

A Study of How Clothing Stores Response to Customer Complaints Affects Future Purchase Intension

Kun Hui Park and Choon-Sup Hwang

Dept. of Clothing and Textiles, Kyung Hee University, Seoul, Korea

I. Purpose

An investigation of the relationship between satisfaction level and future purchase intention, viewed according to types of clothing stores, will provide data on the quality of customer management after sales. This study compares customer service levels in clothing stores based on consumer satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and consumer complaint behavior. Furthermore, the study investigates the relationship between future purchase intention and consumer satisfaction with the response of clothing stores to complaints.

II. Method

The study was implemented through a normative-descriptive survey using self-administered questionnaires. The samples consisted of 509 female consumers residing in Seoul and its suburbs. Data were analyzed by following statistical methods: frequency analysis, χ^2 -test, *t*-test, ANOVA, MANOVA, regression analysis, and Duncan's multiple range test.

III. Results

1. Four factors were found in customer service categories of clothing stores: post-sales service, purchasing environment, store facilities, and product factor. Department stores had the highest consumer satisfaction in the following three factors: post-sales service, purchasing environment, and of store facilities. Though a large fashion shopping malls won out in the area of the product factor, they received the lowest points on the post-sales service and purchasing environment factors.

2. Differences were found in the degree of consumers' satisfaction with the customer services of clothing stores according to the age, marital status, and occupation of consumers.

3. When the consumers were not satisfied with the products, there were differences in their complaint behavior according to the types of stores, and according to the consumers' age and or occupation.

In the case of department stores, women who have occupations outside the home complain most often in an indirect way such as not going to the same stores any more, or complaining to others. In the case of large shopping malls, housewives complain most often in a direct way such as reporting to consumer protection agencies. In the case of agency, the age of 50's and college students complain more often in an indirect way than in a direct way. Among those who use speciality store, the twenties' age group complains most often in an indirect way.

4. In general, consumers complained in a direct way more often when they have complaints of product itself. On the other hand, they complained in an indirect way more often when they have complaints of post-sales service. The study also found that when they were not satisfied with purchasing environment and store facilities, they do not usually complain in any way.

5. A significant relationship between the degree of satisfaction with service recovery and future purchase intention was found in all types of clothing stores.

When consumers are fully satisfied with the way that a service failure was recovered, the future purchase intention increases more than when the customer was satisfied with the service given at first.

IV. Conclusion and Implications

Considering the results mentioned above, marketing strategies that will encourage consumers to voice their complaints should be enacted as well as strategies to recover service failures. And the marketing strategies should consider the different level of consumers' satisfaction with customer services according to the types of clothing store types. Marketers also must extend an effort to enhance the level of satisfaction with service recovery for their customers .

References

- Bae, Young Sang (1987). "A Study on Consumer Complaining Behavior and Corporate Response." Master's thesis, Seoul National University.
- Bang, Ki Suk (2001). "A Study on the Customer Responses of Company-Complaint- Handling." Master's thesis, Hanyang University.
- Day, Ralph L., Klaus Grabicke, Thomas Schaeztle and Fritz Staubach (1981). "The hidden agenda of consumer complaining." *Journal of Retailing* 57(3).
- Gang, Jeong Goo (1997). "A Study on Consumer Responses to Dissatisfaction - Focusing on the Moderating Role of Involvement." Master's thesis, Seoul National University.
- Hwang, Sun Jin, Gyung Soon Hwang and Jong Nam Lee (2000). "The Effect of Service Quality on Consumer Satisfaction of Fashion Retail Stores." *Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles* 24(3).
- Kelley, Scott W., K. Douglas Hoffman and Mark A. Davis (1993) "A Typology of Retail Failures and Recoveries." *Journal of Retailing* 69(4).
- Kim, Sung Hee and Seon Jae Lee (1999). "The Complaining Behavior Process after Purchase

- of the Women's Wear." *Journal of Costume* 42.
- Lim, Ki- Suk (1999). "A Study on the Customer Responses of Complaint Handling." Master's thesis, Seoul National University.
- Ryu, Mi Hyun (1997). "The Consumer Complaining Behavior according to Consumer Problems and Dissatisfaction." *Doctoral Dissertation, Konkuk University.*
- Resnik, Alan, and Robert Harmon (1983). "Consumer Complaints and Managerial Response : A Holistic Approach." *Journal of Marketing* 47(1).