

# Customers' Perception towards Gas Services in Tuticorin District

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## 1. Introduction

Marketing is the process of communicating the value of the product or service to customers, for selling that product or service. From a societal point of view, marketing is the link between a society's material requirements and its economic patterns of response. Marketing satisfies these needs and wants through exchange processes and building long term relationships. Marketing can be looked at as an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, delivering and communicating value to customers, and managing customer relationships in ways that also benefit the organization and its shareholders. Marketing is the science of choosing target markets through market analysis and market segmentation, as well as understanding consumer buying behavior and proving superior customer value.

Many companies are aiming for high satisfaction because customers who are just satisfied still find it easy to switch when a better offer comes along high satisfaction or delight creates an emotional affinity with brand. Variety of factors that affect customer satisfaction includes product quality, product availability and after sales support such as warranties and services. Customer satisfaction is seen as a proof of delivering a quality product or services. It is believed that customer satisfaction by lowering its price or increasing its services but this may result in lower profits. Thus the purpose of marketing is to generate customer value profitability.

The study on Customer satisfaction helps to address whether the existing customer is satisfied or dissatisfied towards the product. Sales of the product increase or decrease based on the customer satisfaction level. If the customer is dissatisfied, it is very difficult to found the reason why the customers are dissatisfied towards the product. Only after assessing satisfaction level, the organization could precede further techniques, schemes etc.

## 2. Statement of the problem

Customer perception is very important for the organization. Customer often feels that they are exploited in the market than fulfilled with the customer satisfaction. It helps in "creating and maintaining the demand." It removes the time imbalance between production and consumption. The two major factors of marketing are the recruitment of new customers and the retention and expansion of relationships with existing customers. In order to know about the Customers' Perception towards Gas Service in Tuticorin District, the present study is made.

## 3. Objectives of the study

- ❖ To understand the efficiency and effectiveness of existing services at Gas Agency.
- ❖ To know the customers opinion with regard to after sales service of their gas delivery.
- ❖ To know the satisfaction of customer with regard to post sales services.
- ❖ To identify the factors this affects improvement and development in rendering service.
- ❖ To know the customer relationship management and customer satisfaction towards the sales and service offered by Gas agency.
- ❖ To offer suggestions to improve the customer satisfaction.

## 4. Review of literature

A literature review is a body of text that aims to review the critical points of current knowledge including substantive findings as well as theoretical and methodological contribution to a particular topic. Its ultimate goal is to bring the reader to update with current literature on a topic and forms the basis for another goal, such as future research that may be needed in the area.

**Kushankumar, Rahul Vatsyayan & Vibhakar Jha (2010)<sup>1</sup>**, made a study on "Customer Satisfaction of TATA NANO Customers" and found that the attributes such as price, service station, design, safety, engine performance, engine sound, resale value had a strong relationship with customer satisfaction of Nano cars.

**Ravithar (2010)<sup>2</sup>**, in his research titled "Customer Satisfaction of Lux Soap in Gujarat", investigated about the assessment of satisfaction level towards Lux soap in Gujarat. The researcher found that the customer is satisfied towards the Lux and he suggested that the advertisement need to be based on their culture.

**Muhammad M.A. Abdallat (2009)<sup>3</sup>**, in his project report on "Customer Satisfaction on Brand Loyalty", states that customer satisfaction as a state of mind in which the customer's needs, wants and expectations throughout the product of service life have been met or exceeded, resulting in future repurchase and loyalty. Some researchers support the idea that satisfaction can be measured from a perspective of performance evaluation, making the inclusion of the disconfirmation process needles. Furthermore, satisfaction not only consists of cognitive element but have to include emotional elements in determining customer satisfaction.

**Rafiqul Islam (2009)<sup>4</sup>**, in his report on "Customer Satisfaction of HSBC ATM in Dhaka", stated that the customers are satisfied towards HSBC ATM and found that the uneducated customers are struggling in handling the ATM. So, he suggested the organization to make awareness about the procedure and handling method

**Santhosh Kumar Sharma (2008)<sup>5</sup>**, done a research on "Customer Satisfaction with special reference to Mahindra Bolero in Hyderabad". From the survey Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M), the market leader in multi-utility vehicles in India. The impact of automobile industry on the rest of the economy has been so pervasive and momentous that is characterized as second industrial. It played a vital role in helping the nation to produce higher value good and services and in the enhancing their skills and impose tremendous demand for automobile.

**Sanjeev kumar (2008)<sup>6</sup>**, in his report "A Study on the Customer Satisfaction for Hyundai Motors India Ltd" had stated that customer satisfaction towards Hyundai Cars in Delhi was satisfied moderately and suggested the company to improve the service provided by the company and the performance of the car.

**Arun Varma (2005)<sup>7</sup>**, in his project report on "Customer Satisfaction of Hero Honda bike Mumbai", pointed out that the road show will increase the sale. Hero Honda should implement a new strategy to reduce the competition and lead in to the bike market. People expect more mileage per kilometer. And the study shows that, they gives an excellent festival offer.

**Hans mark and albinsson (2004)<sup>8</sup>**, in his report on "Customer Satisfaction and Retention: The Experiences of Individual Employees", states that satisfaction is an overall customer attitude towards a service provider, or an emotional reaction to the difference between what customers anticipate and what they receive, regarding the fulfillment of some need, goal or desire.

**Mizik & Jacobson (2003)<sup>9</sup>**, in his report "Understanding Organizations" had explained that customers perception begins to emerge in the 1990s as an issue of growing interest to business and, in particular, to marketing, at both the academic and practitioner levels. This concept is considered to be one of the most significant factors in the success of an organization and it has been pointed to as an important source of competitive advantage for the firm.

**Parasuraman (1990)<sup>10</sup>**, in his book titled "Customer perception and Service Management" had positioned consumers perception of service quality ranging from ideal quality to totally unacceptable quality, depending on whether the customers perceived the service they receive as meeting, falling short of, or exceeding their expectations.

**Miller (1977)<sup>11</sup>**, in his book "Understanding Consumer's Behavior" classified expectations into the following categories: ideal, expected, minimum tolerable and observed. The expectation is based on the respondent's objective calculation of what performance will be. This is also known as predictive

expectation. The minimum tolerable is the least acceptable performance level. This is better than nothing and reflects what the minimum level of perceived performance must be. The deserve level can be determined by consumers evaluation of the rewards and costs involved in the relationship. Hence, this indicates what responds, in the light of investments, feel that the performance ought to be or should be.

**Robin(1976)<sup>12</sup>**, in his research report titled "Customer Satisfaction on Mahindra Bolero in North India", stated that customer is satisfied towards Mahindra Bolero. The researcher suggested that the organization wants to make service center in important places in North India.

## 5. Research Methodology

Research methodology includes the collection of primary data and secondary data. It may be defined as the procedure by which researchers go about their work of describing, explaining and predicting phenomena.

### Data collection methods

This study is compiled with both primary and secondary data.

### Primary Data Collection

The primary data were collected by the researcher from through questionnaire.

### Secondary Data Collection

The researcher has used books and websites for collecting secondary data.

### Sampling Method

The researcher has used convenient sampling method for selecting the sample.

### Sampling Size

The sample size was 200.

### Tools for Analysis

The researcher used Percentage analysis, Chi-square, Correlation, One way ANOVA for analyzing the data.

## 6. Results and Discussion

### Personal and Demographic Analysis of the Respondents:

**Table 1: Distribution of Sample Respondent based on their Personal and Demographic Factors**

Variables	Level	Count	Percent
Types of Customer	Household	179	90
	Owners of Hotels	12	6
	Teashops	9	4
Gender	Male	90	45
	Female	110	55
Age Wise Classification	Below 20 years	15	8
	21-30 years	64	32
	31-40 years	58	29
	41-50 years	43	21
	Above 51 years	20	10
Marital Status	Married	140	70

	Unmarried	60	30
<b>Educational Qualification</b>	School level	25	13
	Under graduate	63	31
	Post graduate	48	24
	Diploma	37	19
	Others	27	13
<b>Occupation</b>	Home maker	77	39
	Business man	13	6
	Government employee	43	22
	Private employee	21	10
	Others	46	23
<b>Income Per Month</b>	Below Rs.10,000	21	10
	Rs.11,000-20,000	55	28
	Rs.21,000-30,000	54	27
	Rs.31,000-40,000	52	26
	Above Rs.41,000	18	9

**Table 2: TYPE OF COOKING**

S.No.	TYPE OF COOKING	No. of RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	Electrical oil	73	37
2	Wood	59	29
3	Kerosene	68	34
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 3: GAS COMPANY WISE CLASSIFICATION OF THE RESPONDENTS**

S.No.	GAS COMPANY	No. of RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	BPC	90	45
2	HPC	62	31
3	IOC	48	24
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 4: HAVING NUMBER OF CYLINDERS**

S.No	No. of CYLINDER	No. of RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	One	72	36
2	Two	128	64
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 5: CYLINDER REFILL DAYS**

S. No.	CYLINDER REFILL DAYS	No. of RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	20-30 days	94	47
2	31-50 days	53	27
3	51-60 days	42	21
4	Above 61 days	11	5
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 6: CYLINDER BOOKING**

S.No.	CYLINDER BOOKING	No. of RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	Personally	42	21
2	Phone	54	28
3	Letter	11	5
4	SMS	71	35
5	IVRS	22	11
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 7: DEALERS DELIVERY DAYS**

S.No.	DELIVERY DAYS	No. of RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	Same day	95	48
2	1-2 days	89	44
3	3-5 days	16	8
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 8: DELIVERY MEN DELIVERS THE CYLINDER**

S.No.	DELIVERS THE CYLINDER	No. of RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	Out door	81	41
2	Kitchen	90	45
3	Store room	27	13
4	Some where out	2	1
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 9: WEIGHT OF CYLINDER CONFIRMS BY DELIVERY MEN**

S. No.	RESPONSE	No. of RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	Yes	147	74
2	No	53	26
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 10: OPINION TOWARDS CYLINDERS QUALITY**

S.No.	RESPONSE	No. of RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	Yes	174	87
2	No	26	13
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 11: DELIVERY MEN CHARGES**

S.No.	DELIVERY MEN CHARGES	No. of RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	Rs.5-10	87	44
2	Rs.10-20	113	56
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 12: RESPOND IMMEDIATELY INCASE OF LEAKAGE**

S.No.	DEALER RESPOND	No. of RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	30 Min	55	28
2	1 Hour	117	58
3	1 Day	28	14
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 13: BEHAVIOR OF DELIVERY MEN AND MECHANIC**

S.No.	OPINION	No. of RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	Very good	9	4
2	Good	21	11
3	Average	153	76
4	Poor	17	8
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>
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**Table 17: CHI-SQUARE TEST BETWEEN THE GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS AND GAS PREFERENCE**

	GAS COMPANY			TOTAL
	BPC	HPC	IOC	
<b>GENDER</b>				
Male	27	41	22	<b>90</b>
Female	63	21	26	<b>110</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>200</b>

**Table 18: RESULT OF CHI-SQUARE TEST**

	Value	D f	Asymp.Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	19.379 <sup>a</sup>	2	.000

Calculated Chi-square value = 19.379  
 Degrees of freedom = 2  
 Level of Significance = 5%  
 P value = 0.000

**Table 14: MANDATORY INSPECTION PERIOD**

S.No.	INSPECTION PERIOD	No. of RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	Year	34	17
2	2 Year	69	35
3	3 Year	78	39
4	4 Year	19	9
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 15: OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF ANNAI GAS SERVICE**

S.No.	OPINION	No. of RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	Very good	117	58
2	Good	37	19
3	Average	42	21
4	Poor	2	1
5	Very bad	2	1
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 19: ANOVA FOR FAMILY INCOME & CYLINDER REFILL DAYS**

CYLINDER REFILL DAYS	SUM OF SQUARES	D f	MEAN SQUARE	F	Sig
Between groups	16.561	4	4.140	5.079	0.001
Within Groups	158.939	195	0.815		
<b>Total</b>	<b>175.500</b>	<b>199</b>			

F value = 5.079  
 P value = 0.001  
 (0.001<0.05) Null Hypothesis is rejected.

**Table 16: NEW GAS AGENCY IN TUTICORIN DISTRICT**

S.No.	RESPONSE	No. of RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	Yes	2	1
2	No	198	99

**Table 20: CORRELATION BETWEEN MARITAL STATUS AND OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF THE RESPONDENTS**

	MARITAL STATUS	OVERALL PERFORMANCE
<b>Spearman's Marital rho Status</b> Correlation Coefficient	1.000	0.404**
Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
N		200
<b>Overall Pearson Performance</b> Correlation	0.404**	1
Sig (2-tailed)	0.000	
N	200	200

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)  
**r=0.404**

**7. Summary Of Findings**

The major findings are summarized below:

**Percentage Analysis**

- 90% of the respondents are household.
- 55% of the respondents are female.
- 32% of the respondents belong to the age group of 21-30 years.
- 70% of the respondents are married.
- 31% of the respondents are under graduate.
- 39% of the respondents are homemaker.
- 28% of respondents income status is Rs.11,000-20,000.
- 37% of the respondents are used electrical oil.
- 45% of the respondents are used BPC gas.
- 64% of the respondents having two cylinders.
- 47% of the respondents said that they refill the cylinder 20-30 days.
- 35% of the respondents said that they send SMS to book the gas.
- 48% of the respondents said that the dealers delivery the gas at the same day.

- 45% of the respondents said that the delivery man delivers the cylinder at kitchen.
- 74% of the respondents said that the weight of the cylinder confirms by delivery men.
- 87% of the respondents said that the cylinders have quality.
- 56% of the respondents said that the delivery men charges extra other than billed amount Rs.10-20.
- 58% of the respondents said that the gas dealer respond within 1 hour in case of leakage.
- 76% of the respondents said that the behavior of counter staff/ delivery men attitude is average.
- 39% of the respondents said that the agency conduct mandatory inspection after 3 years.
- 58% of the respondents said that Gas Agency overall performance is very good.
- 99% of the respondents do not want for new gas in Tuticorin district.

## 8. SUGGESTIONS

- The companies try to improve their customer care activities to delight and attract customers.
- The company may reduce the period of waiting for cylinder.
- More service schemes can be introduced by the company.
- Safety features has to be improved in showroom.
- Overall features of the gas agency can be improved more than at present.

## 9. CONCLUSION

This project is intended to study the Customers' Perception towards Gas Service at Tuticorin District. On the basis of the data collected and the analysis, the researcher concluded that the respondents preferred more for the Gas Agency Service for its price, quality, and delivery services. Most of the customers are expecting extra charges fixed by the delivery men to be reduced in the Gas Agency Service. Most of the customers used Gas for its quality and brand name. Overall, most of the customers are satisfied with the Gas Agency Service in Tuticorin District.

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