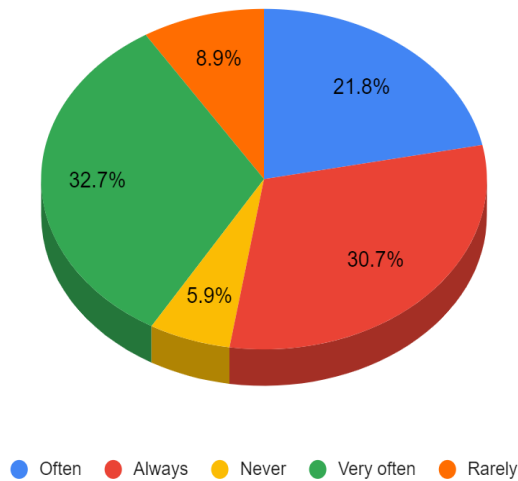


**Interpretation:** The majority of the respondents that is 91.1% purchase very occasionally depending upon seasons or offers. Apart from that, 6.9% purchases quarterly and 2% purchases monthly.

**Table 4.2.6** Frequency distribution based on the ratings degree of consideration of the factors during purchase decisions - QUALITY

DEGREE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Never	6	5.9
Rarely	9	8.9
Often	22	21.8
Very Often	33	32.7
Always	31	30.7

**Figure 4.2.6:** Distribution based on degree of considering Quality

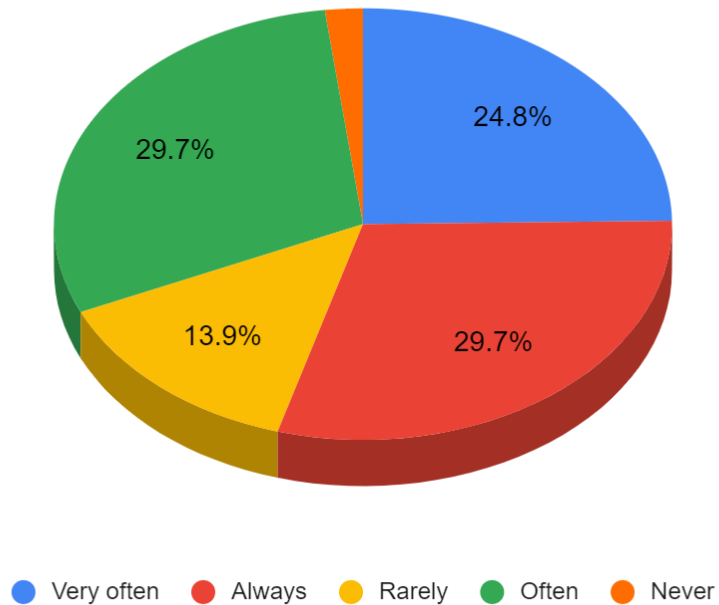


**Interpretation:** A majority of the customers consider quality while making a purchase decision. Here, 32.7% respondents consider quality always, while 30.7% of them consider it very often. A total of 21.8% consider quality often and 8.9% rarely consider quality. 5.9% of the population never consider quality as a factor when coming to a purchase decision.

**Table 4.2.7:** Frequency distribution based on the ratings degree of consideration of the factors during purchase decisions - DURABILITY

DEGREE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Never	2	2
Rarely	14	13.9
Often	30	29.7
Very Often	25	24.8
Always	30	29.7

**Figure 4.2.7:** Distribution based on the degree of considering Durability

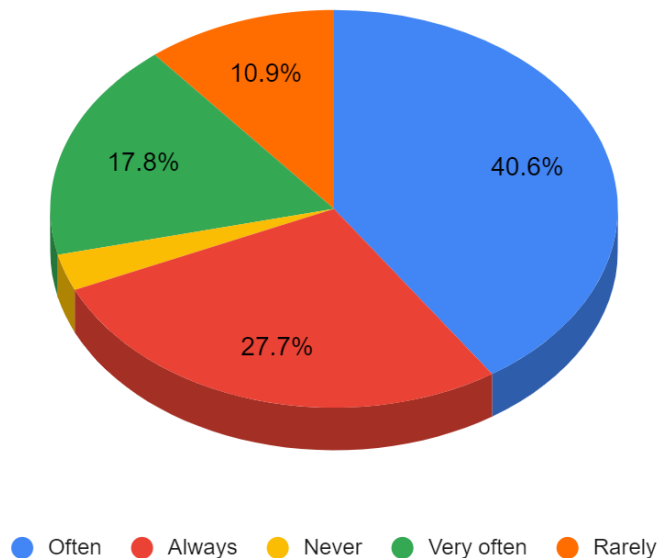


**Interpretation:** About 29.7% of the samples considers durability to be an important factor for purchase always while 24.8% considers it very often. Remaining samples hardly consider it.

**Table 4.2.8:** Frequency distribution based on the ratings degree of consideration of the factors during purchase decisions - PRICE

DEGREE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Never	3	3
Rarely	11	10.9
Often	41	40.6
Very Often	18	17.8
Always	28	27.7

**Figure 4.2.8:** Distribution based on degree of considering Price



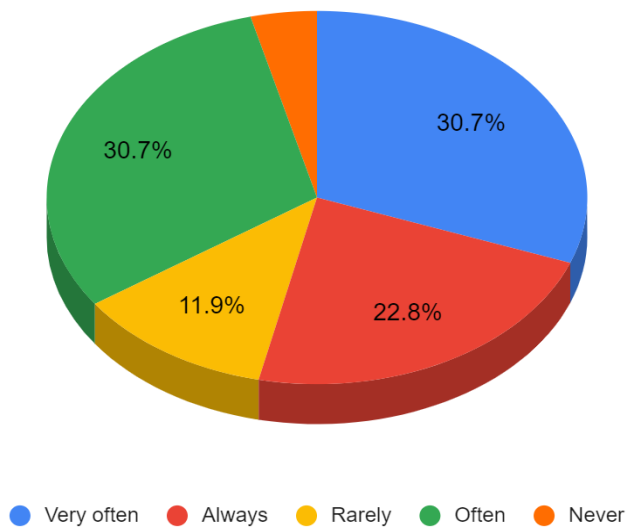
**Interpretation:** 27.7% of people consider price an important factor while 40.6% consider it often. Moreover, 17.8% consider it very often and the remaining hardly consider it.



**Table 4.2.9:** Frequency distribution based on the ratings degree of consideration of the factors during purchase decisions - VARIETY

DEGREE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Never	4	4
Rarely	12	11.9
Often	31	30.7
Very Often	31	30.7
Always	23	22.8

**Figure 4.2.9:** Distribution based on degree of considering Variety

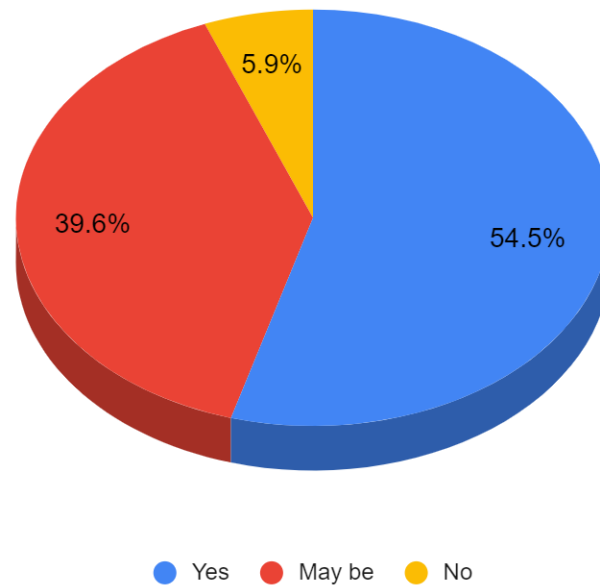


**Interpretation:** Majority of samples say, 30.7% and 22.8% consider variety as an important factor for purchase. The remaining samples do not value it much.

**Table 4.2.10:** Frequency Distribution based on WOM.

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Yes	55	54.5
No	6	5.9
May be	40	39.6

**Figure 4.2.10:** Distribution based on WOM.



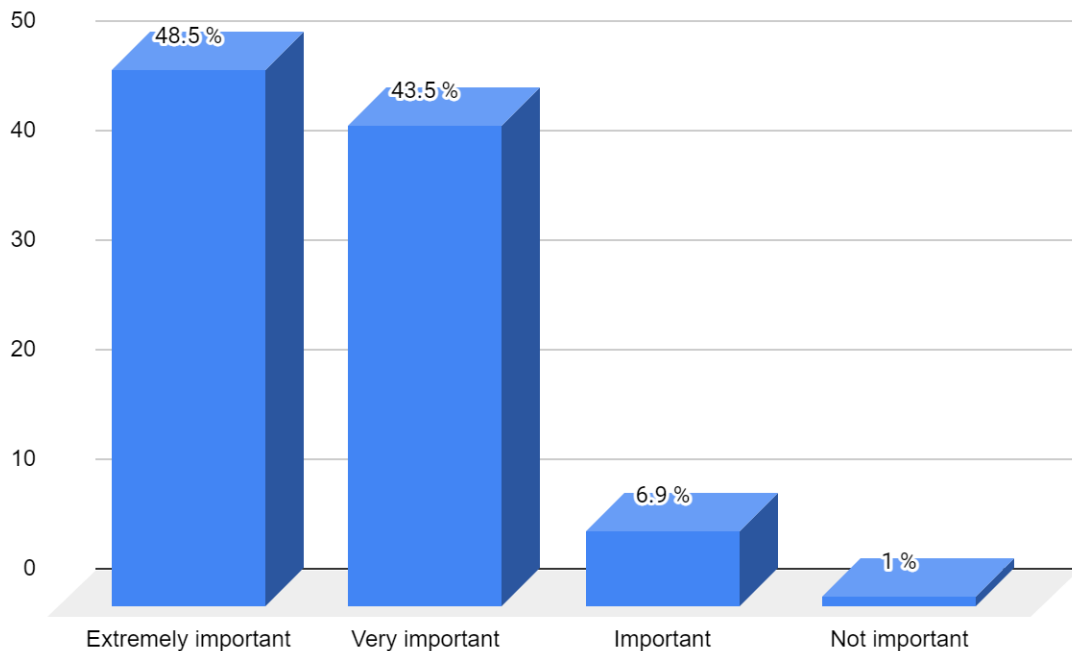
**Interpretation:** More than half of the respondents .i.e, 54.5% have expressed that they would surely recommend Wildcraft to others, while 39.6% of the respondents are not pretty sure that they would and the remaining 5.9% will never recommend the brand for others

**Table 4.2.11:** Frequency table based on the level of importance to the following attributes

1. QUALITY

LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Extremely Important	49	48.5
Very Important	44	43.5
Important	7	6.9
Less Important	1	1
Not Important	-	

**Figure 4.2.11:** Distribution based on the level of importance - Quality



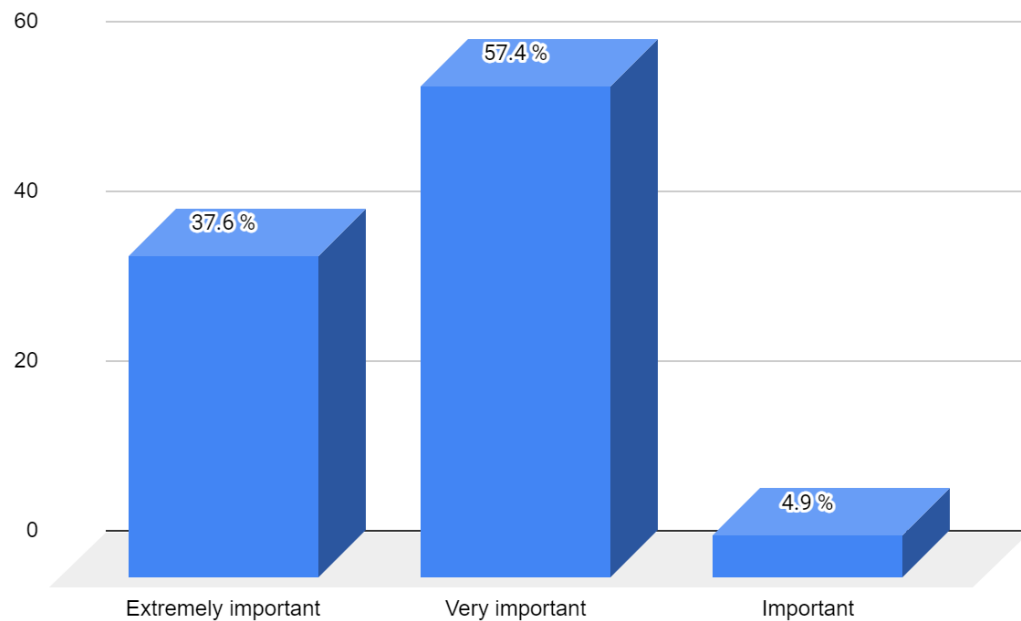
**Interpretation:** 48.5% of the respondents consider quality as an extremely important attribute, 43.5% consider it as very important and the remaining do not consider it.

**Table 4.2.12:** Frequency Distribution based on level of importance.

2.DURABILITY

LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Extremely Important	38	37.6
Very Important	58	57.4
Important	5	4.9
Less Important	-	
Not Important	-	

**Figure 4.2.12:** Distribution based on the level of importance - Durability



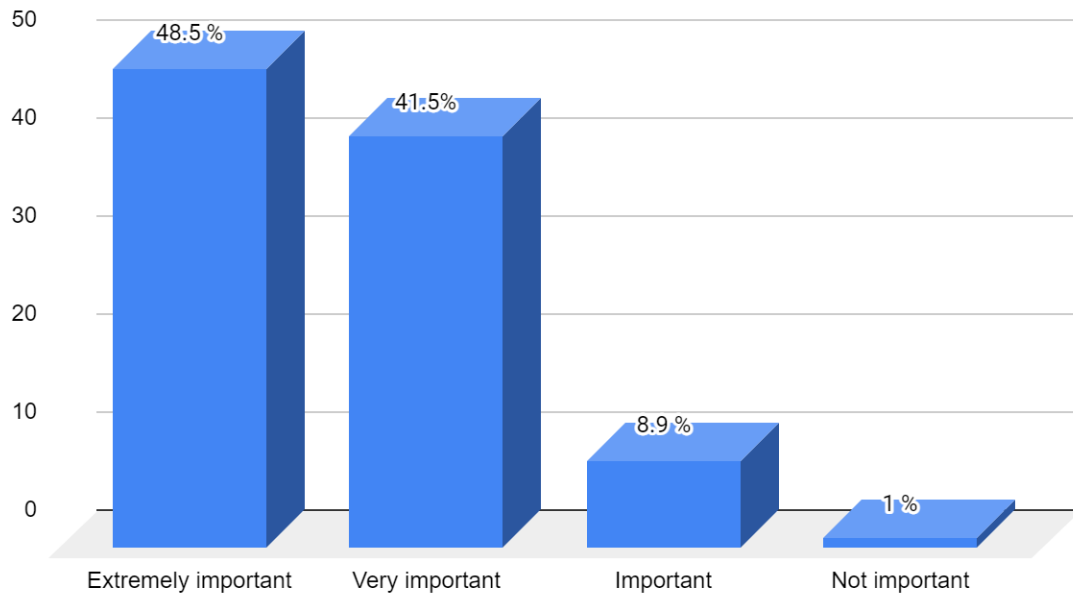
**Interpretation:** A major part of the population, 57.4%, considers durability as a very important attribute while 37.4% consider it extremely important, and the remaining 4.9% consider it somewhat important.

**Table 4.2.13:** Frequency Distribution based on level of importance.

3. COMFORT

LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Extremely Important	49	48.5
Very Important	42	41.5
Important	9	8.9
Less Important	1	1
Not Important	-	

**Figure 4.2.13:** Distribution based on the level of importance - Comfort



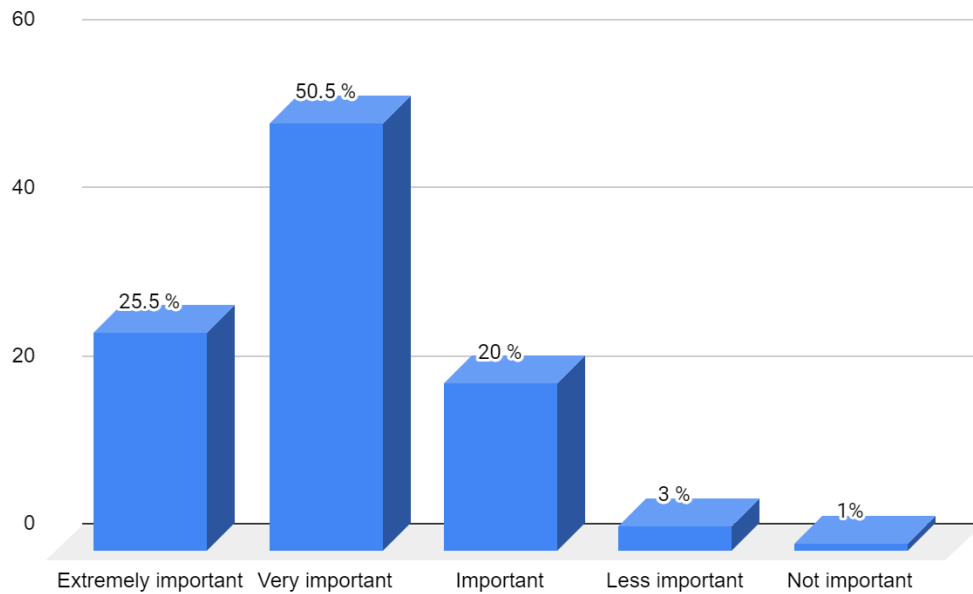
**Interpretation:** Approximately, 50% of the respondents consider comfort of the products as an extremely important attribute, 40% consider it very important, 9% consider it somewhat important, 1% do not consider it important.

**Table 4.2.14:** Frequency Distribution based on level of importance.

4. AFFORDABILITY

LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Extremely Important	26	25.5
Very Important	51	50.5
Important	20	20
Less Important	3	3
Not Important	1	1

**Figure 4.2.14:** Distribution based on the level of importance - Affordability



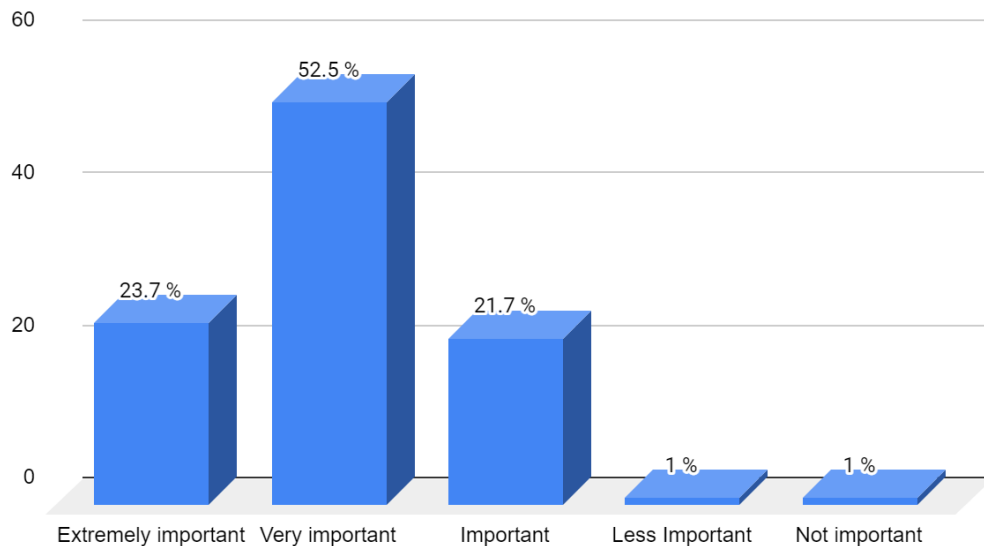
**Interpretation:** More than 75% of the respondents consider Economical affordability as significantly important. About 20% of respondents have said that it is somewhat important and the remaining 4% do not consider it important.

**Table 4.2.15:** Frequency Distribution based on level of importance.

5. REUSABILITY

LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Extremely Important	24	23.7
Very Important	53	52.5
Important	22	21.7
Less Important	1	1
Not Important	1	1

**Figure 4.2.15:** Distribution based on the level of importance - Reusability



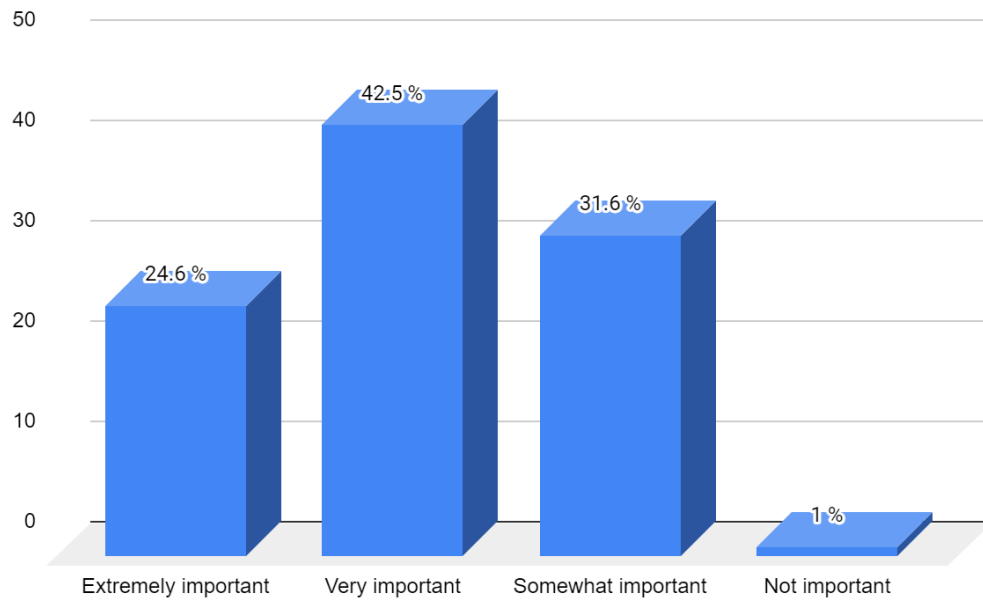
**Interpretation:** A quarter of the respondents consider waterproof and washability as an extremely important attribute, 52.5% consider it very important. About 21.7% of respondents consider it somewhat important and the remaining 2% consider it not that important.

**Table4.2.16:** Frequency Distribution based on level of importance.

6. COLOR & DESIGN

LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Extremely Important	25	24.6
Very Important	43	42.5
Important	32	31.6
Less Important	1	1
Not Important	-	

**Figure 4.2.16:** Distribution based on the level of importance - Color & Design



**Interpretation:** A quarter of the samples consider Color & Design as an extremely important attribute, while almost half of them say that it is very important. About 31.6% consider it somewhat important and the remaining 1% say it is not that important.

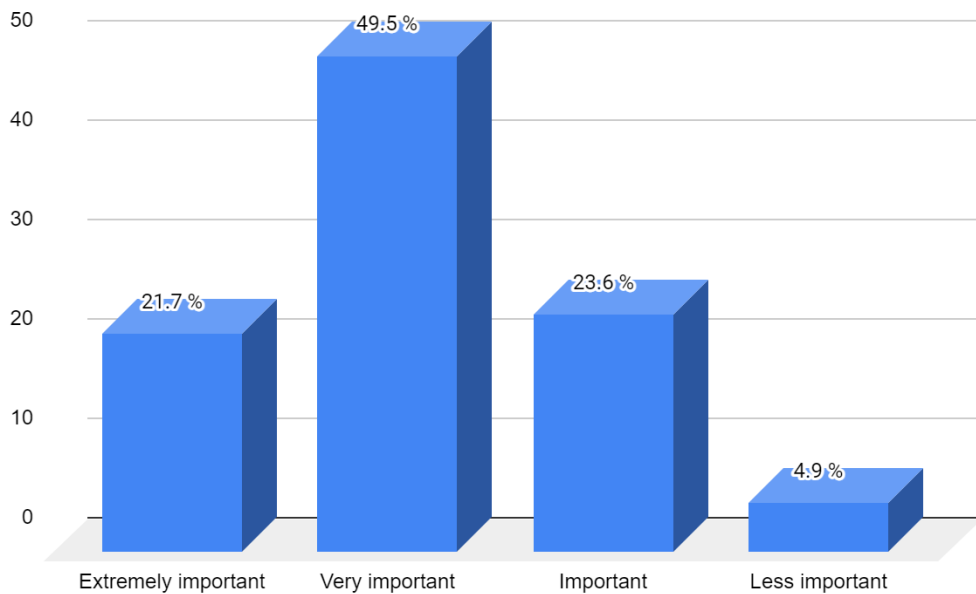


**Table 4.2.17:** Frequency Distribution based on level of importance.

7. EASE OF USE

LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Extremely Important	22	21.7
Very Important	50	49.5
Important	24	23.6
Less Important	5	4.9
Not Important	-	

**Figure 4.2.17:** Distribution based on the level of importance - Ease of use



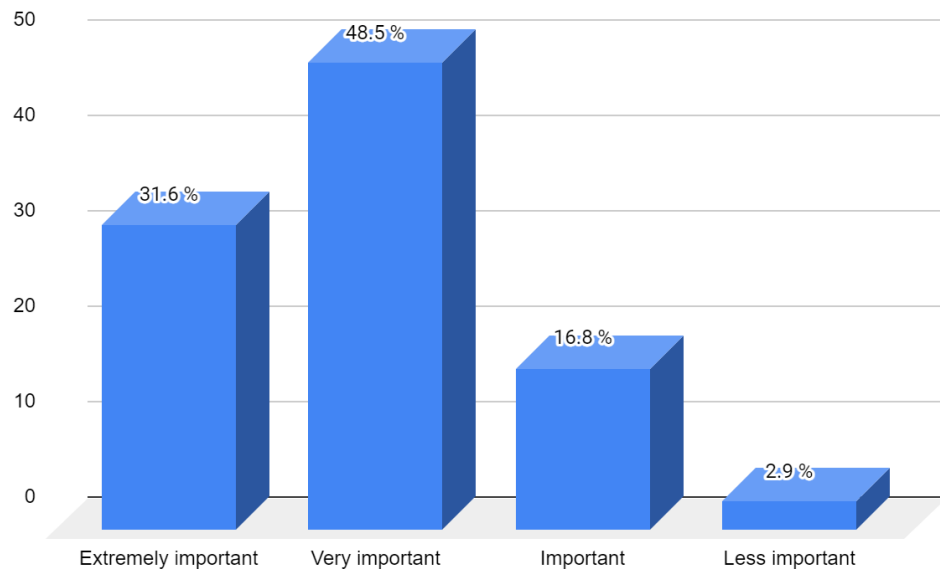
**Interpretation:** Approximately 21.7% of the respondents consider light weight of the product as an extremely important factor while nearly 50% of the respondents consider it very important, 23% as somewhat important and the remaining ones as not very important.

**Table 4.2.18:** Frequency Distribution based on level of importance.

8. FINISH

LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Extremely Important	32	31.6
Very Important	49	48.5
Important	17	16.8
Less Important	3	2.9
Not Important	-	

**Figure 4.2.18:** Distribution based on the level of importance - Finish



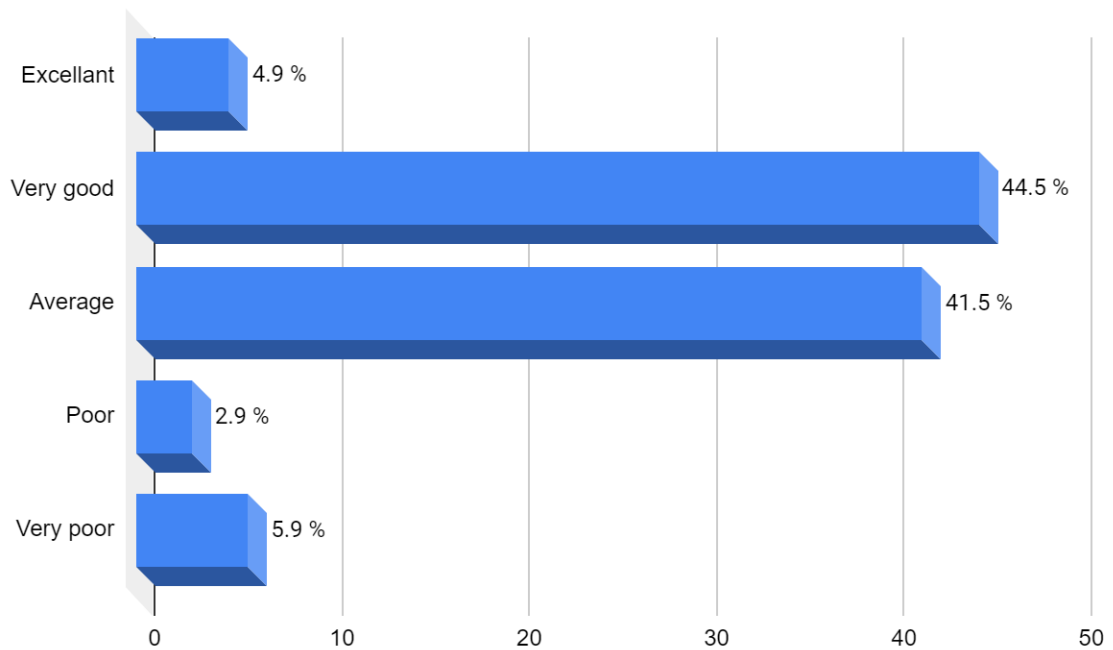
**Interpretation:** A big circle of respondents consider finishing of the product as very important, say about 31.6 % said it extremely important and 48.5% as very important. About 16.8% consider it somewhat important while the remaining 3% do not bother about it.

**Table 4.2.19:** Frequency Distribution based on the rating the Wildcraft brand

1. PRICE

LEVEL OF RATING	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Very Poor	6	5.9
Poor	3	2.9
Average	42	41.5
Very Good	45	44.5
Excellent	5	4.9

**Figure 4.2.19:** Distribution based on Rating of Factors: Price



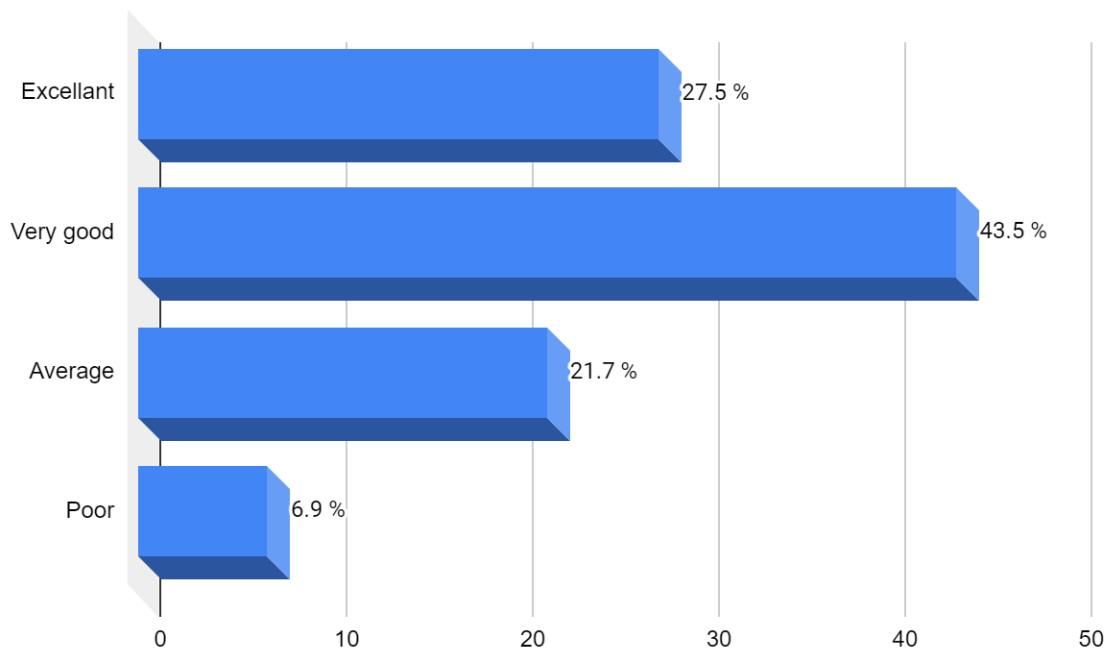
**Interpretation:** Only 4.9% of the respondents are completely satisfied with the price of the brand, about 44.5% said it is very good while 41.5% rated it average and notably the remaining people rated it poor.

**Table 4.2.20:** Frequency Distribution based on the rating the Wildcraft brand

2. QUALITY

LEVEL OF RATING	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Very Poor	-	
Poor	7	6.9
Average	22	21.7
Very Good	44	43.5
Excellent	28	27.5

**Figure 4.2.20:** Distribution based on Rating factors - Quality



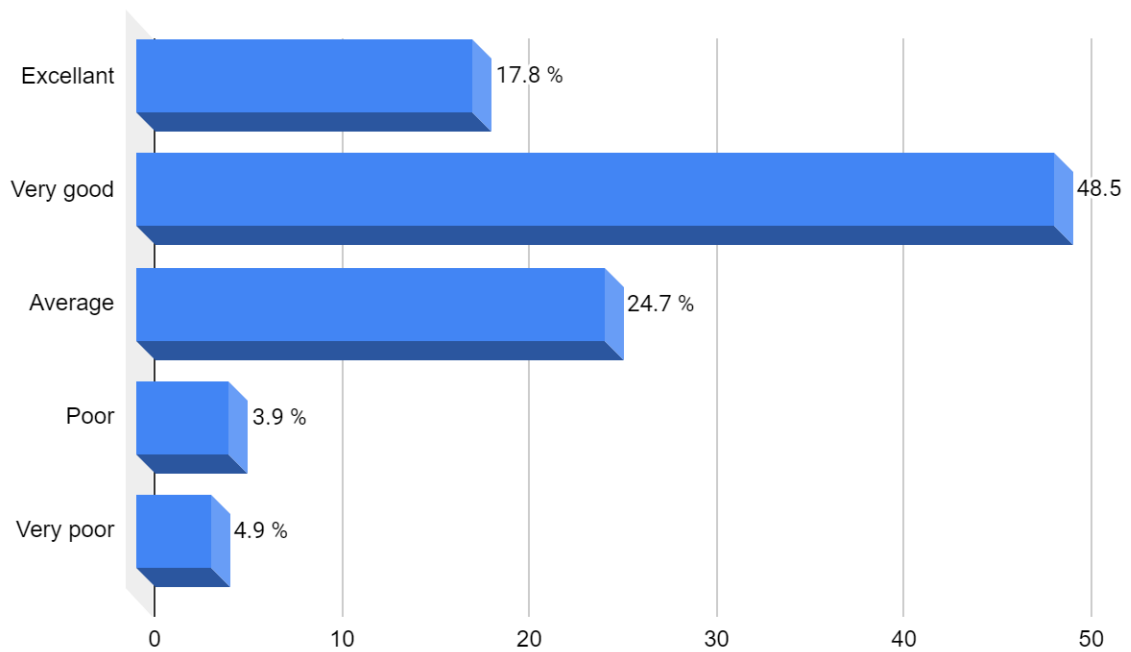
**Interpretation:** It is remarkable that a majority of the respondents about 27.5% said that the quality of wildcraft products are excellent and 43.5% said it very good. About 21.7% said the quality is average and the remaining said it is poor.

**Table 4.2.21:** Frequency Distribution based on the rating the Wildcraft brand

3. DESIGN

LEVEL OF RATING	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Very Poor	4	3.9
Poor	5	4.9
Average	25	24.7
Very Good	49	48.5
Excellent	18	17.8

**Figure 4.2.21:** Distribution based on rating factors - Design



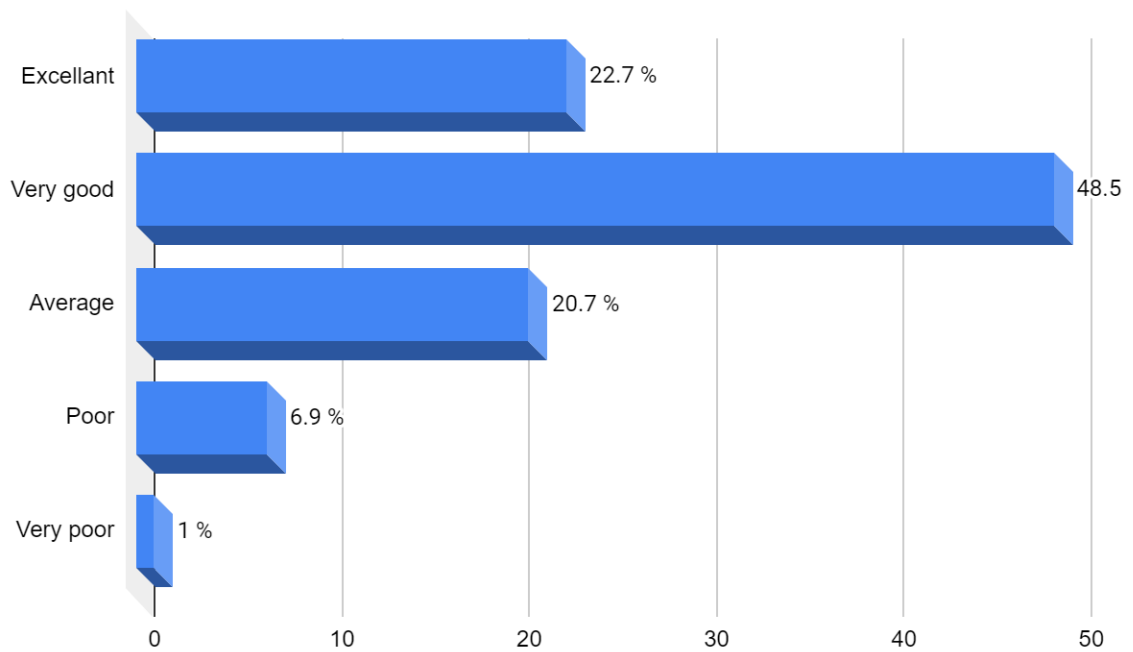
**Interpretation:** The majority of the respondents, about 17.8% and 48.5% highlighted that the design offered by the brand is excellent and very good respectively. While 24.7% respondents said it is average and others poor.

**Table 4.2.22:** Frequency Distribution based on the rating the Wildcraft brand

4. COMFORT

LEVEL OF RATING	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Very Poor	1	1
Poor	7	6.9
Average	21	20.7
Very Good	49	48.5
Excellent	23	22.7

**Figure 4.2.22:** Distribution based on rating factors - Comfort



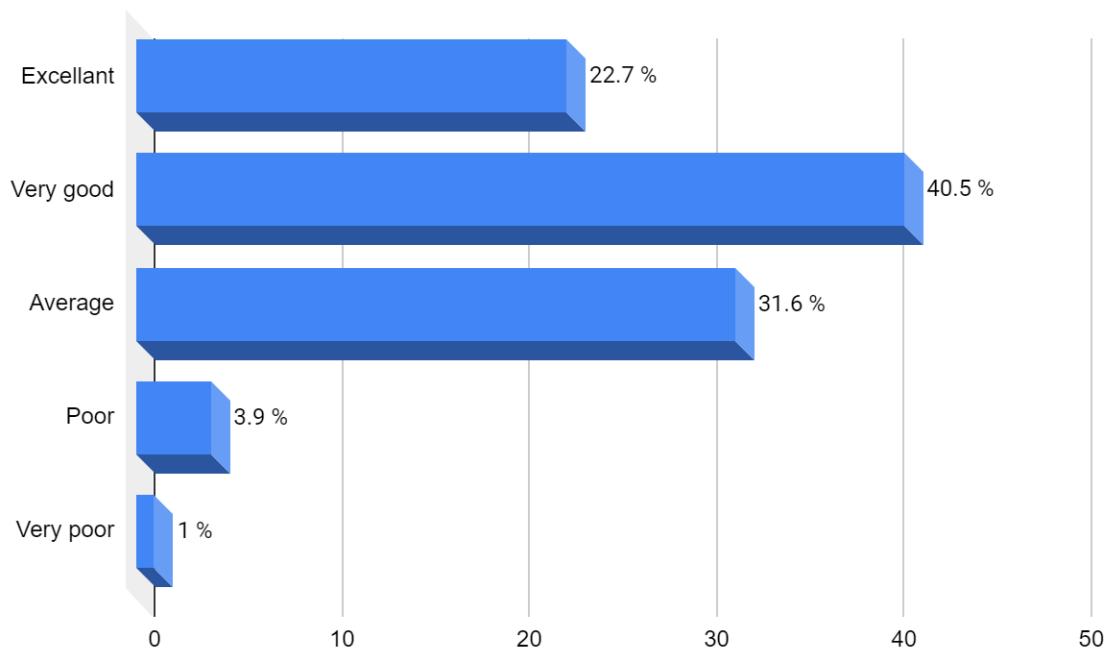
**Interpretation:** A large portion of the respondents, 22.7% and 48.5%, have rated comfort offered by the brand to be excellent and very good. About 20.7% have rated it average and the remaining 7.9% said it is poor.

**Table 4.2.23:** Frequency Distribution based on the rating the Wildcraft brand

5. PACKAGING

LEVEL OF RATING	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Very Poor	1	1
Poor	4	3.9
Average	32	31.6
Very Good	41	40.5
Excellent	23	22.7

**Figure 4.2.23:** Distribution based on rating factors - Packaging



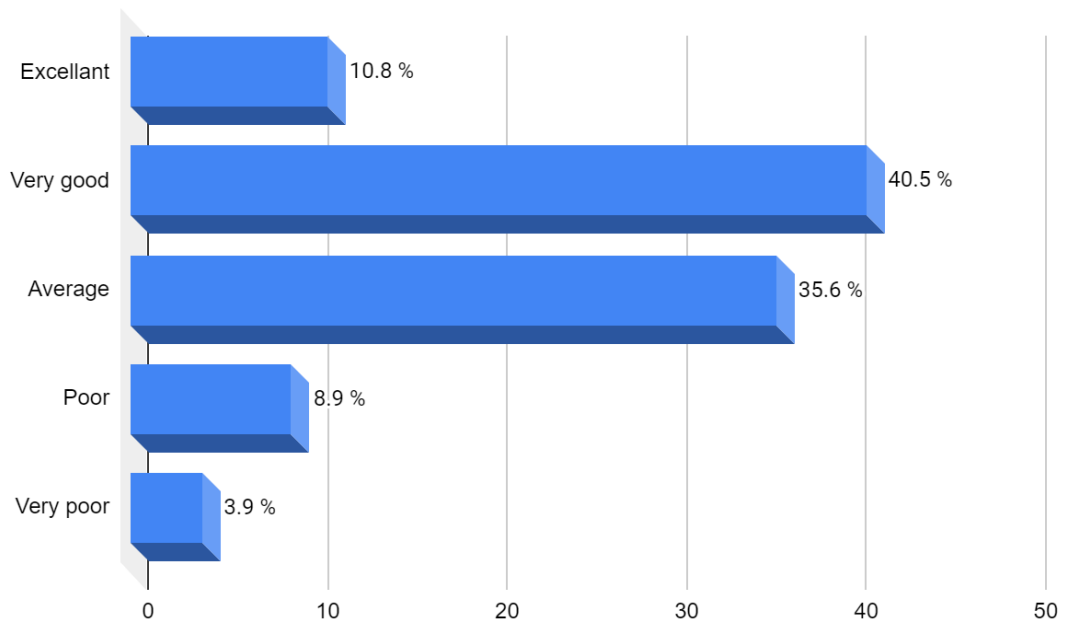
**Interpretation:** While considering packaging of the brand, 22.7% of the samples have rated it excellent and 40.5% have rated it as very good. About 31.6 % of the respondents said packaging is average while the remaining respondents said it is poor.

**Table 4.2.24:** Frequency Distribution based on the rating the Wildcraft brand

6. ADVERTISEMENT

LEVEL OF RATING	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Very Poor	4	3.9
Poor	9	8.9
Average	36	35.6
Very Good	36	45.6
Excellent	9	8.9

**Figure 4.2.24:** Distribution based on on rating factors - Advertisement



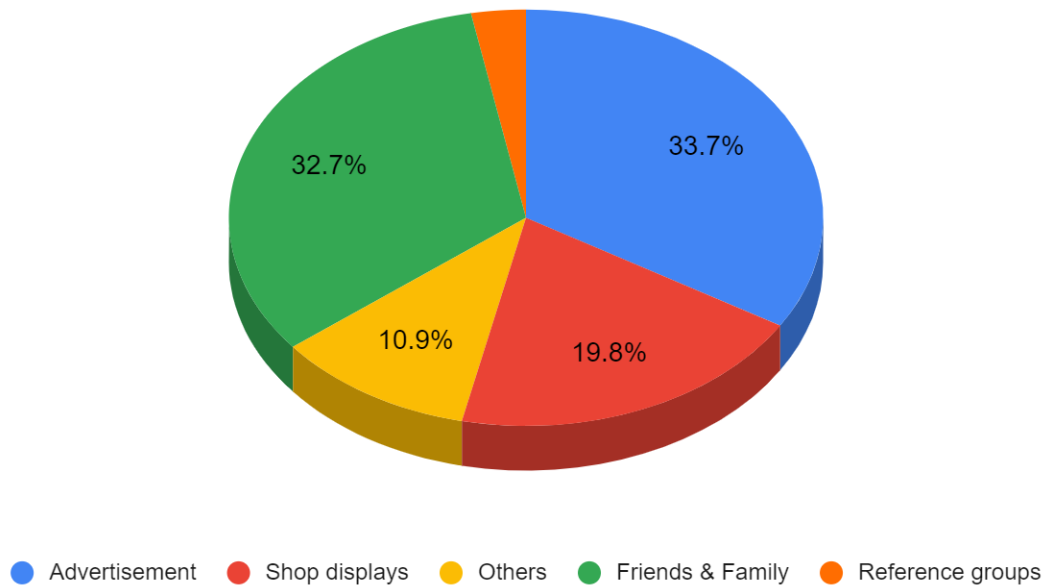
**Interpretation:** Only 10.8% of the respondents have rated that advertisements of the brand are excellent. About 40.5% have rated it very good while 35.6% have rated it average. A small part of the respondents, say, 8.9 % and 3.9% have rated it poor and very poor respectively.



**Table 4.2.25:** Frequency Distribution based on the factors that influence purchasing Wildcraft brand products.

FACTORS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Advertisement	34	33.7
Shop Displays	20	19.8
Friends & Family	33	32.7
Reference Groups	3	3
Others	11	10.9

**Figure 4.2.25:** Distribution based on factors that influence purchasing Wildcraft products

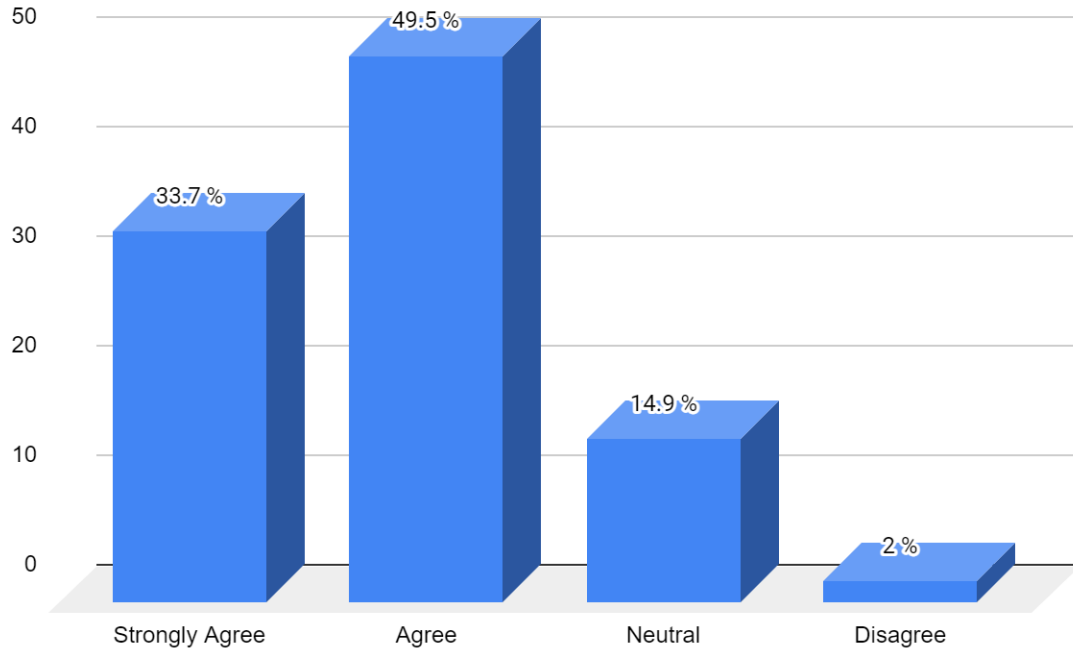


**Interpretation:** Advertisement (32.7%) and Friends & family (33.7%) form the major source of influence to purchase Wildcraft products. Also, 19.8% responded that shop displays influenced them to make purchase decisions. The next 3% said that the reference groups influenced them, and the rest 10.9% depend on other factors.

**Table 4.2.26:** Frequency Distribution based on the level of agreement that brand value influences customer behavior.

LEVEL OF AGREEMENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Strongly Disagree	-	-
Disagree	2	2
Neutral	15	14.9
Agree	50	49.5
Strongly Agree	34	33.7

**Figure 4.2.26:** Distribution based on agreement-brand value influences customer



**Interpretation:** A large majority of respondents (49.5% and 33.7%) completely agree that brand value influences customer decision. A smaller part, say, 14.9% neutrally reacted to the statement and the remaining 2% disagreed.

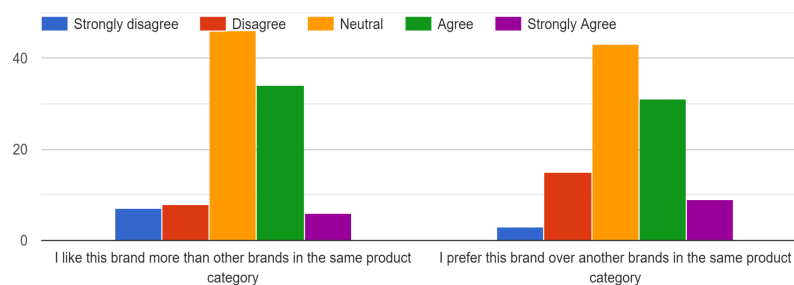
**Table 4.2.27:** Frequency Distribution of the degree of agreement on the following statements:

1. I like this brand more than other brands in the same product category.

DEGREE OF AGREEMENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Strongly Disagree	8	7
Disagree	8	7
Neutral	46	45.5
Agree	34	33.6
Strongly Agree	6	5

2. I prefer this brand over other brands in the same product category.

DEGREE OF AGREEMENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Strongly Disagree	3	2
Disagree	15	14.8
Neutral	43	42.5
Agree	31	30.6
Strongly Agree	9	8

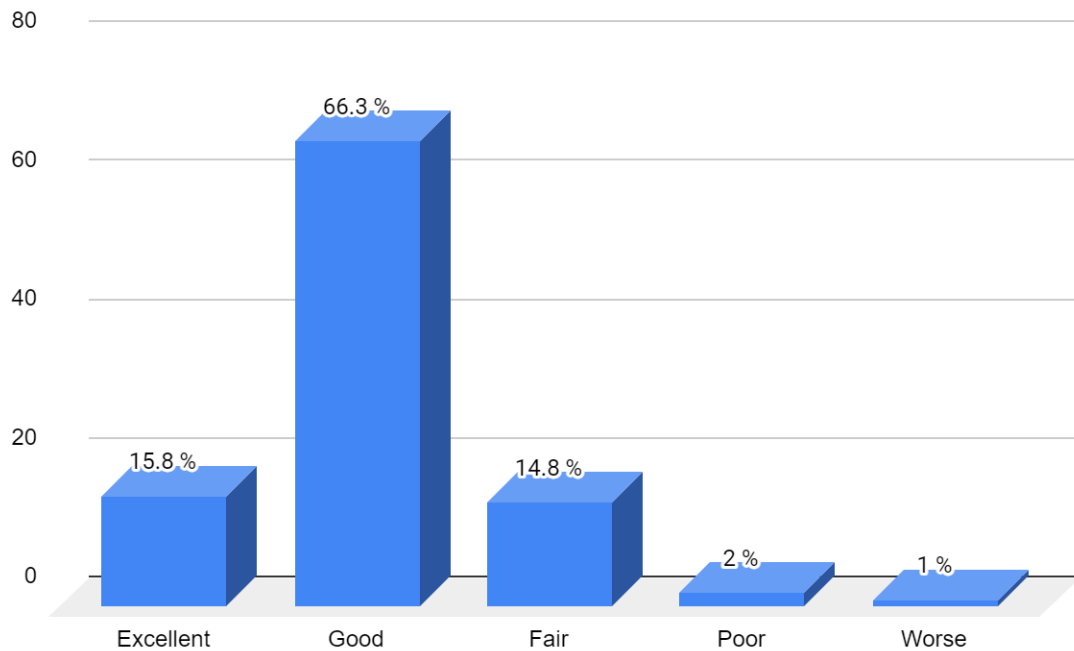


**Figure 4.2.27:** Distribution based on the degree of agreement to statements.

**Table 4.2.28:** Overall customer experience.

DEGREE OF SATISFACTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Excellent	16	15.8
Good	67	66.3
Fsir	15	14.9
Poor	2	2
Worse	1	1

**Figure 4.2.28:** Overall customer experience.

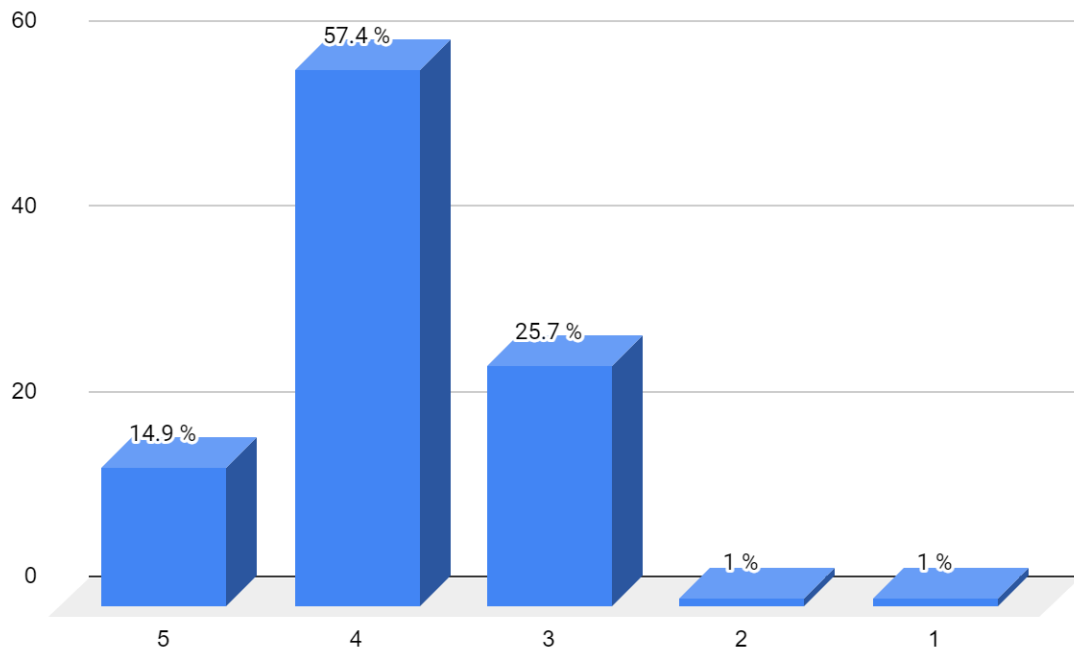


**Interpretation:** A majority of the respondents say, 66.3% and 15.8%, express higher levels of satisfaction. Only a small category of people are dissatisfied.

**Table 4.2.29:** Frequency distribution based on overall rating (5=highest,1=lowest)

<b>RATING</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE (%)</b>
1	1	1
2	1	1
3	26	25.7
4	58	57.4
5	15	14.9

**Figure 4.2.29:** Distribution based on overall rating

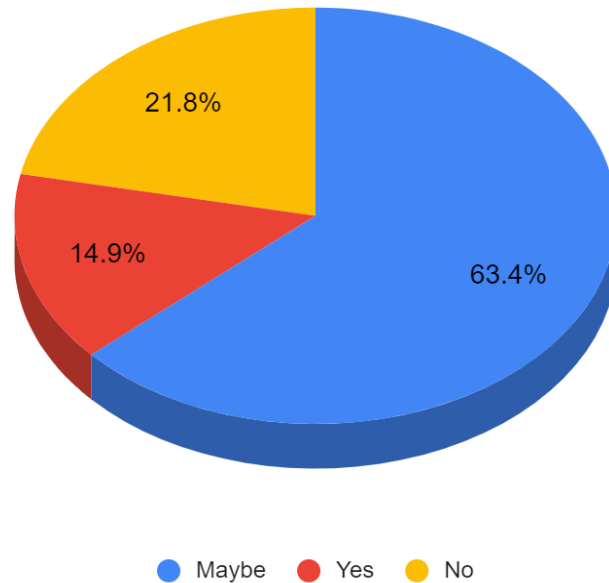


**Interpretation:** The majority of the customers (57.9%) have been provided with an overall rating of 4. A smaller group of 14.9% gave 5 on 5, while 25.7% rated it 3 and the remaining gave 2 and 1 as rating.

**Table 4.2.30:** Frequency distribution based on switching brands.

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Yes	64	63.4
No	22	21.8
May be	15	14.9

**Figure 4.2.30:** Distribution based on degree of switching brands



**Interpretation:** About 63.3% of respondents would switch the brand and 21.8 % are against it while remaining respondents are likely to prefer other brands.

## **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The discussion chapter is where you delve into the meaning, importance and relevance of your results. It should focus on explaining and evaluating what you found, showing how it relates to your literature review and research questions, and making an argument in support of your overall conclusion. The purpose of the discussion is to interpret and describe the significance of your findings in light of what was already known about the research problem being investigated, and to explain any new understanding or fresh insights about the problem after you've taken the findings into consideration. The discussion will always connect to the introduction by way of the research questions or hypotheses you posed and the literature you reviewed, but it does not simply repeat or rearrange the introduction; the discussion should always explain how your study has moved the reader's understanding of the research problem forward from where you left them at the end of the introduction. This section is often considered the most important part of a research paper because it most effectively demonstrates your ability as a researcher to think critically about an issue, to develop creative solutions to problems based on the findings, and to formulate a deeper, more profound understanding of the research problem you are studying. The discussion section is where you explore the underlying meaning of your research, its possible implications in other areas of study, and the possible improvements that can be made in order to further develop the concerns of your research. This part of the paper is not strictly governed by objective reporting of information but, rather, it is where you can engage in creative thinking about issues through evidence-based interpretation of findings. This is where you infuse your results with meaning. When you discuss the study results, you relate your study findings to previous studies; you contextualize the contribution of your study. As for having them as sections in a research paper, that depends on what a researcher wants to communicate. Some researchers would present study results first before discussing the study findings. This strategy allows a researcher to focus on presenting the study results only in conjunction with the research questions and/or objectives. Other researchers would prefer to combine presentation of study results with discussion given that both are closely connected.

## **5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

The study is based on the impact of customer buying behavior with special emphasis on Wildcraft Exclusive Store in apparel and accessories industry. The major findings of the study are:

- The respondents who participated in the survey are equally male and female, that is, 49.5% are male and 50.5 % are female.
- Here the study reveals that the majority of the respondents belong to the age group 20 – 30 that is 92.1%, and the rest include 5% below 20 years, 2% between 30-40 and 1% above 40 years.
- The study shows that the majority of customers are highly qualified since 57.4% have graduated and 37.6% have post graduation. Only 5% of respondents have higher secondary education.
- The major product category purchased by the respondents is Travel Cases and Backpacks which accounts to 70.3%. The category of Footwear comprises 11.9% while Clothing 10.9%, and Other accessories include 6.9%.
- The majority of the respondents that is 91.1% purchase very occasionally depending upon seasons or offers. Apart from that, 6.9% purchases quarterly and 2% purchases monthly.
- A majority of the customers consider quality while making a purchase decision. Here, 32.7% respondents consider quality always, while 30.7% of them consider it very often. Similarly about 29.7% of the samples considers durability to be an important factor for purchase always while 24.8% considers it very often. Remaining samples hardly consider it.
- About 27.7% of people consider price an important factor while 40.6% consider it often. Moreover, 17.8% consider it very often and the remaining hardly consider it. Majority of samples say, 30.7% and 22.8% consider variety as an important factor for purchase. The remaining samples do not value it much.



- More than half of the respondents 54.5% have expressed that they would surely recommend Wildcraft to others, while 39.6% of the respondents are not pretty sure that they would and the remaining 5.9% will never recommend the brand for others.
- About 48.5% of the respondents consider Quality as an extremely important attribute in collecting information regarding the product. A major part of the population, 57.4%, considers durability as a very important attribute while 37.4% consider it extremely important.
- Approximately, 50% of the respondents consider comfort of the products as an extremely important attribute, 40% consider it very important. More than 75% of the respondents consider Economical affordability as significantly important.
- A quarter of the respondents consider affordability as an extremely important attribute, 52.5% consider it very important. A quarter of the samples consider Color & Design as an extremely important attribute, while almost half of them say that it is very important. Approximately 21.7% of the respondents consider reusability of the product as an extremely important factor.
- Approximately 21.7% of the respondents consider ease of use of the product as an extremely important factor while nearly 50% of the respondents consider it very important, 23% as somewhat important and the remaining ones as not very important.
- A big circle of respondents consider the finish of the product as very important, say about 31.6 % said it extremely important and 48.5% as very important.
- Only 4.9% of the respondents are completely satisfied with the price of the brand, about 44.5% said it is very good while 41.5% rated it average.
- Advertisement (32.7%) and Friends & family (33.7%) form the major source of influence to purchase Wildcraft products. Also, 19.8% responded that shop displays influenced them to make purchase decisions. The next 3% said that the reference groups influenced them, and the rest 10.9% depend on other factors.
- A large majority of respondents (49.5% and 33.7%) completely agree that brand value influences customer decision. A smaller part, say, 14.9% neutrally reacted to the statement and the remaining 2% disagreed.

- A majority of the respondents say, 66.3% and 15.6, express higher levels of satisfaction. Only a small category of people are dissatisfied.
- The majority of the customers(57.9%) have been provided with an overall rating of 4. A smaller group of 14.9% gave 5 on 5, while 25.7% rated it 3 and the remaining gave 2 and 1 as rating.
- 63.3% of respondents would switch the brand and 21.8 % are against it while remaining respondents are likely to prefer other brands.

## **5.2 SUGGESTIONS**

Here are some useful suggestions for Wildcraft that helps them to improve the sales by gaining customer attention and motivating

- Sales promotion activities are to be initiated and carried on throughout the year as it can attract more customers. It is necessary since the study points out that the majority of customers purchase products occasionally when there are offers and discounts.
- Brand value is an important factor that influences customer decision. Therefore, it is essential for Wildcraft to showcase the brand image by adopting extensive marketing and promotional activities for enhancing brand awareness.
- The major factors that influence the customers include advertisements, recommendation from family and friends. Therefore, it is very important to maintain high standards in advertisements and customer assistance.
- Customers do come unplanned and their purchase decision depends upon product category, attractive displays and customer assistance.
- Customers tend to visit the store during evening and also during holidays and festive occasions, so employees should stay active during this time to gain sales.
- Since the competitors' stores lie closer, customers would compare the price, quality and variety in products. In the study, it is found that a major group of respondents consider all these factors while making a decision. So it is mandatory for the store to have something that holds the brand over the others.

- Even though customers exhibit a sense of satisfaction, the probability that they would switch the brand for various reasons depending upon the products from competitors is quite high. So it is necessary for the brand to offer high quality and variety of products at reasonable prices and thus satisfy the customers.

### **5.3 LIMITATIONS**

- Restricted time period available for the study.
- Collection of data while the customers are visiting the store for purchase was difficult.
- Lack of interest in answering questions due to a busy schedule of customers.
- Primary data collection from sample respondents are subjecting to normal errors due to natural bias on the reporting data
- The tools used for this analysis are subject to its limitations.
- The study is confined to areas under Cochin only.
- The study was purely confined to 101 samples confined to a single store. May not be applicable to entire customers.

## **5.4 CONCLUSION**

Wildcraft is an Indian apparel and accessories retail brand known and experienced by a huge customer base. The project entitled 'A study on customer satisfaction towards Wildcraft brand with reference to Cochin' is the research topic and the 101 customers of Wildcraft store in Lulu International Shopping Mall are taken as sample. In this study an attempt was made to provide an idea about the way on which the decision can be taken to plan to provide utmost satisfaction to the customers during the decision making. The objective of the study was to understand the level of customer satisfaction with special emphasis on Wildcraft in the apparel and accessories retail industry.

Wildcraft India is the world's first and today it is the largest tropical outfitter. The brainchild of intrepid explorers, Wildcraft is a brand born for the open air. Whether it is a hill or a mountain, the forest or the countryside, the great outdoors can invigorate one like no other and Wildcraft equips with the means to explore it.

A head- to- toe outfitter, the company's product portfolio includes jackets, shoes, rucksacks, sleeping bags, tents and travel accessories for trekking, camping and other outdoor pursuits. With a team of passionate individuals at the helm, the brand is now making purposeful strides towards what it was always meant to do - enable a billion people to embrace the uncertain and equip them to step out with confidence and take the road less taken

In the retail sector the competition is very tough as that of other sectors, day by day the level of knowledge, expectations, perceptions and needs of customers are changing. So the brand should be able to satisfy the customers in every way that it builds a higher loyal customer base. Now the trend also changes from low-cost products to quality products and also, they are okay with switching costs if they are going to be treated well by providing expertise services.

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- Wildcraft Overview - <https://craft.co/wildcraft>

## 6.2 QUESTIONNAIRE

I, Akhila V J, pursuing MBA in Naipunnaya Business School, am conducting a market research on the topic “A STUDY ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOR TOWARDS WILDCRAFT BRAND WITH REFERENCE TO COCHIN”. The information collected will be used only for academic purposes. I request you to kindly spend a few minutes of your time to fill out this questionnaire which forms a comprehensive part of my research. Your response holds a great significance in the successful completion of my study. This is purely for academic purposes and I assure you that confidentiality of your responses will be respected.

1. Name :

2. Gender :

- Male
- Female
- Others

3. Age :

- Below 20
- 20-30
- 30-40
- Above 40

4. Educational Qualification

- Post graduation
- Graduation
- Higher secondary
- Xth grade
- Less than Xth grade

5. What category of products do you purchase from the Wildcraft brand?

- Footwear
- Clothing
- Travel Cases & backpacks
- Other Accessories

6. How often do you purchase?

- Monthly
- Quarterly
- Seasonally/ during offers in occasion

7. Rate your degree of consideration of these factors during purchase decisions.

Factors	Never	Rarely	Often	Very Often	Always
Quality					
Durability					
Price					
Variety					

8. Rate the level of importance given to the different attributes considered while selecting Wildcraft products.

Factors	Extremely important	Very important	Important	Less Important	Not important
Quality					
Durability					



Comfort					
Affordability					
Waterproof & washable					
Light weight					
Color & Design Finishing					

9. How would you rate the Wildcraft brand on the basis of following parameters?

PARAMETER	Very Poor	Poor	Average	Very Good	Excellent
Quality					
Design					
Comfort					
Packing					
Advertisement					

10. What influenced you to purchase Wildcraft brand products?

- Advertisement
- Shop display
- Friends & Family

Reference groups

Others

11. Does brand value influence customer behavior ?

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Strongly disagree

Disagree

12. Rate the following statements with respect to the Wildcraft brand.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I like this brand more than other brands in the same product category					
I prefer this brand over another brands in the same product category					

13. Do you recommend Wildcraft products to others?

- Yes
- No
- Sometimes

14. How was your overall experience with the Wildcraft brand?

- Excellent
- Good
- Average
- Bad
- Worst

15. Overall rating of the brand Wildcraft ? (5 being the highest and 1 lowest)

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

16. Would you like to switch to another brand?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe