

HOW MARKETING CAPABILITIES INFLUENCE SATISFACTION, TRUST & RETENTION IN THE FASHION RETAIL SECTOR

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ABSTARCT

The objective of this paper is to examine the connections between marketing capabilities, customer trust, customer satisfaction and their retention in the retail fashion industry. The study is based on consumer survey results that were then processed using regression analysis. Marketing capabilities comprised of eight forms of capabilities. The results indicated two capabilities significantly influenced customer satisfaction. Indeed, customer satisfaction positively and significantly contributed to customer trust and customer retention. Finally, customer trust emerged as a significant predictor of customer retention. The study provides insights for augmenting customer satisfaction, trust and retention. It is a sublime empirical contribution in terms of eight marketing capabilities of fashion retailers. Indeed, it depicts the efficient use of marketing capabilities to enhance customer satisfaction, trust and retention. The implications of the study provide valuable insights for retailers, researchers, practitioners and policymakers.

Keywords - Marketing capabilities, Customer satisfaction, Customer trust, Customer retention.

Paper type - Research paper.

INTRODUCTION

The fashion retail sector is the most competitive, evolving, and attractive market with millions of outlets worldwide (Sivanesan and Green, 2019). The majority of Indians prefer to purchase at tiny local stores for their household needs, which have dominated the country's retail industry. The arrival of multinational and private shops in India is altering how consumers see a retailer's level of customer care. According to a research by Khare (2013), local merchants' chances of surviving are threatened by organised retailers' market assortments, modern-looking storefront designs, and ambient settings. Therefore, it's crucial to comprehend how crucial it is for local

businesses to raise the bar on both the quality of their service and their products. India's retail industry can be divided into two categories: organised and unorganised. Supermarkets, hypermarkets and malls can all fall within the organised retail sector in a given location. These retail locations offer a variety of services and goods under one roof and are expertly managed. These firms operate on a self-service basis and are not family-owned (Ramkrishnan, 2010). However, in India, the unorganised retail sector—which comprises tiny, family-owned businesses—controls the majority of the market share (Ramkrishnan, 2010). However, compared to unorganised merchants, organised retailers operate on a far larger scale and have more purchasing power, repeat customers and geographic reach. The footwear and apparel industries in this organised sector have the largest penetration, and there are many different retail formats including malls, department stores, hypermarkets and speciality shops. Foreign merchants, including Reebok, Nike, Lacoste and Tommy Hilfiger, which operate in the specialty store model of the retail sector or in shopping malls, contradict Mann and Byun's (2011) assertion that domestic retailers control department stores and hypermarkets.

Indeed, it has witnessed a tremendous change in the last few decades due to the changing shopping patterns, lifestyle and customers' income. Nevertheless, globalization has posed several challenges for the retail business and the designing of appropriate retail strategy considering capabilities is indispensable for sustainable retailing. In the existing body of knowledge, researchers accorded many interpretations to the term 'marketing capabilities' (MC). They defined MC as the process of using available resources to perform the various marketing activities for attaining the desired results (Morgan et al., 2018). Indeed, MC involves the utilisation of tangible as well as intangible assets to recognise complex consumer-specific wants by introducing product differentiation for accomplishing superior brand equity in the market (Yu et al., 2014).

The Indian retail market has attracted major global retailers due to the high percentage of young customers seeking fashionable brands. Meanwhile, there is mushrooming growth of specialty stores, hypermarkets, and shopping malls, selling apparel, footwear and other fashionable products (Paul, 2017). The earlier researchers considered the organizational perspective by studying the impact of MC on business performance and competitive advantage (Chahal and Kour, 2014; Morgan et al., 2018). However, there is a dearth of research on exploring MC from the customers' perspective who can provide an objective, reliable and authentic opinion regarding customer-centric MC. In addition, the number of customers visiting fashion retail outlets has increased in recent years aspiring for a better shopping experience, satisfaction and value from the fashion retailers. Therefore, it becomes imperative for fashion retailers to satisfy the customers who subsequently, repeat purchases and spread positive word of mouth communication (Vazquez-Casielles et al., 2017). Contrary to this, the dissatisfied customers switch to competitors and create a negative image of the retailer leading to slack down in retail performance. Therefore, it is indispensable for retailers to use the various marketing capabilities to satisfy and retain customers. Furthermore, the relationship between MC, customer satisfaction (CS), customer trust (CT) and customer retention (CR) in the retail sector has not yet been validated and needs further investigation. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to

explore the marketing capabilities of fashion retailers from the customers' perspective and subsequently, examine the relationship among MC on CS, CT and CR.

The study provides several contributions. Firstly, it makes an addition to the existing literature by conceptualizing eight forms of MC in the retail sector. Secondly, it provides an integrated framework indicating the relationship between MC, CS, CT and CR. The integrated framework will provide directions to the upcoming researchers. Thirdly, it depicts how fashion retailers can utilize MC to satisfy customers, edify mutual trust and retention for a win-win situation for retailers and customers. Finally, the findings of the study generate implications for retailers, researchers, and policymakers. The study is organised as follow:

The introduction section proceeds to the conceptual background and hypotheses development. The subsequent section portrays the research methodology followed by the findings and implications. The final section presents the conclusion, limitations and directions for future research.

CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature on MC is voluminous and researchers have made theoretical and empirical contributions (Table I) In the current study, our focus is on MC, CS, CT and CR. The relevant literature is reviewed as follow:

Marketing Capabilities In The Retail Sector

Marketing capabilities play a significant role for retailers in the present volatile environment for the optimum utilisation of available resources in gaining the competitive advantage and long-term survival of the firm (Golgeci and Gligor, 2017). Marketing capabilities are crucial marketing-related mechanisms that describe the company's capacity to carry out marketing procedures and meet marketing goals in order to increase its competitiveness and produce revenue from rentals (Gliga and Evers, 2023). In the previous literature of MC in the retailing context, the researchers mainly focused on pricing and selling capability while other significant capabilities are not yet explored empirically particularly from customers' perspectives. The present study, therefore, provides a comprehensive and integrated framework by considering all the marketing capabilities in the retail sector viz., merchandise assortment capability (MAC), pricing capability (PRC), promotional capability (PMC), selling capability (SC), store image differentiation capability (SIDC), service quality capability (SQC), customer relationship management capability (CRMC) and innovation capability (IC). All the constructs are reviewed as under:-

Merchandise Assortment Capability

Customers are drawn to and satisfied with the retail outlet's vast selection of goods (Asuquo and Igbongidi, 2015). The choice of products is the most important one that retailers must make when it comes to product variety in terms of price range, attributes, selection, stock-out or delivery issues, and consumer relevance, which is the primary factor influencing consumers'

purchase intentions and retailer profitability (Ademe-Godwin and Opuene, 2023). According to Bahng et al. (2018), selection refers to the retailer's choice on the amount needed to satisfy client demands. In fact, according to Bahng et al. (2018) study, merchants' selection decisions affect their store's revenue and profitability. To give variety to clients and to cross-sell items at their shop, merchants diversified their collections based on the needs of different customer groups. In fact, merchandising is the process by which retailers offer the appropriate number of goods at the appropriate location and time.

Pricing Capability

Customers must pay the product's price, which includes the item's cost and the retailer's profit margins. In fact, research on pricing strategies has been going on for several years now. Retailers and marketers usually experience pressure to perfect their pricing strategy in order to compete in the market (Bansalet al., 2023). The PRC of merchants is of utmost importance since demand and pricing are related and retailers' performance depends on whether or not customers choose to take ownership by paying the price (Snelgrove, 2012). PRC also helps shops make money, according to Liozu and Hinterhuber (2013). PRC is a company's capacity to determine pricing while taking into account relevant data on costs, rival prices, and consumers' budgets. Consumers consider a product's pricing before buying it.

Promotional Capability

One of the most important components of marketing initiatives is promotion. It is frequently used to draw attention to, raise awareness of, and persuade people to buy a specific retailer's brands. In fact, publicity, sales promotion, advertising, and personal selling are all included in the promotion mix (Zineldin and Philipson, 2007). According to the study by Fassnacht and Konigsfeld (2015), discounts are used as a sales promotion strategy to boost profits and sales. In fact, retailers increase their sales by bringing in more customers in a shorter amount of time through incentives and other perks. Promotion is also recognised as one of the aggressive marketing tactics for luring in new clients and keeping existing ones (Hanaysha, 2018).

Selling Capability

According to Pratono (2018), SC is the ability of retailers to sell products to target customers. Retailers require SC to build the strong network for selling their products (Kamboj and Rahman, 2015). In fact in today's competitive market retailers utilize vital resources to strengthen SC for tapping marketing opportunities and competitive advantage. SC can be both customer-oriented as well as sales-oriented. The study by Jaramillo and Grisaffe (2009) concluded that customer-oriented SC occurs where salespeople assist customers in purchase decisions to satisfy their needs while sales-oriented salespeople focus on demand rather than the customer's need and stress on closing deal instead of focusing on the long-term relationship with customers.

Store Image Differentiation Capability

According to Saraswat et al. (2010), business Image (SIDC) is a representation of how customers picture a physical business in their minds. In fact, the SIDC may also be described as a mental representation of the business that can be enriched by patrons' actual and subconscious perceptions. The term "store image" describes the opinions, sentiments, and attitudes that a customer develops about a business. It is founded on indirect as well as direct information (word-of-mouth, direct marketing, and advertising) obtained from the inside and outside of the business (El Moussaoui, 2023). SIDC is, in fact, the consumers' perspective of the retail store based on its many features. In contrast to Moore and Fairhurst's (2003) assertion that SIDC is a distinct image of a store in customers' minds or a merchandising image of a retail establishment, the study by Wu et al. (2011) stated that SIDC is considered to be the customer's attitude developed from different store characteristics (intrinsic as well as extrinsic characteristics).

Service Quality Capability

Although services are intangible compared to items, buyers may nonetheless experience them. Due to instantaneous utilisation, the production and distribution of a service take place simultaneously and at the same place. Nevertheless, service quality (SQ) measures how happy a consumer is with a service by comparing their opinion following delivery and consumption to their view before obtaining the service (Tseng, 2016). The SQ impression of a consumer will be higher when their experience exceeds their expectations, and vice versa. In fact, providing customers with SQ is essential for acquiring a competitive edge and preserving a positive connection with those customers. Additionally, according to Paul et al. (2017), retailers use SQC to improve performance in terms of turnover, margins, and competitive advantage.

Customer Relationship Management Capability

CRMC entails utilising sophisticated methods for establishing, growing, and preserving relationships with clients (Lin et al., 2010). It is a method for managing customer knowledge so that a business can identify and better service their customers (Tseng, 2016). Additionally, CRMC helps merchants build enduring relationships with their clients that eventually improve client happiness, client trust, and merchant performance (Bhat and Darzi, 2016). According to Wang and Feng's (2012) study, CRMC is essential from an operational perspective for establishing, preserving, and enhancing relationships with consumers throughout time.

Innovation Capability

Due to the fierce competition, wide variety of options, and raised customer expectations, innovation is urgently needed. The most important aspect for retailers to succeed and gain a competitive edge in current shifting market conditions is their capacity for innovation. A retailer's IC forces them to continually innovate or remodel in order to thrive and adapt to the volatile market environment (Rajapathirana and Hui, 2018). Furthermore, innovation can be defined as the introduction of new goods, fresh approaches to manufacturing, fresh markets for

goods, etc. Later economists define innovation as a crucial shift in technology that affects the low cost with high quantity connection and is measured by a company's R&D capacity or patent portfolio (Hristov and Reynolds, 2015). Further, the study by Fuentes-Blasco et al. (2017) concentrated on innovation in services like shopping experience, or the personalised services provided by shopping, entertainment places in the store.

Customer Satisfaction

According to Kundu and Datta (2015), satisfaction is the subjective pleasure experienced when a product performs better than predicted. Customer satisfaction was described by Darzi and Bhat (2018) as the customer's mental state, which is made up of two things: his expectations prior to purchasing the goods and his experiences with the product following that purchase. According to Hellier et al. (2003), the state of being that consumers experience when their wants, needs, or expectations are met is referred to as satisfaction. Long-term client connections with the company have been thought of as being fundamentally determined by customer pleasure. Customers stay with a company longer when they are more happy (Darzi and Bhat, 2018). In fact, there is a strong and positive correlation between customer happiness and a company's market reputation, market share, and sensitivity to price. According to the research of Stauss et al. (2001), client retention is a result of customer satisfaction. Through effective word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing, a business's satisfied consumers can increase both brand loyalty and new customer acquisition.

Customer Trust

The individual expectation that the other party's assertion is truthful and reliable can be referred to as trust. In actuality, trust is the belief that one partner has in the other because of his or her dependability and honesty. According to Han and Hyun (2017), trust is essential for creating and sustaining a long-term connection between sellers and purchasers. Customers' characteristics, firm originality, firm honesty, privacy & security during transactions, friendliness & interactions, and this context's Oliveira et al. (2017) emphasised that these are the key sources of trust. In fact, Oliveira et al. (2017) have made the case that trust influences customers' online purchasing purchase decisions. Additionally, salespeople are used in physical stores as a source of customers' trust in that store but in online shopping, search tools and application-based help buttons have replaced salespeople, removing the foundation of customer trust (Cho and Sagynov, 2015). Even though Schoenbachler and Gordon's study from 2002 claimed that a customer's desire to rely on a store is a sign of trust. Uncertainty and dependency are the two main components that are used to gauge trust.

Customer Retention

CR is the main issue for the retailer as the acquisition of new customers is more costly therefore; retailers devote the best efforts to retain the existing customers (Alshurideh, 2016). Indeed, in service firms, customer retention is considered an important and most challenging issue for service providers (Ascarza et al., 2018). In fact, the study by Ascarza et al. (2018) found

'continuation with a particular store as a synonym of customer retention while, Singh and Khan (2012) observed CR as a duty of products, methods of service delivery, services, and reputation of a particular business. According to the study conducted by Alshurideh (2016) customer retention contributes to retail performance and positive word-of-mouth communication. CR is becoming an important way in the market for sustainability as compared to customer acquisition. Although, Darzi and Bhat (2018) stated CR as the outcome of four factors which are: customer satisfaction, the spread of positive words of mouth, repeated purchase or buying intentions, and loyalty towards the retailer. The study by Cooil et al. (2007) defined CR as the customer intention to continue their relationship with the retailer for the long term.

Table I: Research gap of marketing capabilities

Authors (year)	Objective	Sector/Country	Sample	Future research
Moore and Fairhurst (2003)	To find the impact of MC on business performance.	Apparel and footwear retail sector/ US.	60 retail firms.	Examine marketing capabilities about vendors, suppliers, or customers.
Jun, Yang and Kim (2004)	To explore customer perceptions of online service quality and satisfaction.	Retail sector/ US.	228 customers.	To verify the service quality dimension in the future.
Hooley <i>et al.</i> (2005)	To know the impact of marketing resources on BP.	Manufacturing and service/UK.	485 marketing executives.	Investigate innovation and new product development.
Vorhies and Morgan (2005)	To find out appropriate MC for benchmarking.	Manufacturing As well as the service sector/ US.	230 Marketing executives.	Evaluate MC such as CRM.
Amin and Isa (2008)	To investigate the relationship between service quality perception and CS.	Banks/ Malaysia.	440 customers.	To explore more dimensions of service quality and customer satisfaction.
Chahal and Kaur (2014)	To develop, measure, and validate the MC scale.	Banking sector/ India.	144 managers.	To develop MC scale on another perspective like the marketing mix and to examine the effect of MC in other sectors.
Yao, Gong and Wei (2016)	To know how MC in agricultural business leads to competitive advantage.	Agribusiness/ China.	268 managers.	Consider customers for data collection.
Kamboj and <u>Rahman</u> (2017)	The relationship between MO, MC, and sustainable innovation.	Service companies/ India.	192 marketing managers.	To analyze the effect of more MC and use cross-sectional analysis.

Shaaban and Ghoneim (2017)	Relationship between CRM and MP with the mediating role of MC.	Hotels/ Egypt.	49 managers.	To investigate the relationship in other sectors and consider customers for data collection.
Darzi and Bhat (2018)	To find out the effect of personnel capability and CS on CR.	Banks/ (J&K) India.	409 customers.	To examine other capabilities or skills to manage the relationship with customers.
Hanaysha (2018)	To investigate the effect of CRS, social media marketing, promotion, and store environment on the perceived value and CR.	Retail stores/ Malaysia.	278 customers.	To consider more antecedents of CR as well as other factors like price.
Easmon <i>et al.</i> (2019)	To find out the affect of social capital and the influence of market-based capabilities on export performance of SME's.	SME's/ Ghana.	297 managers.	Other marketing capabilities such as pricing, crm, differentiation and innovation should consider in future.
Alnawas and Farha (2020)	Impact of interaction orientation and brand orientation on marketing capabilities and SMEs' performance.	SMEs/ Qatar.	538 employees.	Consider other capabilities like innovation capability in future.
Slack and Singh (2020)	Impact of service quality on CS and loyalty as well as mediating role of CS.	Supermarkets/ Fiji.	480 customers.	To study the impact of other factors like price on customer satisfaction.

RESEARCH FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Based on the objectives framed in the present study, a research framework is designed to develop the hypotheses.

Marketing Capabilities and Customer Satisfaction

In order to achieve a competitive edge and ensure the long-term survival of the business, fashion merchants must have marketing capabilities (MC) in the current unstable climate (Golgeci & Gligor, 2017). We present a thorough framework by taking into account eight marketing talents in the retail fashion industry. According to Kundu and Datta (2015), the sensation of satisfaction is the result of contrasting the product's performance with what was anticipated. According to the study by Darzi and Bhat (2018), customer satisfaction is the mental state of the consumer, which is made up of two things: his expectations prior to making a purchase and his experiences with the product once he has done so. Customer satisfaction is a

retailer's top priority in today's cutthroat marketplace in order to remain competitive (Cooil, 2007). In a similar vein, Ngo and Nguyen's (2016) study discovered that customer satisfaction is highly influenced by service quality. In fact, Hassan et al. (2015) discovered a substantial association between customer relationship management and customer satisfaction, whereas Oh and Kim (2017) corroborated the relationship between SQ and CS. Additionally, Fuentes Blasco et al. (2017) came to the conclusion that there is a connection between the ability to innovate and consumer happiness. Renko and Druzijanic (2014) made an additional attempt to express the positive correlation between customer happiness and retail innovation. Thus, marketing capabilities have a positive impact on customer satisfaction. So, the first proposed hypothesis is:

H1. MC positively and significantly influence CS.

Customer Satisfaction and Customer Trust

Satisfaction with customers has been seen as a crucial factor in determining long-term client relationships with businesses. Customers stay with a company longer when they are happy (Darzi and Bhat, 2018). Trust is also seen to be essential for establishing and preserving the long-term connection between sellers and buyers, and customer satisfaction has a positive and substantial association with price sensitivity, market share, CR, and the market reputation of a business (Han and Hyun, 2017). According to Oliveira et al. (2017), the main sources of trust include consumer characteristics, firm originality, firm honesty, privacy & security during transactions, and friendliness & interactions. Furthermore, Liang et al. (2018) suggested that CS and trust had a significant and positive link, whereas Iqbal and Shah (2016) believed that CS positively contributed to consumer trust. Additionally, this association was determined to be positively significant by Mahmoud et al. (2018). Finally, the research study by Sabote and Roman (2009) concluded that CS positively contributes to trust. Hence, the next proposed hypothesis is:

H2. CS significantly leads to CT.

Customer Satisfaction and Customer Retention

CR is the main issue for the retailer as the acquisition of new customers is more costly, therefore; retailers devote the best efforts to retain the existing customers (Alshurideh, 2016). Indeed, in service firms, customer retention is considered an important and most challenging issue for service providers (Ascarza et al., 2018). In the past literature, many researchers have studied the relationship between customer satisfaction and retention. (Al-Tit, 2015). Indeed, customer retention is achieved only through offering quality products and satisfying customers (Zeithaml et al., 2002). The study by Chacha (2015) revealed customer satisfaction and customer retention were positively associated. Thus, CS is more likely to retain customers for a longer period. Furthermore, Bowen and McCain (2015) opined that satisfied customers are not enough for the business rather it is important to retain them in the business because attracting new customers requires additional costs for the business. Moreover, Al-Tit (2015) witnessed customer satisfaction as one of the major factors leading to retention. Thus, customer

satisfaction can be measured as an interpreter of customer retention. Thus, it is hypothesized that:

H3: CS leads to CR.

Customer Trust and Customer Retention

Trust has been considered as an crucial element while a business has developing or maintaining relationships with their customers. Indeed, this element is conceptualized as the enthusiasm of a customer to rely on a business. The finding of Roberts-lombard and du Plessis (2012) stated that, both customer and business man must mutually perceive that trust exist between them before a relationship can start between them. Infact, the study by Mahmoud et al. (2018) explained in a consumer perspective, this element can be seen as a desired product or service, at a fair price in the market, and in last an on going mutually valuable relationship between the customer and the business. Trust is the main component that encourages consumers to build and maintain a relationship with a business and it is considered as a sign of a long-term relationship of a consumer with a business. A businessman builds the trust of a consumer through continuous communication with them (Chen and Quester, 2015). In this regard, Mokhtaruddin et al. (2018) stated customer involvement with the firm in formal and informal ways helps to build long-term relationships ultimately leading to consumer retention. Further, Simarmata et al. (2017) found customer trust and customer satisfaction contributed to customer retention. Similarly, the studies by Mahmoud et al. (2018) and Mokhtaruddin et al. (2018) concluded that customer trust is indispensable for customer retention. Hence, the next proposed hypothesis is:

H4. CT contributes to CR.

In the extant literature, few researchers have explored the various relationship of marketing capabilities. Initially, Moore and Fairhurst (2003) studied four marketing capabilities viz, promotional, differentiation, customer services and external (market level) knowledge capabilities and suggested to study other capabilities like relations with customers. Further, Shaaban and Ghoneim (2017) investigated the relationship between CRM capability and marketing performance in hotels situated in one city and suggested future research should be done in other sectors. In addition to this responses were gathered from managers only and also suggested to consider customers in future studies while Rondan Cataluna et al. (2019) found pricing capability as key to success in the retailing sector and recommended to study the effect of prices discrimination on customers in the retail sector as the study is limited to retailers perspective only. Darzi and Bhat (2018) suggested examining other capabilities or skills to manage the relationship with customers. Indeed, Alnawas and Farha (2020) recommended considering other capabilities like innovation capability in the future. Therefore, with these suggestions, we created the following framework:

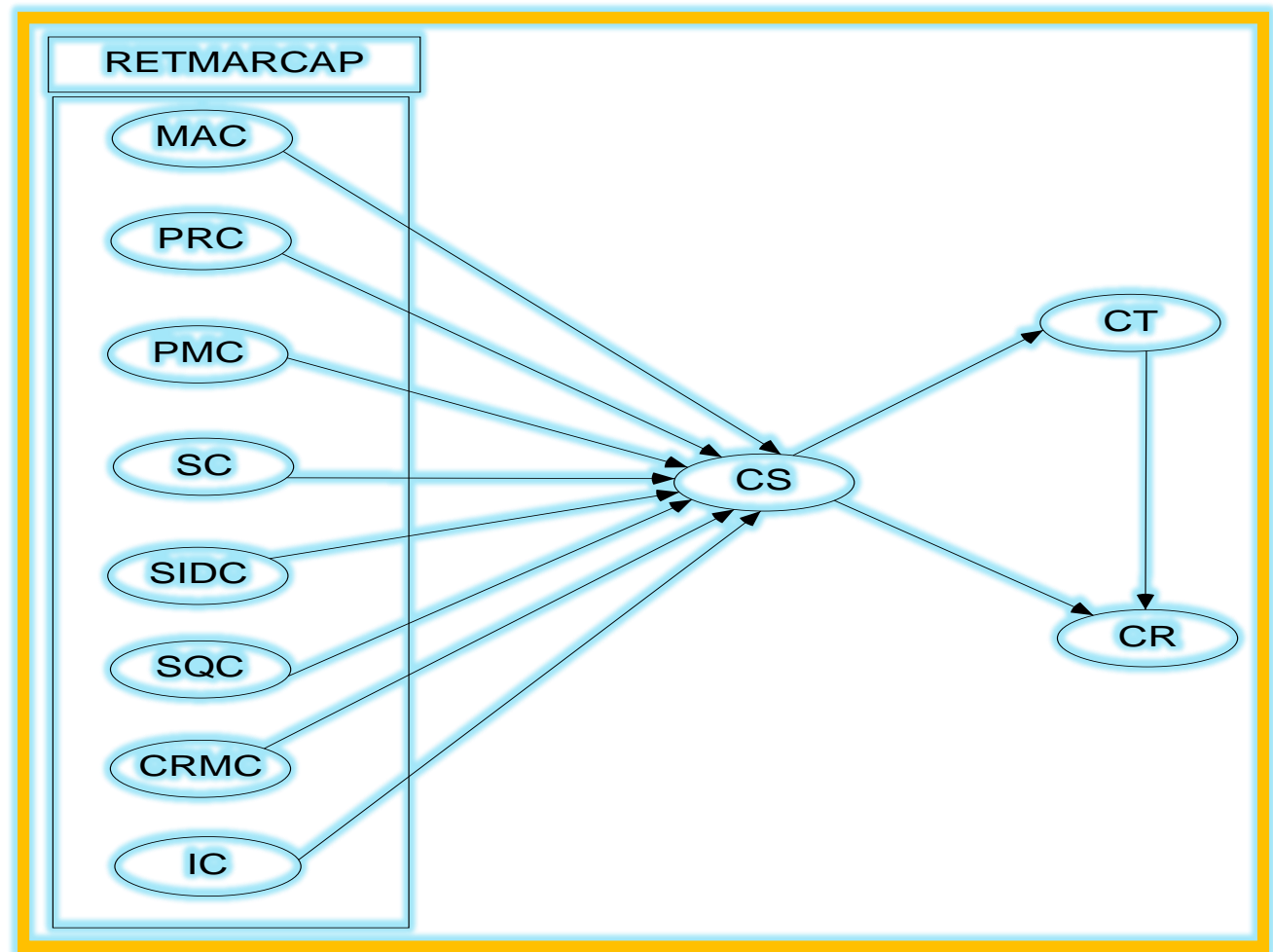


Fig. 1 Conceptual Model

METHODOLOGY

Measures

The survey tool modified a few of the many scales that were already in use. As previously said, the marketing capabilities are made up of a variety of skills, and the researchers have only created a small number of scales in the existing literature. Items were obtained from Sin et al. (2005), Wang and Feng (2012), and Wu et al. (2011) for the CRMC and Diallo and Cliquet (2016), Belwal and Belwal (2017) for the SIDC. The 10 items that make up the SQC were developed from research by Tseng (2016) and Keith and Simmers (2011), whereas the eleven items that make up the MAC were obtained from Deng et al. (2016) and Asuquo and Igbongidi (2015). Additionally, 10 items from Hanaysha (2018) and Shamout (2016) were used to assess PMC, whereas 10 items from Liozu and Hinterhuber (2013) and Rondan-Cataluna et al. (2019) were used to measure PRC. Similar to SC, 12 items from Kadic-Magljajic et al. (2017) were used to assess IC, whereas 10 items from Bellingkrodt and Wallenburg (2015), Martin and Javalgi (2016), and Anning-Dorson

(2017) were used to measure SC. Similarly, fifteen items were used from Blasco et al. (2017), Xie et al. (2017) and Berraies and Hamouda (2018) to measure customer satisfaction. Further, ten items from Singh and Jain (2015) are used to assess trust, while Aldaihani and Ali (2018) and Hanaysha (2018) are used to measure customer retention. Before the survey instrument was finalised, all these metrics were discussed with academics, researchers, and customers. The items of various constructs have been generated and altered to fit the research subject. The Likert scale, which has five points, ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) has been used.

Sample

Customers who lived in a city in northern India (Jammu) were given the survey tool. Since previous studies contacted owners or managers as respondents, who might conceal some information, this study is the first to measure the customer's perceived marketing capabilities. As a result, it is possible to present the true picture of MC from the perspective of customers. Only clients with buying experience for fashion items including clothing, footwear, and other relevant products were individually contacted for the current study (Moore and Fairhurst, 2003). 50 well-educated urban consumers who were chosen through purposive sampling provided the replies. Table II shows the demographic features.

It is clear that female consumers buy more fashion goods since there were more female customers (56%) than male customers (Kuruville et al., 2009). The respondents made up around two-thirds of the younger 25 to 50 age group. According to extensive research, young consumers buy more trendy goods than those in other life periods, such as childhood, adolescence, and old age/empty nest (Khare et al., 2014). In fact, 64% of the respondents who were not married reported having adequate discretionary income to purchase fashionable goods. 34% of respondents were self-employed, while 58% of respondents had postgraduate degrees.

Table II: Demographic Characteristics (n = 50)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	22	44
	Female	28	56
Qualification	Up to Graduation	20	40
	Post Graduate & above	30	60
Age	Below 25	15	30
	25-50	32	64
	Above 50	03	06
Marital Status	Married	18	36
	Unmarried	32	64
Occupation	Service	13	26
	Self-employed	17	34
	Others	20	40
Residence	Urban	38	76

Family Type	Semi-urban	10	20
	Rural	02	04
	Joint	10	20
	Nuclear	40	80

RESULTS

The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, 21 Version). Initially, normality was assessed in terms of Skewness as well as Kurtosis and the values were within the threshold limits (Bai and Ng, 2005). The descriptive and correlations are presented in Table III.

Table III: Descriptive and correlation analysis

	Mean	SD	CRMC	SIDC	SQC	MAC	PMC	PRC	SC	IC	CS	CT	CR
CRMC	3.50	0.65											
SIDC	4.18	0.39	.299*										
SQC	4.10	0.54	.227	.515**									
MAC	4.02	0.62	.423**	.679**	.493**								
PMC	3.63	0.72	.441**	.202	.236	.343*							
PRC	3.59	0.57	.344*	.228	.372**	.289*	.502**						
SC	3.39	0.44	-.180	.009	-.012	-.099	-.418**	-.618**					
IC	3.63	0.67	.624**	.227	.271	.453**	.322*	.311*	-.282*				
CS	3.91	0.51	.639**	.383**	.673**	.463**	.386**	.384**	-.031	.499*			
CT	4.02	0.58	.312*	.428**	.673**	.514**	.226	.319*	-.007	.304*	.665**		
CR	3.39	0.85	.482**	.292*	.501**	.322*	.359*	.326*	-.142	.431**	.695**	.539**	

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

HYPOTHESES TESTING

To test the first hypothesis multiple regression has been applied. The various types of marketing viz. IC, SIDC, SC, PMC, SQC, CRMC, PRC, MAC are considered as predictors of customer satisfaction as the dependent variable. The results reveal that CRMC and SQC contribute positively and significantly to the customer satisfaction (CRMC: $\beta=0.46$; $p<0.05$; SQC: $\beta = 0.55$; $p<0.05$). The R square value of 0.72 indicates that predictors cause 72% variation in the dependent variable. The Durbin-Watson value of 2.214 in this relationship falls within the acceptable range of 1.5 to 2.5, suggests that there are no auto-correlation problems in the data used in this study. Thus, the hypothesis is supported regarding CRMC and SQC (Table III). This indicates that customer relationships and service quality play a significant role in satisfying customers shopping from fashion retailers.

A connection between the independent variable (CS) and the dependent variable (CT) was to be tested. As shown in Table IV, the findings in the prediction model were determined to be significant, demonstrating a favourable and considerable influence of customer satisfaction on trust. According to Mahmoud et al. (2018), the beta coefficients ($\beta=0.665$; $p<0.05$) demonstrate that customer satisfaction has a substantial effect on trust. Additionally, the Durbin-Watson value in this connection, 1.727, is within the permissible range and R square is 0.442. when a result, the second hypothesis is confirmed, showing that when consumer satisfaction rises, trust is eventually strengthened.

The third hypothesis (H3) in the study was accepted ($\beta = 0.695$; $p < 0.05$). This hypothesis implying that customer satisfaction has a positive statistically significant impact on customer retention. The findings of the analysis seemed alike to the result of Edward and Sahadev (2011, Table IV). The findings provide that satisfied customers become loyal and develop repurchase intentions for fashion products from the existing retailers. This will create a win-win situation for both retailers and customers.

The last hypothesis of the study is *customer trust leads to customer retention* was tested by using regression analysis. The endeavor was to test the relationship between the independent variable which was customer trust and the dependent variable was customer retention. As shown in the table IV, this hypothesis was found to be significant in the prediction model. In fact, the results support the hypothesis as beta coefficients ($\beta=0.539$; $p<0.05$) showed the positive and significant impact of customer trust on retention (Mokhtaruddin *et al.*, 2018).

Table IV: Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig.
H1	(Constant)			-.435	.666
	MC	CS			
		CRMC	.462**	4.003	.000
		SIDC	-.079	-.659	.513
		SQC	.550**	5.145	.000
		MAC	-.022	-.171	.865
		PMC	.076	.729	.470
		PRC	.081	.650	.520
		SC	.163	1.415	.164
H2 H3 H4	CS	→ CT	.665**	6.172	.000
	CS	→ CR	.695**	6.705	.000
	CT	→ CR	.539**	4.436	.000

DISCUSSION

The findings support most of the hypotheses indicating the positive and significant impact of CRMC on CS (Hassan et al., 2015); SQC on CS (Ngo and Nguyen, 2016; Oh and Kim (2017)); CS on CT (Iqbal and Shah, 2016; Liang et al., 2018; Sabiote and Roman, 2009); CT on CR (Mahmoud et al., 2018; Mokhtaruddin et al., 2018; Simarmata et al., 2017); CS on CR (Al-Tit, 2015; Chacha, 2015) which are similar to the results of existing studies. It indicates that if fashion retailers manage their capabilities particularly, CRMC and SQC that will satisfy customers. Indeed, customers have expectations from retailers about brand quality, ambiance, sales staff conduct, security, and privacy, etc. and they feel satisfied only after getting their expectations fulfilled. This is possible with better service quality and the development of customer relationship management. In this way, a strong bond is created which will create a win-win situation for customers as well as fashion retailers. Nevertheless, retailers have many capabilities but CRMC and SQC emerged as the significant predictors of CS.

Another significant finding of the study is that CS edifies trust. This reveals that as customers' expectations are met by fashion retailers, it builds mutual trust. It is the basis of repurchase intentions and long-term buyer-seller relationships. Therefore, it becomes imperative for fashion retailers to satisfy and retain customers (Al-Tit, 2015; Chacha, 2015). As customers are satisfied with the brands and services of fashion retailers, they become loyal and make repurchases from the same retail outlets. They also spread positive word of mouth and bring new customers to the retailer thereby increasing the market share, sales, and margins. Indeed, customer trust also assists in customer retention and repurchases. Hence, fashion retailers put their whole efforts to satisfy customers and after gaining their trust, retain them for superior business performance. It can be inferred that the success of fashion retailers lies in the satisfaction, trust and retention of customers.

CONCLUSION

In today's dynamic and competitive environment, it is important for retailers to satisfy their customer to build long term relationship with them. Marketing capabilities play an important role in the survival of retailers in the market by managing their relationship with customers. The present study has taken eight marketing capabilities. Further, the study attempts to evaluate the impact of these capabilities on customer satisfaction. In addition, the impact of customer satisfaction on customer trust and customer retention has been examined to give fruitful insights.

THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The present study significantly advances the topic of marketing capabilities, which has been of equal importance to researchers, managers, and academics. By confirming marketing capabilities as a multi-dimensional construct that includes customer relationship management, service quality, innovation, promotion, pricing, store image differentiation, selling capability

and merchandise assortment, the study expands on the body of knowledge already known about marketing capabilities. The research has established the individual effect of each marketing capabilities on customer satisfaction, even though the direct impact of marketing capabilities on customer satisfaction has been demonstrated earlier. This knowledge can aid in a deeper understanding of each capabilities on the satisfaction level of customers.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The current study makes an addition to the existing literature by providing conceptual understanding and insights for the researchers to extend the research to other areas. The present piece of work is a unique contribution in the sense that it identifies all the capabilities of retailers that contribute towards customer satisfaction, trust, and retention in the retail sector. As marketing capabilities can be used to understand customer needs as well as how different factors influence their choice (Dutta et al., 1999). MC like CRM and SQC assist to understand customers' needs and demands. Without such capability, a firm is likely to become out of touch with its customers. In fact, like CRM other capabilities also help a retailer to better understand their customers and sustain their business in this competitive market for the long run. Therefore, a retailer must take appropriate initiatives to implement and enhance all the customer-related capabilities. Moreover, in the absence of such capabilities, a firm would fail to perform different strategies that are creative and innovative for the firm (Hooley et al., 2005). As per the results, it is suggested that fashion retailers should focus their attention on customer relationship management and service quality to satisfy and retain customers. Moreover, it will make the customer trustful and committed to the retail outlet. The fashion retailers face huge competition in today's dynamic market and retailer needs to sustain their businesses thus, it is suggested that retailer should use capabilities to sustain their business (Moore and Fairhurst, 2003). The retailer can use the findings to analyze the marketing capabilities of their retail store for designing various initiatives to improve the business performance and competitive advantage. Hence, marketing capabilities facilitate a firm to add value for tapping market opportunities for superior business performance. Although the findings of the current study were drawn from the sample of Indian customers, the implications are also valid for other emerging economies that have similar types of retailers.

LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The findings provide significant contributions yet some research limitations need to be kept in mind. Firstly, the results were obtained using survey data from customers, the future researchers can undertake a cross-sectional survey on both retailers and customers. Secondly, the research provides findings for the marketing capabilities of fashion retailers, however, the upcoming researchers can extend the research to other forms of retailers such as FMCG, grocery, departmental stores, and digital retailers. We examined the relationship between MC, CS, CT and CR in the retail sector, the impact of some mediating and moderating variables would be an interesting research contribution. The role of social media, technological advancement,

store characteristics, customer engagement, customer value, ethical conduct and channel capabilities can be investigated in the future.

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