



A Study on After –Sales Service in Select Consumer Durable Goods

Dr. K. Maneiah*

*Department of Commerce, S.V. University, Tirupati – 517 502, Email id: drmaniroyal@gmail.com

Citation: Dr. K. Maneiah, (2024). A Study on After –Sales Service in Select Consumer Durable Goods, *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice*, 30(7), 1390-1394

Doi: 10.53555/kuey.v30i7.10292

ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

In the marketing of consumer durable goods, service is very important. An attempt is made to know whether the respondents have satisfied with the after sales service the consumer durable goods. For this purpose, 5 categories are consumer durable goods such as refrigerators, washing machines, vacuum cleaner, mixers and television sets are selected.

The samples are drawn from Greater Vishakhapatnam. The size of the sample is restricted to 700. The elements of after sales includes first time failure, Complaint time, Service at home, Service promptness, service charges and Behaviour of service centres. It is highlighted that most of the respondents have satisfied after sales service components.

Keywords: After sales service, durable goods, refrigerators, washing machines.

INTRODUCTION

In the recent past, there is a phenomenal growth in the market for consumer durable goods in India. There is a quantum jump in the range of consumer durables. There is a widespread feeling that the consumer gets a raw deal in the provision of after sales service.

Therefore, it is necessary to examine to what extent the commitment towards after-sales service is honoured by manufacturers/agent/service centre to the customer. Against this backdrop modest an attempt is made to elicit the opinions of consumers on after sales service in respect of consumer durable goods.

1. METHODOLOGY

The area of the study is confined to greater Visakhapatnam city, Andhra Pradesh. Refrigerators, washing machines, television sets, vacuum cleaners and mixers are purposively chosen. A total of 700 customers are conveniently brought into the sample. Of them, 200 are refrigerators, 150 each for washing machines and TV sets and 100 each for vacuum cleaners and mixers.

During 2020, data has been collected through a schedule during speciality design for the purpose by personal interview method. The primary data has been properly processed, analysed and interrupted.

2. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRATATION

Various aspects of post purchase dimensions of customers are analysed in the following pages. These include first time failure, complaint time, , number of complaints amount spend, service promptness and so on. All the aspects are covered with respect to service center only but not out side service.

2.1 First Time Failure

An analysis of first time failure of the product shows to a certain extent the customers' satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the product. It also indicates the period for which the customers can enjoy the product without any trouble. The details of first time failures are presented in the table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Product-wise first-time complaint by customers

Name of the product	Number of years
Refrigerators	4.41
Washing machines	3.55
Television sets	1.45
Vacuum cleaners	2.55
Mixers	1.95

Source: Primary data.

It can be observed from the table that the refrigerators, on an average, enjoy a trouble free service for 4.41 years. In the case of washing machines the trouble free service is 3.55 years. In respect of television sets, it is 1.45 years. In the case of vacuum cleaners, the trouble free service is 2.55 years. The trouble free service with regard to mixers is 1.95 years. It can be concluded that the trouble service is the highest in the refrigerators followed by washing machines, vacuum cleaners, mixers and television sets. Therefore the manufacturer has to after lengthy warranty period to customers of television sets.

3.2 Complaint time

To understand this, time taken by the service center to respond to service request after lodging the complaint is elicited. A prompt service by service centre gives greater satisfaction. The particulars of time taken to complaint to the service centre is shown in table 1.2. The time taken by the service centre is categorised in terms of 24 hours response, 48 hours response and 72 hours response, after lodging the complaint by the customer.

Table 1.2: Response time taken by service centre

Product (1)	24 hours (2)	48 hours (3)	72 hours (4)	Total (2+3+4) (5)	Outside services (6)	Grand total (5+6) (7)
Refrigerators	100 (62.5)	40 (25)	20 (12.5)	160 (100)	40 (20)	200 (100)
Washing machines	18 (16.82)	59 (55.14)	30 (28.04)	107 (100)	40 (20)	200 (100)
Television sets	25 (22.93)	61 (55.96)	23 (21.11)	109 (100)	43 (28.69)	150 (100)
Vacuum cleaners	11 (13.1)	49 (58.33)	24 (28.57)	84 (100)	16 (27.33)	100 (100)
Mixers	50 (66.67)	25 (33.33)	--	75 (100)	25 (75)	100 (100)

Note: Figures in brackets indicate the percentage to total.

Source: Primary data.

A look into the table 1.2 shows that 160 or 80 per cent of customers of refrigerators have availed service from service centre and the rest outside. In the case of the former, centre 100 of 62.5 per cent of customers have availed the service within 24 hours, 40 or 25 per cent within 48 hours and the rest 20 or 12.5 per cent within 72 hours. In the case of washing machines, 16.82 per cent availed service within 24 hours, 55.14 per cent 48 hours and 28.14 per cent 72 hours and the rest outside. A similar trend exists in television sets and vacuum cleaners. In respect of mixers, 75 customers have approached service centre and 25 outside. It may be concluded that the response time is least in mixers followed by refrigerators followed by television sets, washing machine and vacuum cleaners.

3.3 Service at home

To understand the preference of customers for service at home, the response are taken on a 5 point Likerts' scale. These are most important, more important, important less important and not important. These are given ranks and calculated weighted average for each product. The preference for service at home for the products is given in the table 1.3. A glance at the table reveals that the highest 136 or 68 per cent of refrigerators have taken service at home as most important and the least 3 or 1.5 per cent less important. A similar pattern prevails in all the remaining products for example 105 or 70 per cent, 108 or 72 per cent 71 or 71 per cent, 78 or 78 per cent of customers of washing machines, television sets, vacuum cleaners and mixers have treated service at home as most important. As against this, the less important are the least in all these products respectively without any exception. The weighted average is the highest in mixers (4.63) followed by vacuum cleaners and refrigerators (4.43) each, television sets (4.42) and washing machines (4.40). It may be summed up that the service at home is the most important for more than 70 per cent of the customers in all the products. Service at home is the least important for less than 5 per cent of respondents. In terms of weighted average television sets came first while vacuum cleaners the last.

Table 1.3: Customers opinion on service at home

Product	Most important	More important	Important	Less important	Not important	Total	Weighted average
Refrigerators	136 (68)	35 (17.5)	17 (8.5)	03 (1.5)	09 (4.5)	200 (100.00)	4.43
Washing machines	105 (70)	24 (16)	11 (7.33)	03 (2)	07 (4.67)	150 (100.00)	4.40
Television sets	108 (72)	17 (11.33)	13 (8.67)	4 (2.67)	8 (5.33)	150 (100.00)	4.42
Vacuum cleaners	71 (71)	12 (12)	10 (10)	3 (3)	4 (4)	100 (100.00)	4.43
Mixers	78 (78)	11 (11)	07 (07)	04 (4)	--	100 (100.00)	4.63

Note: Figures in brackets indicate the percentage to total.

Source: Primary data.

3.4 Service promptness

The customers are asked to rank their preference for service promptness. A perusal of the table 1.4 furnishes the information regarding the promptness in the service provided to the customers by the service centre.

Table 1.4: Service promptness to customers by service providers

Product	Most important	More important	Important	Less important	Not important	Total	Weighted average
Refrigerators	94 (47)	80 (40)	10 (05)	04 (02)	12 (06)	200	4.22
Washing machines	60 (40)	71 (47.3)	01 (0.7)	07 (4.7)	11 (7.3)	150	4.08
Television sets	68 (45.3)	68 (45.3)	06 (1.5)	02 (1.4)	06 (1.5)	150	4.25
Vacuum cleaners	38 (38)	47 (47)	02 (2)	05 (5)	8 (8)	100	3.97
Mixers	33 (33)	52 (52)	3 (3)	8 (8)	4 (4)	100	4.02

Note: Figures in brackets indicate the percentage to total.

Source: Primary data.

It can be observed the table that 47 per cent of refrigerators have opined that the service centre have provided the required service promptly. With regard to washing machines, the highest 47.3 per cent have opined that the service is more important. In respect of television sets, the most important and more important are one and the same i.e., 43.5 per cent. A similar trend exists in the customers of vacuum cleaners and mixers. In terms of weighted average it is the highest in television sets (4.25) followed by refrigerators (4.22), washing machines (4.08) and vacuum cleaners (3.97). It may be concluded that service promptness is more important for majority of the customers in all the products except refrigerators. In the matter weighted average the preference is the highest in television sets while the least is vacuum cleaners.

3.5 Service charges

The customers categorised on the basis of importance attached to service charge. The views customers on service charges is furnished in table 1.5

Table 1.5: Ranking of customers on the opinion of service charge

Product	Most important	More important	Important	Less important	Not important	Total	Weighted average
Refrigerators	27 (13.5)	21 (10.5)	125 (62.5)	13 (6.5)	14 (7)	200	3.17
Washing machines	12 (8)	23 (15.3)	105 (70)	3 (2)	7 (4.7)	150	3.00
Television sets	10 (6.7)	24 (16)	98 (65.3)	8 (5.3)	10 (6.7)	150	3.12
Vacuum cleaners	7 (7)	10 (10)	77 (77)	1 (1)	5 (5)	100	3.03

Note: Figures in brackets indicate the percentage to total.

Source: Primary data.

In the case of refrigerators, 62.5 per cent of customers have given importance for service charge followed by most important, 13.5 per cent, more important 10.5 per cent, not important 7 per cent and less important 6.5 per cent. Service charge is the important for 77 per cent, 70 per cent and 65.3 per cent of customers in vacuum cleaners, washing machines and television sets sequentially. It is surprising to note that service charge is not important for 6.7 per cent, 5 per cent and 4.7 per cent of customers in television sets, vacuum cleaners and washing machines. The weighted is almost identical in all the products. It may be said that majority of the customers have attached importance for the service charge charged by the centres. Among all the products it is the highest in vacuum cleaners while the least in refrigerator. In the matter of not important, refrigerators came first followed by television sets, vacuum cleaner and washing machines. The opinions in terms of weighted average, it is in the range of 3-3.17. More than 90 per cent of customers are concerned about service charge.

3.6 Reasonable service charges

An enquiry is made to know the perception of customers on reasonableness of service charges. The opinions of sample respondents are sought whether the service charge is high or reasonable or otherwise. The details are presented in the table 1.6.

Table 1.6: Opinions of customers on reasonableness of service charges

Product	High	Reasonable	No idea	Total
Refrigerators	95 (47.5)	83 (41.5)	22 (11)	200
Washing machines	75 (50)	61 (40.7)	14 (9.3)	150
Television sets	95 (63.3)	38 (25.3)	17 (11.4)	150
Vacuum cleaners	45 (45)	36 (36)	19 (19)	100

Note: Figures in brackets indicate the percentage to total.

Source: Primary data.

A look at the table reveals that 95 or 47.5 per cent of respondents of refrigerators have opined that the service charge is high. The service is reasonable for 41.5 per cent of respondents. Eleven per cent of respondents have not expressed in opinion. With regards to washing machine service charge is high for 50 per cent of respondents followed by reasonable (40.7 per cent) and no idea (9.3 per cent). More than 60 per cent of the respondents have perceived that the service charge is high in television sets whereas 25.3 per cent reasonable. The respondents of vacuum cleaners have expressed that the service charge is highest for 45 per cent and reasonable for 36 per cent. It can be concluded that the service charge is the high for more than 50 per cent of respondents in washing machines and television sets. It may be further noted that 19 per cent of respondents in vacuum cleaners have not expressed any opinion.

3.7 Behaviour of service centres

The respondents are asked to give their reaction regarding the behaviour of service personnel. The information is provided in the table 1.7.

Table 1.7: Opinion of respondents on the behaviour of service centre personnel

Product	Most concerned	More concerned	Concerned	Less concerned	Not concerned	Total	Weighted average
Refrigerators	4 (2)	2 (1)	22 (11)	161 (80.5)	11 (5.5)	200	4
Washing machines	3 (2)	9 (6)	9 (6)	121 (80.7)	8 (5.3)	150	2.19
Television sets	4 (2.7)	1 (0.7)	6 (4)	133 (88.6)	6 (4)	150	2.09
Vacuum cleaners	2 (2)	0 (0)	1 (1)	89 (89)	8 (8)	100	1.89
Mixers	1 (1)	4 (4)	6 (6)	77 (77)	12 (12)	100	2.05

Note: Figures in brackets indicate the percentage to total.

Source: Primary data.

Among the products, 80.5-89 per cent of respondents have concerned on the behaviour of service centre personnel. For less than 3 per cent of respondents, behaviour is not most important. The more important respondents are nil in vacuum cleaners. It may be observed that behaviour is not important for 12 per cent, 8

per cent, 5.55 per cent, 5.3 per cent and 4 per cent of customers in mixers, vacuum cleaners, refrigerators, washing machines and television sets serially. The weighted average is the highest in refrigerators (2.18 per cent) followed by television sets (2.09 per cent), mixers (2.05 per cent) and vacuum cleaners (1.89 per cent). It may be concluded that more than 75 per cent of respondents have attached concern on the behaviour of service centre personnel. The respondents are insignificant in the most important and more important categories. Further the respondents were not concerned with the behaviour are more than that of most important and more important. Among the products, refrigerators rank first in the matter of weighted average.

3.8 Comparison

For the purpose of comparison, the perception of respondents on service at home, service promptness, service charges and behaviour of service centre personnel is shown in the table 1.8. These are expressed in terms of weighted average.

Table 1.8: Comparative analysis on the basis of weighted average

Product	Service at home	Service promptness	Service charge	Service centre behaviour
Refrigerators	4.37	4.23	3.19	2.11
Washing machines	4.42	4.08	3.2	6.56
Television sets	4.42	4.27	3.11	1.97
Vacuum cleaners	4.43	3.97	3.13	1.89
Mixers	4.63	4.02	1.75	2.05

Source: Primary data.

In the case of refrigerators the weighted average is the highest in service at home (4.37) followed by service promptness (4.23), service charge (3.19) and service centre behaviour (2.11). A similar trend exists in television set and vacuum cleaners. With regard to washing machines, the weightage is the highest for service centre behaviour (6.56), service at home (4.42), service promptness (4.08) and service charge (3.2). In the case of mixers weightage is the highest in the service at home (4.63) followed by service promptness (4.02), behaviour (2.05) and service charge. It may be said that weightages vary across the product over service elements.

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