

INSIGHTS INTO CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE IN SPORTS RETAIL STORE IN REFERENCE TO DECATHLON

Project Report

Submitted by

JISA MONCY (Reg. No. SB20BMS012)

Under the guidance of

Ms. Megha Mary Michael

In partial fulfilment of the requirements for award of the degree of

Bachelor of Management Studies (International Business)



ST. TERESA'S COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), ERNAKULAM

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the project report entitled, “Insights into customer experience in sports retail store in reference to Decathlon”, has been successfully submitted by Ms. Jisa Moncy, Register No.SB20BMS012, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Bachelor of Management Studies in International Business during the academic years 2020-2023.

Date: 19.04.23



Ms. MEGHA MARY MICHAEL
INTERNAL FACULTY GUIDE

Valuel

19/04/23

DECLARATION

I, Jisa Money, Reg. No.SB20BMS012, hereby declare that this project work entitled “Insights into customer experience in sport retail store in reference to decathlon” is my original work. I further declare that this report is based on the information collected by me and has not previously been submitted to any other university or academic body.

Date: 19.04.23


Jisa Money

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to place on project report my debt of gratitude to those who helped me in the preparation of this project.

I thank Dr. Alphonsa Vijaya Joseph, Principal and Dr. Sr. Vineetha, Provincial superior and manager, St. Teresa's College, Ernakulam for permitting me to take up this opportunity of doing an in-depth study on the Customer experience in sport retail store.

I take this opportunity to express my deep sense of gratitude and whole hearted thanks to Dr. Megha Mary Michael, who is also the head of the Department of Management Studies for guiding me in all stages of this project, without whom the project would have been a distant reality.

Last but not the least, I extend my heartfelt thanks to my family and friends for their valuable and proficient guidance and enormous support bestowed during the tenure of this extension.

Jisa Moncy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The researcher is presenting to you the report on 'Instore customer experience in sport retail store in reference to decathlon' conducted among people in Kerala between the age group of 15 to 40 years who have visited or purchased from decathlon at least once.

The project aims to analyse the customer experience in sport retail store, specifically decathlon. Decathlon is a popular sport retail store chain that offers a wide range of sporting goods at affordable prices. The study uses a mixed method approach to collect data from both primary and secondary sources. The secondary data was collected through literature review of existing research on customer experience and retail store management.

The findings suggest that decathlon's customer experience is generally positive, with customers satisfied with the product range, store layout and price competitiveness. However, there is a room for improvement in customer service especially in areas such as staff knowledge and assistance.

Based on these findings, recommendations are made to enhance the customer experience in decathlon stores. These include training staff to provide better customer service, improving in store signage and displays and offering personalised service to customers.

Overall, this study provides valuable insights into customer experience in a sport retail store and offers practical recommendations for improving customer satisfaction and loyalty.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

A sports industry is developing one of the biggest in the world. More & more people are participating in sport & recreational activities throughout a wide spectrum of activities. Indian sports goods retail industry has grown significantly over the years. Technology, coupled with few government initiatives, leading to cost-effective production techniques, would be the prerequisites for this highly evolving industry.

The Indian sports goods retailing sector is becoming intensely competitive as more and more players are vying for the same set of customers and is witnessing a radical transformation. The increase in the number of retailers across the country indicates that sports industry will boom in a big way in the near future. The new entrant in retailing in India signifies the beginning of retail revolution. Retailing of Sports Goods Market in India is growing due to the rise in per capita income, changing lifestyle, and consumer preferences. India has been a manufacturing hub for various sports products and brands sourcing which has tremendously increased.

They have become a considerable line of business. An excellent example is the athleisure trend (the overall athleisure category is growing at a rate of 20% to 25% annually in India) Clothing designed for workouts and other athletic activities is worn in different settings, such as at the workplace, at school or at other casual or social occasions.

Trends like this and the uniqueness of sports products and sports customers require appropriate sports retail settings to increase customer satisfaction and loyalty. In other words, the context of sport and retailing is faced with several peculiarities distinguishing it from other lines of business, these peculiarities have to be taken into consideration when creating a positive customer experience in a sports retail store.

Many sports brands use online and offline channels as complementary strategies and an increasing fraction of customers shop both online and offline. Nevertheless, there is no denying that online business in contrast to offline business has been increasing every year also in the sports industry but retailers with offline stores have begun to realise that they have a physical advantage over pure online players and that it is important to utilise this chance. In particular, an offline channel may complement an online channel in terms of service quality – that is, by highlighting the possibility of a rich, multisensory brand experience and the salespeople's ability to improve the service experience. For customers in India, the main reasons for not

shopping online are the chance to see the product before purchasing it and to get support from salespeople in case of lacking skills and knowledge. All these aspects highlight the importance of satisfaction.

Sport retail stores are an essential part of sport industry serving as a vital link between sport equipment manufactures and sport enthusiasts. Decathlon is a well-known global sports retail store that offers an extensive range of sports equipment, apparel and accessories at affordable prices. The company's commitment to provide quality products and excellent customer service has earned them a significant market share in the sports retail industry. However, with the increasing competition in the sports retail sector, it is essential for decathlon to understand its customers experiences in their stores. This study aims to explore insights into customer experience in Decathlon retail store.

1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

There are more and more sports stores coming up in India and is showing a rapid rise in the business. As a sports MNC company, Decathlon has a place in every sports person which enables the business to sustain. Researcher aims to understand the factors that influence customer perception in Decathlon.

1.3 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.3.1 Peculiarities of sports industry

The sports retail industry is highly competitive, with numerous players offering a wide range of products and services. To stand out in such an industry, companies must provide exceptional customer experiences that differentiate them from their competitors. A study by Heung, Kucukusta, and Song(2016) on the impact of customer experience on customer satisfaction and loyalty found that providing a positive customer experience significantly increases customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Moreover, customer engagement and personalised services play a significant role in enhancing the customer experience. As per a study by Kim, Lee, Kim (2016), personalised services, such as customised recommendations and personalised assistance, improved customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Sport has an ambiguous history when viewed from a management perspective. As Stewart and Smith (1999) as well as Smith and Stewart (2010) noted, there are traditionally two contrasting philosophical approaches to the management of sport: One stream sees sport as a unique cultural institution with a host of special features, wherein the reflexive application of standard business practices not only produce poor management decision-making but also erode the rich history, emotional connections and social relevance of sport. The other stream views sport as nothing more than just another generic business enterprise that is subject to the usual government regulations, market pressure and customers demand and is therefore best managed by the application of standard business tools that assist the planning, finance, human resource management and marketing functions. Over time, these divisions have been blurred due to the corporatisation of sport and through the emergence of sports management as an academic discipline. In fact, there are distinct and special features, which make sport a unique business institution (Gammelsaeter, 2020; Hess et al., 2008; Smith and Stewart, 2010). Likewise, as Szymanski (2009) underlined in his research, sports management and sports marketing are unique and differ from other business branches. Given the peculiarities sport offers, it is natural that (1) sports products, (2) customers of sporting goods and (3) sports customer experience shows distinct features, too. Sports scholars and educators highlight the intrinsic characteristics of sports products and link them to the uncertainty of outcomes, fluctuations in supply and demand, the intangibility and inconsistent nature of sport, reliance on product extensions, sports customers' increasing knowledge and the manner in which sport is consumed in the presence of others (Shilbury et al., 2014).

In contrast to a classic hedonic shopper, for whom the shopping process is driven by fun, spontaneity and impulsivity, a sport shopper as understood by Chiu and Leng (2015) and O'Donnell et al. (2016) has task-oriented, ego-oriented and social approval-oriented goals and thus can be assigned the attributes highly focused, task-driven and rational (Chiu and Leng, 2015; Gammelsaeter, 2020); in that case, shopping itself is not necessarily/exclusively a IJMS 22,2 314 recreational or leisure activity but a kind of sport (O'Donnell et al., 2016). We take these attributes into account; however, in this paper, we use the terms "sports shoppers" and "sports customers" synonymously, namely, for clients of sports retail stores, who purchase all kinds of sports-related goods, including sports hardware (e.g. equipment) and sports software (e.g. apparel). Their in-store experience is in the focus of this contribution. Referring to sports customer experience, a growing number of sports management and sports marketing researchers have recognised the importance of service quality. Enhancing the holistic customer

experience is one of the most important issues among both goods manufacturers and retail stores (Yoshida et al., 2013). Furthermore, Kwak et al. (2011) confirmed that sport provides a unique opportunity to explore how emotions operate in people (Knobloch Wester wick et al., 2009). Undoubtedly, strong emotional responses (e.g. suspense, arousal, excitement) are central to the sport consumption experience, for spectators (e.g. Knobloch Wester wick et al., 2009; Madrigal and Chen, 2008) as well as for participants (e.g. Zuckerman, 2007). Funk (2017) introduced the Sport Experience Design (SX) framework, which consists of three interrelated elements: (1) the sport context, in which a sports customer navigates through an experience and interacts with touch points, (2) the sports user with mental processes, psychological needs and personal characteristics and (3) the sports organisation, which produces the sport experience to achieve organisational goals. Scattered research on the sports industry in particular has been done (e.g. Liu, 2016; Lohman et al., 2004). Nevertheless, two main gaps remain. First, the aforementioned studies focused on sports events and/or sports participants and disregarded sports retail customers and their experience; and second, there is a lack of studies replicated from other disciplines and extended to fit a sport context (Funk, 2017). Finally, the assumption that sport has unique characteristics (Funk, 2006) could result in the fact that ISCX in sports retail stores differs from ISCX and CX in other retail branches.

1.4 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study is being conducted among people all over Kerala who has experienced Decathlon. The researcher aims to collect data from 100+ participants to get a better idea on instore shopping experience and customer satisfaction in Decathlon.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Benefits of the study:

The research will help the brand to create an idea where they have to improve their satisfaction level.

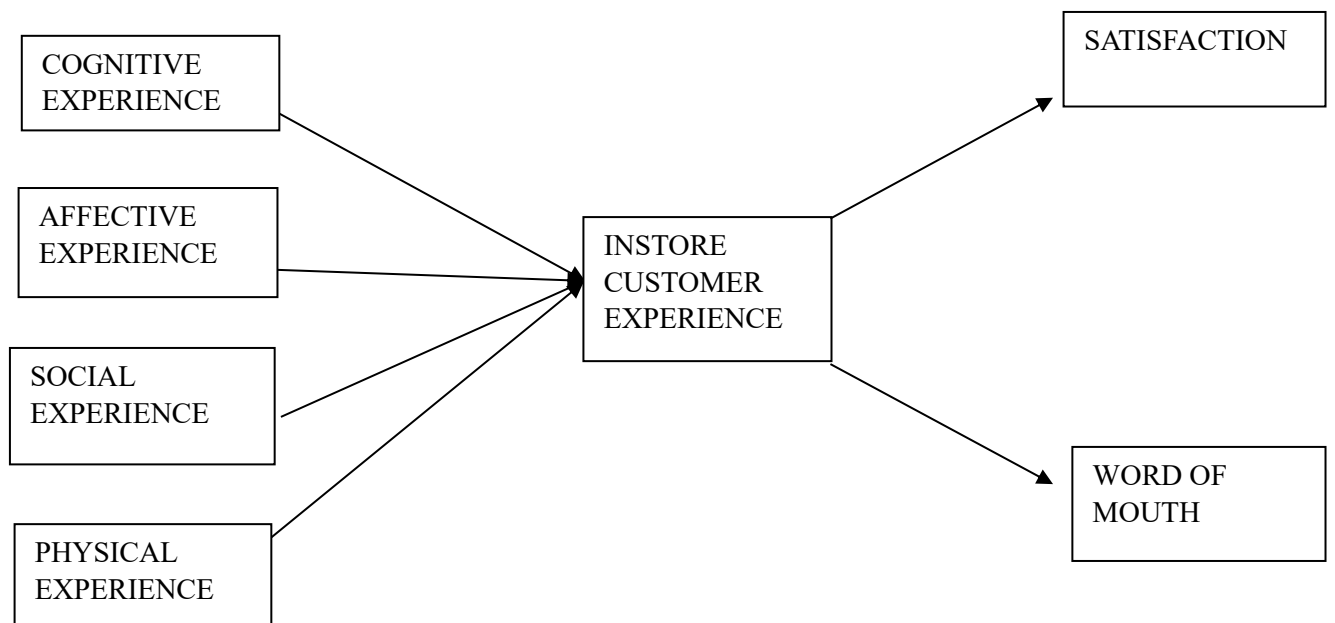
Also, it will help Decathlon to measure the service quality provided that has been provided to the customers on a general basis.

1.6 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the study are:

- a) Understand the customer expectation and its impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty.
- b) To review customer instore shopping experience in Decathlon.
- c) To understand the factors the customers, have on the brand Decathlon.
- d) To understand various factors influencing customers to purchase at decathlon.

1.7 CONCEPTUAL MODEL



1.8 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Hypothesis 1 - In sports retail stores, a positive instore shopping customer experience is positively related to customers satisfaction with the store.

Hypothesis 2 - In sports retail stores, a positive instore shopping customer experience is positively related to customers likeliness to recommend the store to a friend or colleague.

Hypothesis 3 – In sports retail store, a pleasant experience or satisfaction from the supplier is positively related to instore shopping experience and regular visit of the customer.

1.9 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.9.1 Population

Population is the collection of the elements which has some or the other characteristics in common. The number of elements in the population is the size of the population. In this survey, the population comprises all the people who have experienced Decathlon in between the age group of 15-40 years.

1.9.2 Sample size

The sample for the research is confined to people between 15-40 years old in Kerala. Keeping in view the limitation of time and resources, the sample size taken is 116 respondents. Questionnaires were distributed through social media platforms like WhatsApp and Instagram to the respondents and enough time was given to the respondents to fill the questionnaire to reduce sampling error within Kerala.

1.9.3 Sampling techniques

There are mainly two types of sampling, probability sampling and non-probability sampling. The sampling that I used here is cluster sampling which comes under non-probability sampling. This study focuses on the group of people in Kerala who has experienced Decathlon at least once as it is hard to reach out to people all around India.

1.9.4 Tools used for data collection

The questionnaire is carefully designed to meet the requirements of the research. The questionnaire focuses on two parts. The first part is the demographic aspects of the respondents and the second part focuses on the insights of customer perception in offline shopping at decathlon.

To understand the customer perceptions, most of the questions in the second part were provided to be ranked between a scale of strongly agree to strongly disagree.

1.9.5 Data analysis technique

The entire data has been analysed using SPSS software. The tools used for analysis in SPSS software for this research is

- i. Chi-square analysis

1.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- It was difficult to reach out to such a large sample size.
- Getting the respondents to trust the researcher and get them to answer the questionnaire was quite challenging.
- There are higher chances of inaccuracy as respondents may not have answered honestly due to less patience or being busy
- It was difficult to get people around 30 to 40 years to answer the questionnaire as they were not willing to spend much time in front of phone.

CHAPTER 2

INDUSTRY AND COMPANY PROFILE

2.1 Retail industry

Retailing refers to a group of related operations that entail offering consumer goods and services to end users directly for their own or domestic use. Along with selling, retailing also involves a variety of other tasks like purchasing, advertising, data processing, and inventory maintenance. Retail's definition and etymology are discussed in this article. Recognize what the retail sector is, what makes up its components, and what part it plays in any country's economy. Retailing refers to a group of related operations that entail offering consumer goods and services to end users directly for their own or domestic use. Along with selling, retailing also involves a variety of other tasks like purchasing, advertising, data processing, and inventory maintenance.

According to Philip Kotler, "Retailing includes all the activities involved in selling goods or services to the final consumers for personal and non-business use".

A retailer or retail store is any business enterprise whose sales volume comes primarily from retailing. Retail comes from the old French word *tailer* which means to cut off, divide in terms of tailoring. Retail is how producers of goods and services get their products to the consumer. Retailers often get their goods directly from the manufacturer. That is when the commodity becomes a finished product.

2.1.1 Indian retail industry

The magnificent Indian retail tale that elevated the country to the position of second-largest retail market worldwide now appears to be making a U-turn. Experts believed that the estimated Rs. 2,500 crore Indian retail industry would be the only one to survive the economic downturn, but it is also exhibiting signs of contracting sales and stagnant growth rates. India has one of the greatest per capita numbers of retail shops in the world with 12 lakhs.

Retailers like Reliance Fresh closed about 25 underperforming locations in the first half of 2009, Foodland Fresh of the Radhakrishna Group closed 39 of its 42 locations, and Vishal Retail closed all of its daily and express format stores in addition to two Vishal Mega Marts, one in Mumbai and the other in Delhi.

Spinach and Aditya Birla Retail, both of the Wadhawan Group, have drastically reduced their operations. Happy smiles quickly transformed into uneasy grins when the retail industry's

growth in the third quarter of 2008 dropped to about 12% from 35% in the third quarter of the previous fiscal year.

One of the Indian economy's fastest-growing sectors in recent years has been modern retail. Retailing comes after agriculture. The modern retail sector in India is around 4.6 per cent of the wider retail market, compared to 20 and 38 per cent in China and Brazil, respectively.

India has some 12 million retail establishments, but many of them serve as little more than bare necessities for their owners, surviving on a cost structure where labour and land are taken for granted and taxes are non-existent. Contrast this with the global retail sector, one of the greatest organised employers in the world, a leader in technological advancement, and a provider of value-added services to consumers.

However, this industry has only recently begun to awaken as more organised shops begin to make their presence felt. The retail industry's structure and behaviour have started to be affected by the liberalisation of the consumer goods sector, which started in the middle of the 1980s and intensified during the 1990s. Retailing in India presents a huge opportunity for a variety of businesses, including real estate, store design and operations, visual merchandising logistics and communications, B2C service providers, and FMCG companies who can enhance their offerings by partnering with this revolution, which is supported by changing consumer trends and metrics, liberalisation in mindsets driven by media, new opportunities, and increasing wealth.

The Indian Retailing Industry is one of the fastest growing sectors in the nation that caters to the world's second largest consumer market.

2.1.2 Retail trends

The retail industry is constantly evolving, and businesses must keep up with the latest trend in consumer needs to stay ahead of the competition. By understanding these trends and taking advantage of them, businesses can stay ahead of the curve and keep their customers happy.

i. Consumer Spending

Retail industry operators must engage in multiple forms of competition in an environment where competition is escalating. Consumers today demand excellent customer service and a seamless buying journey. This is confirmed by the increase in omnichannel retailing.

The advantages of conventional purchasing practises and the practicality of employing contemporary technologies are sought after by consumers. Customers may now shop online using their smartphones or tablets. They might also be at a physical store on the high street.

ii. Market Intelligence

To guarantee that you have access to the thorough retail analysis and insights you need to keep your business competitive

iii. Loyalty programmes

Customer loyalty programmes are becoming more and more well-liked because of the numerous ways in which they can increase sales.

These may contribute to higher client retention rates and repeat business from customers. Additionally, they can persuade customers to spend more on each transaction, and they can assist you in bringing in new clients by spreading the word and getting recommendations.

Customer loyalty programmes can provide you with useful information on the preferences and purchasing behaviours of your clients, allowing you to customise your marketing and sales campaigns for optimal impact.

iv. Sustainability

Customers are demanding greater transparency from businesses and pushing merchants to be more environmentally and socially responsible as they become more conscious of the effects that their purchases have on the world.

Also, retailers can now afford sustainability. Sustainable technology and materials are getting cheaper, which makes it more feasible for companies to use them in their goods. Parallel to this, sustainable practises are spreading throughout society as more companies adopt them in an effort to lessen their environmental effect.

2.1.3 Types of Retail Marketing

i. Store Retailing

- ii. Specialty Stores
- iii. Departmental Store
- iv. Supermarket
- v. Convenience Stores
- vi. Off - Price Retailer
- vii. Discount Store
- viii. Catalogue Showroom

2.1.4 Major players in India in the Retail Industry

Reliance retail

Trent

Adithya Birla retail

Future group

Titan

Shoppers stop

Raymond group

Godrej consumers product limited

Avenue supermarkets

2.1.5 Sports goods retail

Sports retail in India is tiny but rapidly expanding subset of contemporary retail. This industry has seen growth recently as a result of the nation hosting numerous international sporting events. Corporate merchants from both outside and at home have flooded the sports retail market. The Foreign Trade Policy (2009-2014) places a priority on the manufacturing of sports items, and the government is now reviewing its present retail foreign direct investment strategy.

Indians are now increasingly realising the importance of health and fitness. The reasons for this are changes in lifestyles, the multi-national work culture, changing work patterns (for example, nightshifts in BPOs (Business Processing Outsourcing)), workplace stress, changed eating habits and lifestyle-related diseases like backaches. This is forcing the younger generation to take up some form of fitness activity and the number of gymnasiums, yoga centres, and aerobics centres is growing. The fitness equipment industry has witnessed significant growth.

Sports retailers are operating through various formats. Franchisee is the most common mode of operation for brand retailers as it helps them to increase their retail footprint. Corporate retailers operate simultaneously through exclusive brand outlets, shop-in-shop with department stores/multi-brand retailers, factory outlets, and discount stores.

Since India does not have any strong domestic brands, foreign brands are doing well and have been able to expand their presence at a rapid pace. In spite of the presence and rapid expansion of foreign brands, the Indian market is not saturated in terms of brand presence. Indian manufacturers work for a large number of global brands but all those brands are not available in India. The organisations with proven sports distribution capabilities, well-known franchisers, and established Indian business houses are the ideal partners for overseas merchants and brands.

2.2 Company profile

There are several companies that play a major role in the sports retail industry. Decathlon is one among the companies which play an important role in the Indian sports industry. Decathlon has penetrated into the Indian market way faster than expected. It was accepted by all Indians as it provides the lowest price best products to the customers.

DECATHLON

Decathlon, a French-based company, who thoroughly dominates the market worldwide, has seen a steady growth in India. In recent times in India, the sporting industry has seen a drastic shift in terms of being a one sports nation to a multi-sport viewing nation. The upsurge in participation and engagement has led brands to ply their trade in several parts of the country and grow their business in sheer rapidity. India is the 7th largest economy in the world. Sports as a business is going through a massive cycle of change, which is headed towards a positive path. The nascent industry which is blooming at a steady rate has led to a great amount of growth in terms of education, health accompanied by fitness and most importantly, employment.

Decathlon first established their franchise back in 2009 in Bengaluru. It was the first entity to incorporate a big-format niche retail chain in India. They soon expanded their stores in Mumbai, Hyderabad, and Chandigarh which had a great response. It took Decathlon no time to break even in India. Recently, Decathlon plan to invest a roaring 700 Crores INR to expand its business in India. Decathlon sports India CEO Jeff said in an interview, "India is a priority country. We dream to open 100 stores in India in five years." Also, the company sees India as a key market to expand their business as they termed India to be their top global market in terms of stores. Generally, Decathlon stores are huge- sprawling over at least 4000 square feet. In comparison, the other sports goods shops are tiny in size. Not only has Decathlon opened career opportunities for the sports enthusiasts in the country, but it has also helped to shape a sporting ecosystem in the country. Decathlon as an organization emphasizes product quality and they have 20 brands which cover 70 sports. The cost of the products is quite economical as well. In India, people are starved for entertainment beyond movies, restaurants, and malls. Decathlon has the potential to provide weekend entertainment alternatives as they offer to practice indoor sports in their enormous showrooms.

Values

Decathlon has a dedicated team for Research and Development of sporting equipment and goods. With a dedicated product development and design team, they undergo various models of tests and develop the latest innovative designs, registering up to 40 patents per year. Each brand represents a different sport or group of sports. Decathlon's main mission is to make sport accessible to every person in the world as they believe, the sport has the power to change the globe. As a company, they anticipate to help, inspire and guide through varied sporting experiences.

SWOT ANALYSIS

Decathlon Strengths

1. Stores located throughout the world with 800 stores all over
2. Group is largest sporting goods reseller in domestic market
3. Large variety of sports goods in affordable pricing for all classes of consumers
4. Own private label brands to get high brand recall
5. Strong and innovative marketing since years have created a strong brand retention in the minds of customers

Decathlon Weaknesses

1. Limited global presence as compared to leading global companies
2. E- retailing is gaining importance but still company has limited presence on the same

Decathlon Opportunities

1. Brand building by tie-up with emerging clubs/teams/players
2. Company has opportunity to innovate on technology front to design new products
3. Creating high brand awareness by exploring advertising media tactically

Decathlon Threats

1. High inflation doesn't give opportunity of cost advantage in competitive environment
2. High competition from global and domestic players
3. Threats from other brands who provide goods at lower price

DECATHLON COMPETITORS

There are several brands in the market which are competing for the same set of customers.

Below are the top 3 competitors of Decathlon:

1. Kitbag
2. Early winters
3. JD SPORTS

CHAPTER 3

DATA ANALYSIS AND

INTERPRETATION

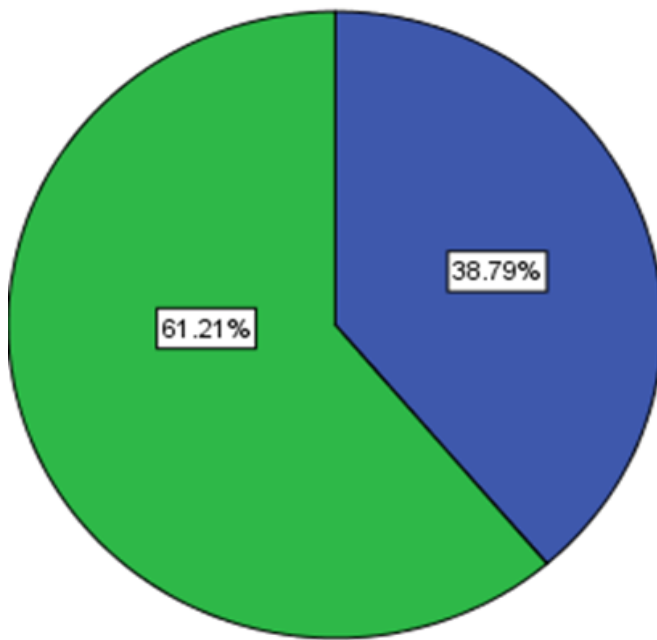
DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

The demographic details of the respondents are given in table 3.1. The study was done among 116 people in Kerala from the age group of 15 to 40. In it about 61.2% of them are women and 38.8% is men. The above 15 age group had 6.0% of people falling under it. The 20-30 age group have 93.1% and above 30 age group had 0.9% respondents respectively. About 72.4% of the respondents were students. 23.3% of employed people, 3.4% of unemployed people and 0.9% belongs to other have actively took part in this survey.

Table 3.1(a) Demographic details of respondents

Demographic characteristics		Number of respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	45	38.8
	Female	71	61.2
Occupation	Student	87	72.4
	Employed	24	23.3
	Unemployed	4	3.4
	Other	1	0.9
Age	Above 15	7	6.0
	20 - 30	108	93.1
	Above 40	1	0.9

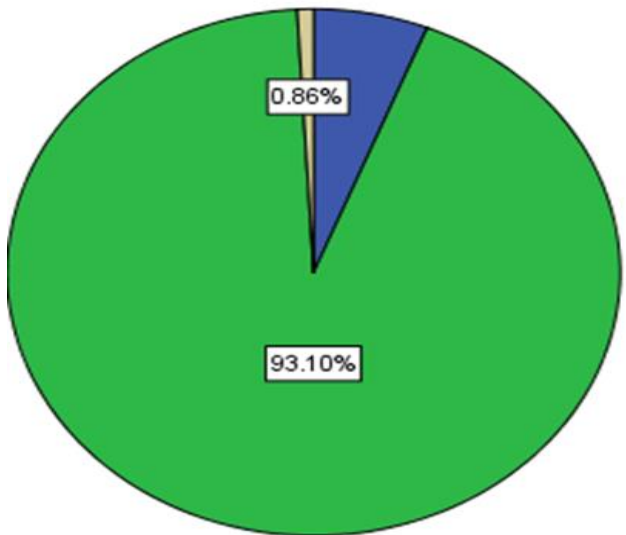
GENDER



MALE – 61.21%

FEMALE – 38.79%

AGE

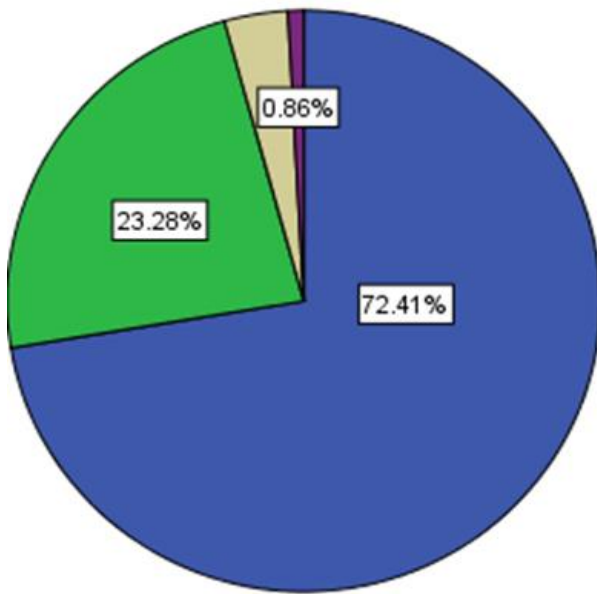


93.10%: 20-30 YEARS

6.04%: ABOVE 15 YEARS

0.86%: ABOVE 40 YEARS

OCCUPATION



STUDENT: 72.41%

EMPLOYED: 23.28%

UNEMPLOYED: 3.45%

OTHER: 0.86%

A positive instore shopping customer experience is positively related to customers satisfaction with the store.

Customer experience have influence on customer satisfaction. Hence the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1. In sports retail stores, a positive instore shopping customer experience is positively related to customers satisfaction with the store.

Chi square test compares the means of two non-parametric variables in order to determine whether there is statistical evidence that the associated population means are significantly associated. Here it is used to verify if an association exists between customer experience and customer satisfaction.

3.2 showing the relationship between customer experience and customer satisfaction

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	34.852 ^a	6	.000
Likelihood Ratio	35.302	6	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	22.163	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	116		

Summary of hypothesis statement

#	Statement	Decision
H1	Instore customer experience is positively related to customer satisfaction within the store	Accepted

This table is made to find the influence of knowing how customer experience affects customer satisfaction inside a store. Here the significance is 0.000. Since the significance is below the accepted rate of 0.05, knowing the customer experience influence customer satisfaction.

H2. In sports retail stores, a positive instore shopping customer experience is positively related to customers likeliness to recommend the store to a friend or colleague

3.3 show the relationship between customer experience and customer likeliness to recommend the store to friends and family

	Value	df	Asymptotic. Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	54.398 ^a	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	55.813	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	44.073	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	116		

Summary of hypothesis statement

#	Statement	Decision
H2	a positive instore shopping customer experience is positively related to customers likeliness to recommend the store to a friend or colleague	Accepted

This table is made to find the influence of knowing how physical customer experience affects socialisation about the store. Here the significance is 0.000. Since the significance is below the accepted rate of 0.05, knowing the customer experience influence customer satisfaction.

H3. In sports retail store, a pleasant experience or satisfaction from the supplier is positively related to instore shopping experience and regular visit of the customer.

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic. Significance (2- sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	70.658 ^a	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	61.870	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	41.839	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	116		

Summary of hypothesis statement

#	Statement	Decision
H3	a pleasant experience or satisfaction from the supplier is positively related to instore shopping experience and regular visit of the customer.	Accepted

This table is made to find how the pleasant experience is related to regular visits of the customer into the store. Here the significance is 0.000. Since the significance is below the accepted rate of 0.05, knowing the customer experience influence customer satisfaction.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND

CONCLUSION

List of findings

- i. Table 3.1 showing the demographic statistics took in the survey, most people visiting decathlon is between the age group of 20-30. The young people are the one who visit decathlon more frequently.
- ii. Employed respondents are the one who is into sports and physical activity is more compared to the people above 30.
- iii. Most people purchase from decathlon not only for physical activity but also leisure purposes as apparels and shoe collections are more in the store.
- iv. Table 3.2 shows relationship that customer experience has in customer satisfaction level. All the physical experience that customer had in decathlon is positive as majority strongly agree that and thus the satisfaction level has also improved.
- v. Customers highly value Decathlon's product quality and affordability. They appreciate the wide range of products available and the brands focus on designing and producing its products.
- vi. The staff's behaviour received mixed reviews with some customers praising their helpfulness and knowledgeability, while others criticised their unfriendliness and unresponsiveness.
- vii. Customers appreciated the personalised services offered by Decathlon such as fitting and testing of products and the provision of product recommendations. Many customers felt that these services enhanced their shopping experience.
- viii. Customers appreciated Decathlon's loyalty program and felt it added value to their shopping experience.

Suggestions

- i. Decathlon should keep the physical experience more and more vibrant and constant to retain the customer as the satisfaction will be high.
- ii. Focus on the young generation will help the brand grow more quicker as the majority of customers are young generation.
- iii. Rewarding system for the constant customers will help in increasing the customers.
- iv. Decathlon can optimise the store layout and product organisation by using clear signage and aisle makers, arranging products in logical and easy to follow sequence and making use of interactive technology to assist customers.
- v. Decathlon can increase staff availability by having more staff members on the shop floor during peak hours and by having a clear system in place for customers to locate staff members when they need assistance.
- vi. Decathlon can continue to expand its product lines to cater to more diverse customer needs and preferences. This can help attract new customers and retain existing ones.
- vii. Decathlon can improve its online presence by investing in a user-friendly and mobile app, providing online shopping and delivery options and leveraging social media to engage with customers and promote products.
- viii. Decathlon can adopt more sustainable practices, such as using eco-friendly materials in its products, reducing waste and minimizing its carbon footprint. This can help attract environmentally conscious customers and enhance the company's reputation.
- ix. Decathlon can foster customer engagement by organising sports events and activities, offering loyalty programs and soliciting feedback from customers to improve its products and services.
- x. Decathlon can invest in staff training and development to ensure that all staff members have the necessary skills and knowledge to provide excellent customer service and product expertise.
- xi. Decathlon can continue to expand its global footprint by entering new markets and opening new stores in countries where it has not yet established a strong presence.

Conclusion

Sports retail is a niche retail segment in which government, federations, manufacturers, sponsors and consumers play an important role. In India, retail of sports products is growing due to an increase in per capita income, increasing health awareness and brand consciousness and the entry of corporate retailers in this segment. India has been a manufacturing hub for sports products and the number of brands sourcing from India has increased after liberalisation. With the growth of the domestic market, some companies that were previously focusing solely on exports are now looking at the domestic market. Global retailers, who are facing a saturated market at home and slowdown in countries like the US, are now looking at growing markets like India and China. India is hosting a number of international sports events, which has created opportunities for sports product retailing.

Customer experience in offline retail stores has been studied but there is still a call for more research in different contexts to develop better knowledge about customer experience. The aims of the current study were to provide deeper insights into the construct of instore customer experience including satisfaction and word of mouth in a sports retail sector. To implement instore experience in the field of sports marketing and to emphasise and discuss the peculiarities of the sports business and sports customers in sports retailing. The results of the study show that instore customer experience has a significant influence on customer satisfaction with the sports retailer and their likeliness to recommend the store to friends. Also, this likeliness was significantly associated with customer satisfaction with the retailer. Notably, social responses to other actors involved in the service encounter for example, the interaction with employees also play a significant role for the instore customers. Sports customers strive not only for the functional benefits inherent in the interaction with customers and employees but also for the social benefits.

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ANNEXURE
QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name
2. Gender
 - Male
 - Female
 - Other
3. Age
 - Above 15
 - 20-30
 - 30-40
 - Above 40
4. Occupation
 - Student
 - Employed
 - Unemployed
 - Other
5. Level of physical activity (monthly)
 - <2
 - 2-4
 - 4-6
 - 6-10
 - >10
6. Favourite sport retailer
 - General
 - Specific
7. How much do you agree to the following

Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly disagree

Decathlon teaches me
interesting things

Decathlon awakens my
curiosity

Brings interesting ideas
to mind

Inspires me

8. Do you choose decathlon over any other sport store

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

9. Rate the physical experience in decathlon

Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly disagree

Energy

Vitality

Comfort

Relaxation

10. How sporty do you feel while visiting decathlon

- Very much
- Much
- Neutral
- Least
- Very least

11. Rate the following affective experiences you had in decathlon

Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly disagree

Happy

Hopeful

Thrilled

Enthusiastic

12. How do you rate the interaction from the employees

- Excellent
- Good
- Neutral
- Poor
- Very poor

13. Kindly rate the following in terms of interaction with the employees

Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly disagree

I give opinions to
store employees

I receive advice from
employees

I ask opinions of the
store employees

I interact with the store
employees

14. Do you think decathlon should market other brands

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

15. Rate your satisfaction with decathlon sport retail store

Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly disagree

My feelings towards
decathlon is positive

I feel good about coming
to decathlon for the
offerings I am looking
for

Overall I am satisfied
about the services they
provide

I feel satisfied that
Decathlon produce the
best results that can
be achieved for me