A STUDY ON ANTECEDENT AND CONSEQUENCES OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN APARTMENT CULTURE AT CHENNAI

Dr. P. Balathandayutham,

Assistant professor,
Business Administration, Annamalai University,
Annamalainagar, Tamilnadu, India.

ABSTRACT

The primary objective of the study was to examine the antecedents and consequences of satisfaction of the people living in apartments. Sample for the study was selected through simple random sampling. Area of the research was in and out of Chennai. Data from 150 samples were gathered through a questionnaire. Data was analyzed with the help of Linear Multiple Regression and Factor analysis. Results of the study show that factors, reasons and service quality were the factors that influenced the satisfaction of buyers of apartments.

Keywords: Reason, Customer satisfaction, Word of mouth, Antecedent, Consequences.

Introduction:

Shelter is one among the basic needs of life and for the purpose of shelter we call for a home. The availability of land is very limited in urban prime areas. The available limited land is best utilized for shelter by the construction of apartments. Building apartment is the best possible way for offering shelter for many people in limited area.

Identification of the antecedents, consequences and references regarding this concept will help in clarifying how the concept is employed in the social context. The antecedents of the research give reply to "what happens before?". The consequences and the concept give reply to "what happens after?" that is the occurrence of the concept (Rogers, 1989).

From the viewpoint of satisfaction's antecedents and consequences, **Oliver** suggested a model which states satisfaction of consumers as a role of expectancy disconfirmation and expectation. Findings of the study also have substantiated this concept. Additionally, attitude of consumers and their purchase intention is affected by satisfaction.

Recent year studies have concentrated more on customer satisfaction. It is believed that customer satisfaction is said to have added theoretical antecedents when compared with the service quality. An organization to be successful has to follow actions that satisfy the customers. Satisfaction of customers plays a major role in the successful survival of the organization in today's world of competition.

Ranaweera and Neely (2003) had done a research and also stated that service quality is generally referred to as the antecedent of customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is seen as an outcome variable, then making a focus on the discussion and study on the antecedents to and determinants of customer satisfaction is required to achieve the desired result (Ellen Day, 2000).

By making an analysis of the relationship among customer satisfaction, reason to buy and service quality, this study investigated the customer satisfaction. There are two antecedents and consequences for customer satisfaction as per the model suggested by Fornell et al (1996). (COMPLAINT, LOYALTY)

The present study discusses the customer satisfaction's antecedent and consequences of apartment industries. Sense of belonging is created by the antecedent while sense of belonging creates consequence (Hagerty et al., 1992; Hagerty & Patusky, 1995; Newman et al., 2007).

For the overall analysis of the societal economy, customer satisfaction is used as performance indicator, apart from using it as an indicator of performance for firms individually. To be in particular, any change in customer satisfaction is said to be a positive and leading indicator for any other types of monetary and economic indicator for growth in GDP. When housing is considered, customer satisfaction seems to have a greater extent of effect on the society when compared with the experiences that the customers experience with other products. A person is said to have an overall satisfaction in life when he is satisfied with his/her housing. As per Lu, 1999, customer satisfaction has now become a major topic for research in various fields, like, marketing, sociology, civil engineering, psychology, geography and planning.

Structural equations were used in the study to frame the consequences and antecedents of customer satisfaction. In most of the researches, customer expectation and customer perception are used as the antecedents for customer satisfaction. Further those studies adopted the theory of Hirschman's exit-voice to explain the customer satisfaction's consequences. But these models have not taken into consideration that quality element for dissimilar quality attributes direct the way to diverse effects (Hirschman, 1970).
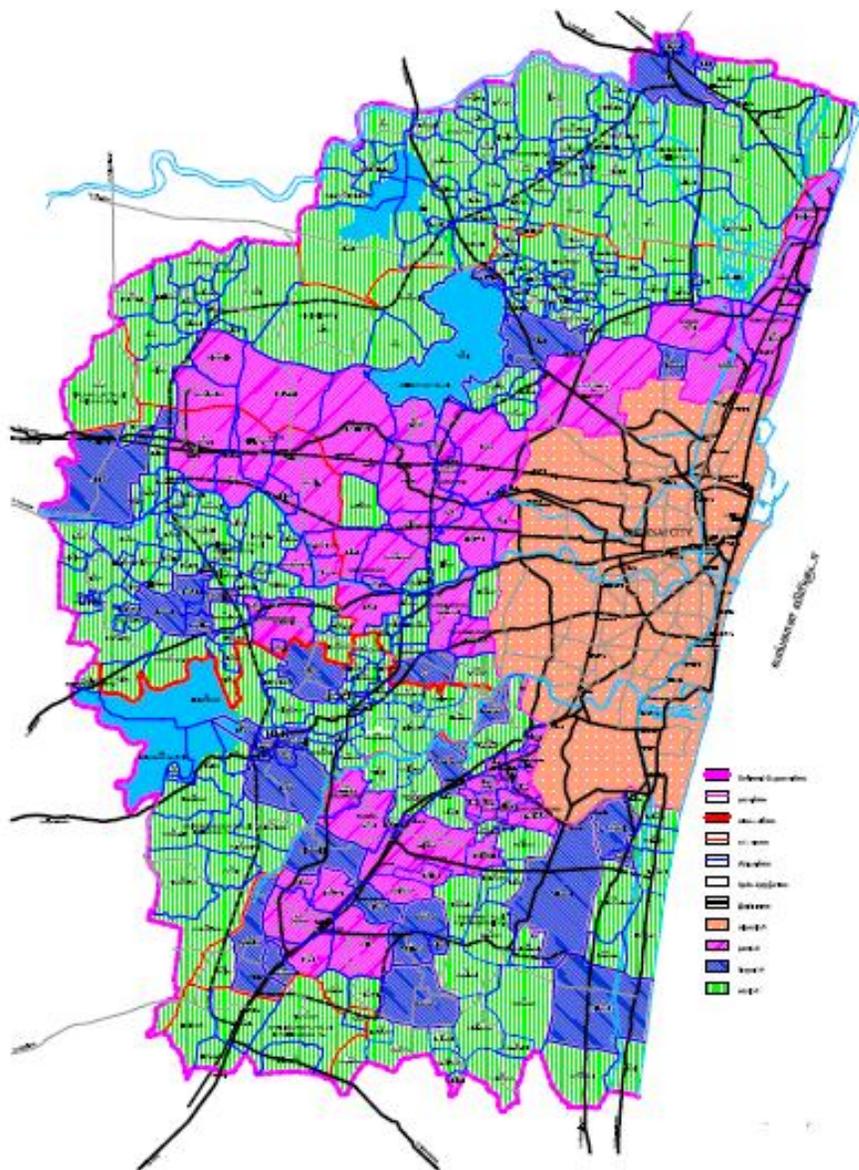
Chennai Metropolitan Area – Profile:

The fourth largest metropolitan city in India is Chennai, the capital of Tamilnadu. 16 Municipalities, 214 Village Panchayats in 10 Panchayat Unions, 20 Town Panchayats and the city of Chennai come under The Chennai Metropolitan Area (CMA). CMA covers a total of 1189 Sq.km.

Three districts of tamilnadu fall under the CMA. Those include a part in kancheepuram district, a part in thiruvalluvar district and Chennai district fully. The area of Chennai district covers an area of about 176 sq.km (Chennai Municipal Corporation). The Chennai district covers 55 revenue villages of five taluks. The taluks include Perambur-Purasawalkam Taluk, Mylapore-Triplicane Taluk, Mambalam-Guindy Taluk, Fort-Tondiarpet Taluk and Egmore-Nungambakkam Taluk. When the district of thiruvallur is considered, an area of 637 sq.kms out of 3427 sq.kms fall umder the CMA. They include Poonamallee, Ponneri, Thiruvallur and Ambattur taluks. Chengalpattu, Tambaram and Sriperumbudur taluks of

Kancheepuram District fall under CMA, which covers an area of about 376 sq.kms out of a total of 4433 sq.kms. Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority (CMDA) was constituted as an ad-hoc body in 1972 and become statutory body in 1974 vide the Tamil Nadu Town and Country Planning Act 1971. It was established under the sub-section 1 of the section 9 –A (2) of the Act.

		CMA	**CITY**
1. Extent		1189 Sq.Km	176 Sq.Km
2. Population	1981	46.01	32.84
	1991	58.18	38.43
	2001	70.41	43.43
	2011(projected)	88.71	49.50

Source: http://www.cmdachennai.gov.in/aboutchannels.html

Source: http://www.cmdachennai.gov.in

Chennai Metropolitan Area:

From the last few years, the business of real estate has been growing in a fast mode. Investments n apartment houses are changing the shape of the landscape of investments in property increase in investment level in apartments have paved the way for the growth of many companies, which concentrate in the construction of many apartments in Tamilnadu. Though there exists an extraordinary development in these industries, an effort has been made to examine the influence of these types of developments on customer satisfaction. On the other hand, the hurry to respond to these wants seems to lead to a lesser quality housing which does not effectively match the wants of these group (Siamak, 2011).

Review of Literature:

R.L. Oliver, (1980) suggested antecedents (expectations and disconfirmation) and consequences (e.g., intention to purchase) of customer satisfaction. But those researches were conducted on the basis of traditional channels. As per the words of Anderson, 1994; Fornell et al., 1996, overall price, expectations and quality influences the customer satisfaction. As per the words of Aga, 2007; firm image influences customer satisfaction. On the other hand, Spreng, 1996 says that a person's desire has an effect on the customer satisfaction. Ernest et al., 1987; Churchill and Surprenant 1982 have suggested that there exists an optimistic relation among satisfactinon and expectation. Churchill and Surprenant 1982; Oliver 1980; Westbrook and Oliver 1981; Yi 1990; Tse and Wilton 1988 have said that this positive relation also exists among the performance related customer's expectation and the perceived performance of that product. According to Oliver and DeSarbo, (1988) the consequences of expectations and perceived performance are mediated through disconfirmation construct

Yavas et al. (1997) has clarified that though some studies have clarified perceptions of service quality as the result of satisfaction, the studies of recent years have explained the service quality to be the antecedent of satisfaction. Churchill and Suprenant, 1982; Oliver and DeSarbo, 1988; Anderson and Sullivan, 1993 said that when compared with other antecedents, the effect of quality on customer satisfaction is much higher. The concentration in making a study on the service quality and satisfaction as the antecedents of behavioral intentions of customers in this study has been inspired, initially, by the identification that customer satisfaction does not create lifetime value among customers (Appiah-Adu, 1999). Next to that, quality and satisfaction are directly connected to customer retention and market share (Fornell, 1992; Rust and Zahorik, 1993; Patterson and Spreng, 1997).

Bearden and Teel [1983] had also made a research on the same topic. The antecedents and consequences relating to customer satisfaction were examined with the help of information gathered regarding the experiences of customers in repairs and services of automobiles. Sample was fixed at 375 and data was collected in a two-phase study among the customers. The findings of the study clarifies that appropriate determinants of satisfaction are customer's expectation and disconfirmation. Suggestion has also been given that, in the phase of research regarding satisfaction or dissatisfaction, complaint activity could also be included.

Disagreement also exists concerned with the relation among service quality and customer satisfaction. Oliver and DeSarbo 1988; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry 1994, said that service quality and customer satisfaction have certain relationship among them, whereas, Parasuraman et al. 1988; Churchill and Suprenant 1982; Cronin and Taylor 1992; Spreng and Mackoy, 1996; Oliver, 1993; Fornell 1992; Oliver and DeSarbo 1988; Chigozirim, 2008 argued that service quality should be considered as a significant antecedent of customer satisfaction. On the other hand, few authors have the argument that service quality's significant antecedent is customer satisfaction. To conclude, it was found that customer satisfaction is a wider concept. Hence service quality is considered to be the antecedent of customer satisfaction.

Arguments are also existing among authors that winning new customers is more expensive when compared with retaining the existing ones (Ennew and Binks, 1996; Hormozi and Giles, 2004). This statement is similar to the views of Athanassopoulos, Gounaris and Stathakopoulos's (2001), who placed the arguments that expenses of customer replacement, like, promotion, sales expenses and advertising proves to be high. It also becomes a high procedure to make the new customers beneficial. As per the words of Appiah-Adu, 1999, an increased level of word of mouth leads to enhancement of the rate of customer retention. Reichheld and Sasser, 1990 says that this increase in retention rates lead to reduction

in transaction costs in the future and sensitivity in price and ultimately to a better performance in business; Fornell, 1992; Ennew and Binks, 1996; Bolton, 1998; Ryals, 2003.

There are not many studies which have been conducted in the field of construction for identifying the customer satisfaction. But studies have been carried out regarding customer satisfaction ih the housing industry. These studies have been performed mostly to examine the relation between the company and the customer. Though there are limited studies for customer satisfaction in the field of construction, many studies are prevailing in the field of service industry to identify customer satisfaction. The findings of these studies reveal a very sturdy correlation among service quality or customer satisfaction and returns of economy (Holm 2000).

Word of mouth:
For a successful survival of business in today's world of competition, customer satisfaction and service quality plays a very significant role. Several researchers have undertaken studies in these two areas. As per the words of Olsen, 2002; Kang, Nobuyuki and Herbert, 2004; Söderlund and Öhman, 2005; satisfaction and service quality are connected to purchase intention, spreading optimistic word of mouth, referral, intention to be loyal and complaint intention. Most of the studies have been carried out for examining the relationship of antecedents, consequences with the variables like service quality, customer satisfaction, behavioral intentions and perceived value.

According to Rauyruen and Miller, 2007; an important constraint for assessing attitudinal loyalty is considered to be the word of mouth. Word of mouth is the reflection of the consumer's willingness to pay for the constructive features of a product and their support given to their friends to purchase that product. WOM is considered to be an important element for consumer's intention to repurchase. According to Hsu et al., 2010, WOM also symbolizes an element for consumer's behavioral intention. WOM is revealed in the fact that the consumers become psychologically attached to a product's brand and the fact that WOM becomes a significant antecedent which shows the future actions of consumers that they will be ready to purchase that brand in the future. In the study performed by Yun and Good (2007), they pressurize the fact that the store image becomes a significant forecaster of consumer's behavioral intentions.

Need of the study:

The current study is carried out to examine the antecedents and consequences of customer satisfaction regarding apartment housing. Attempt is also made to assess the causes that make the customers to choose apartments rather than individual self built homes. The study also assesses the relation between customer satisfaction and reason. Relation between word of mouth and customer satisfaction was also examined in the study.

Statement of the problem:

Indian market has been seeing a huge development in apartment industries. It is the need of the hour to select a good place to live which also suits their work place. If the dwelling place is much farther, it will lead to increase in cost of transportation. Persons living in metropolitan cities need to find a house nearer to their office. The more nearer the apartment to the office, the higher will be the cost of apartments. Hence in this context, it is necessary to note that the antecedents and consequences plays an important role.

Objectives:
- To categorize the causes which make the people to go in for apartments
- To recognize the relation among and Customer Satisfaction and Reasons
- To compute the relationship among Word-of-Mouth and Customer Satisfaction

Research Methodology:

150 respondents were selected as a sample for the study. For selecting the sample, simple random sampling was adopted. Analysis of data was done in SPSS package for social sciences (version 16). To find out the reason why people go in for apartments than self built homes, factor analysis was conducted. In order to examine the relation between customer satisfaction and reason, regression was carried on. The same analysis was done ti identify the relation between word of mouth and customer satisfaction. Survey method was used to test and analyze the hypothesis of the study. The intention of the current study is to identify the customer satisfaction's antecedent and consequence.

The questions of the survey deals with the reasons, word of mouth and customer satisfaction, regarding why people prefer apartments than the self built homes. The questionnaires of the survey used a 5 point likert scale. The survey respondents were the residents of Chennai who lived in their own apartments. For further analysis of the study, 150 surveys were collected. For the current study, analysis was done using multiple linear regression.

Analysis and Interpretation:

Reliability:
Cronbach's alpha (Nunnally, 1978) was used to compute the study item's internal reliability. It was suggested by her that 0.6 minimum alpha is sufficient for the purpose of early survey. 0.707 was arrived at by the Cronbach's alpha for reasons. Since all the constructs of the study were higher than 0.6, adequate reliability was seen to have in all the constructs of the study.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.707	21

In order to identify the total quantity of reasons which influence the respondents to purchase an apartment, factor analysis was carried on.

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.668
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1430.796
	df	210
	Sig.	.000

Communalities

	Extraction
1	.641
2	.879
3	.751
4	.783
5	.773
6	.660
7	.687
8	.728
9	.813
10	.564
11	.603
12	.717

	Extraction
13	.746
14	.691
15	.750
16	.576
17	.675
18	.676
19	.896
20	.872
21	.620

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

It is very clear from the table that the percentage of variance in every variable accounted by both the factors is not similar.

Rotated Component Matrix (a)

	Component						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14	.772						
15	.769						
10	.720						
21	.628						
13	.598						
11	.535						
20		.876					
19		.870					
6			.753				
5			.750				
9			.679				
8			.542				
2				-.895			
1				.747			
18				.690			
17					.806		
16					.618		
7					-.530		
4						.831	
12						.623	
3							.856

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. a Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

The data was inspected with the help of principal component analysis as the varimax and extraction method as a method of rotation and eigen values larger than the one appeared.

Regression

Variables Entered/Removed [b]			
Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	21, 1, 3, 17, 4, 5, 16, 6, 18, 12, 20, 7, 10, 14, 11, 15, 13, 8,[a] 2, 9, 19		Enter
a. All requested variables entered			
b. Dependent			

The above table is the variables Entered/Removed, that, as the name refers, accounts with the variables entered into the table.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.868[a]	.754	.713	.055499527
a. Predictors: (Constant), 21, 1, 3, 17, 4, 5, 16, 6, 18, 12, 20, 7, 10, 14, 11, 15, 13, 8, 2, 9, 19				

Multiple correlation is provided by this table (R = .868), the Multiple Correlation squared (R^2 = .754), the adjusted Multiple Correlation squared (adj.R^2 = .713), and the Standard Error of the Estimate. The multiple correlations refer to the combined correlation of each predictor with the outcome. The multiple correlations squared represent the amount of variance in the outcome which is accounted for by the predictors; here, 75.4% of the variance in overall customer satisfaction is accounted for by every reason people prefer apartments rather than self-built house. However, the multiple correlation squared is a bit optimistic, and therefore, the adjusted R^2 is more appropriate.

ANOVA[b]

	Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
1	Regression	1.207	21	.057	18.653	.000[a]
	Residual	.394	128	.003		
	Total	**1.601**	**149**			
a. Predictors: (Constant), 21, 1, 3, 17, 4, 5, 16, 6, 18, 12, 20, 7, 10, 14, 11, 15, 13, 8, 2, 9, 19						
b. Dependent Variable: Overall satisfaction						

The ANOVA summary table, indicates that our model's R^2 is significantly different from zero, $F_{(21,128)}$ =18.653, $p < .001$.

Coefficients (a)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Level of significant
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1 (Constant)	1.593	.052		30.843	.000	Significant
1	.009	.007	.072	1.239	.218	Not significant
2	.067	.019	.314	3.446	.001	Significant
3	.004	.006	.038	.790	.431	Not significant
4	-.028	.011	-.161	-2.641	.009	Significant
5	-.048	.016	-.218	-2.906	.004	Significant
6	.004	.010	.023	.393	.695	Not significant

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Level of significant
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
7	-.006	.010	-.040	-.618	.538	Not significant
8	.032	.015	.166	2.078	.040	Significant
9	.003	.011	.021	.245	.807	Not significant
10	-.006	.011	-.032	-.529	.598	Not significant
11	.009	.012	.050	.782	.436	Not significant
12	.006	.011	.042	.602	.548	Not significant
13	-.009	.013	-.048	-.687	.494	Not significant
14	-.010	.011	-.055	-.889	.376	Not significant
15	-.048	.013	-.237	-3.676	.000	Significant
16	-.016	.009	-.086	-1.636	.104	Not significant
17	.003	.009	.016	.300	.765	Not significant
18	.010	.009	.071	1.129	.261	Not significant
19	.102	.025	.459	4.083	.000	Significant
20	.055	.021	.255	2.607	.010	Significant
21	-.029	.030	-.063	-.955	.342	Not significant

a) Dependent Variable: Overall satisfaction

Let's focus on the 21 predictors, whether they are statistically significant and, if so, the direction of the relationship. Certain reasons are significant and the coefficient is positive which would specify that 8 reasons are related to increased customer satisfaction. This is what we would expect. The percentage of customer satisfaction with most of the reasons seems to be not significant. This result also makes sense. Finally, the reliability value shows Cronbach's Alpha .707 in this study were all much higher than 0.6, the constructs were therefore deemed to have adequate reliability. All this indicate that the proportion of customer satisfaction along with the reasons is considered to be an important variable that predicts the so called customer satisfaction.

Model Summary (b)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.426(a)	.181	.165	.0956917

a) Predictors: (Constant), I encourage my friends and relatives to buy the apartment from this promoter. Recommend this promoter to another , My Intentions are to say positive things to others
b) Dependent Variable: overall satisfaction

We have the Model Summary table. This table provides the Multiple Correlation (R = .426), the Multiple Correlation squared (R^2 = .181), the adjusted Multiple Correlation squared (adj.R^2 = .165), and the Standard Error of the Estimate. The multiple correlation refers to the combined correlation of each predictor with the outcome. The multiple correlation squared represents the amount of variance in the outcome which is accounted for by the predictors; here, 18.1% of the variance in customer satisfaction is accounted for by reasons. However, the multiple correlation squared is a bit pessimistic, and therefore, the adjusted R^2 is less appropriate.

ANOVA[b]

	Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
1	Regression	.296	3	.099	10.783	.000[a]
	Residual	1.337	146	.009		
	Total	**1.633**	**149**			
a. Predictors: (Constant), I encourage my friends and relatives to buy the apartment from this						

> promoter., Recommend this promoter to another, my intentions are to say positive things to others
> **b. Dependent Variable:** Overall satisfaction

The ANOVA summary table, indicates that our model's R² is significantly different from zero, F (3,146) =10.783, p < .000.

Coefficients (a)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
1	(Constant)	1.986	.071		28.086	.000
	My Intentions are to say positive things to others	-.005	.024	-.018	-.201	.841
	Recommend this promoter to another	-.048	.017	-.248	-2.752	.007
	I encourage my friends and relatives to buy the apartment from this promoter.	-.087	.017	-.380	-4.953	.000

a) Dependent Variable: overall satisfaction

Let's focus on the 3 predictors, whether they are statistically significant and, if so, the direction of the relationship. Some of the respondents recommend the promoter and the coefficient is positive which would indicate that the word of mouth is related to higher customer satisfaction. The percentage of customer satisfaction with intention of the word of mouth seems to be not significant. This result also makes sense. This would seem to indicate that the percentage of customer satisfaction with Word of mouth is an important consequence in predicting customer satisfaction.

Discussion:

The following results were arrived at, from the current study's approach regarding customer satisfaction. The first result indicated that the word-of-mouth and reasons are linked positively with the customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction gets enhanced when this word of mouth and reasons get increased. The key for enhanced customer satisfaction was found to be quality, which is considered as an essential factor needed by the customer.

Conclusion:

Statements for examining the reasons why people go in for apartments are framed in this study and assessment of reliability was also conducted. The cronbach's alpha value for overall reasons was 0.707. The reason constructs has adequate reliability. This study uncovered some antecedents and some consequences of satisfaction in the context of residential satisfaction. This empirical study's findings propose that the reason and Word of mouth were optimistically manipulating customer satisfaction. To conclude, customer satisfactions have a noteworthy and direct connection with reasons and word of mouth.

Findings:

The Cronbach alpha estimated for reasons was 0.707, therefore reasons have adequate reliability. Factor analysis indicated that 8 reasons are related to higher customer satisfaction and rest of the 13 reasons has no significance. The multiple correlations squared represents the amount of variance in the result which is accounted for by the predictors; here, 75.4% of the variance in overall customer satisfaction is accounted for by every reason to purchase an apartment.

Limitation:

The main drawback of this study is that the current research took only one antecedent and one consequence for the study, among the various antecedents and consequences. One more limitation is that the study has been carried out only in limited areas of Chennai.

Suggestion:

Only some reasons have been considered for the study. Though these reasons are enough to make the customers satisfied, future studies should be done, taking into consideration few other reasons required for the satisfaction of the customers.

Scope of the research:

Many reasons prevail for the purchase of an agreement. Yet, only a very few of them are considered for the present research. In the future, the scholars may go in for some other antecedents and consequences and also find out some new reasons. Further studies can be done for studying the customer satisfaction of apartment residents in rural places in India.

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