Editorial Advisory Board

EDITORIAL

With immense pleasure Commerce Forum of Department of Commerce, Assam University, Silchar is going to release the sixth issue of **HIND BUSINESS REVIEW (HBR)**. The present issue of HBR entails in it research papers covering diverse issues of business. A deliberate attempt has been made to create a broader spectrum by including research papers pertaining to various areas of business because of the inherent nature of business research.

The sole objective of this research journal is to be one of the premier journals of business-related research. I am sincerely thankful to all the contributors for submitting research papers. I have the conviction that the journal will certainly draw the attention of a wide range of researchers in the years to come. The editorial advisory board of HBR has been adorned by academicians hailing from different institutes of higher learning from different parts of India and I must put on record my sincere gratitude to all of them.

All the members of Commerce Forum also deserve special thanks for their consent and support for publishing this journal. I would like to extend heartiest thanks to the Head of the Department of Commerce and Chairman, Commerce Forum for his support from time to time. I take this opportunity to thank all the faculty members for their moral support in this endeavour. Despite relentless effort, there may be some inadvertent flaws in this issue. So, Hind Business Review expects feedback and suggestions in writing from the readers because we believe that improvement is a continuous process and collective wisdom can certainly enrich the forthcoming issues of Hind Business Review.

Dr. Kingshuk Adhikari
Chief Editor

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A Study on Perceptions of Private Sector Bank Employees on Customer Relationship Management

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Abstract

Today one of the approaches which are creating the buzz in the banking sector is Customer Relationship Management (CRM). Indian Banks are realizing that the key for attaining success in a competitive environment is to focus on building and maintaining relationship with customers. The main purpose behind this study is to examine the perceptions of private sector bank employees on CRM in the banking sector particularly private sector commercial banks operating in Goalpara District of Assam. The research design in this study consists of exploratory in nature whereby different aspects with regards to CRM in the banking sector have been extracted from literature review and tested on a sample size 24 number of employees working in the banks. These results were discussed and analysed so as to get an indication of how far the perceptions of private sector bank employees on CRM is important.

Keywords: CRM, Perception, Bank Employees

Introduction

The relationship marketing received more attention from scholars and practitioners in the last decade of 20th century because of two issues: benefits to organization and the involvement of generic service characteristics. Relationship marketing or CRM is emerging as a core marketing activity for businesses in a powerful competitive environment. The statistics suggest that businesses spend more to acquire new customers than to retain them (Mehra, 2000). Therefore, many firms are now paying more attention to their relationships with existing customers to retain them and increase their share of customer purchases. CRM holds that a major driver of company's profitability is the aggregate value of the company's customer base (Kotler, 2003). Berry (1983) viewed relationship marketing as identifying, acquiring, developing and retaining customers. Christopher (1992) viewed relationship marketing as a "tool to turn current and new customers into regularly purchasing clients and then progressively move them through being strong supporters of the company and its products, to finally being active and vocal advocates for the company". Sheth and Parvatiyar (2001) defined CRM as a "comprehensive strategy and process of acquiring, retaining and partnering with selective customers to create superior value for the company and the customer". Osunde C (2014) defined CRM can be viewed as an application of one-to-one marketing and relationship marketing, responding to an individual customer on the basis of what the customer says and what else is known about that customer. It is a management approach that enables organizations to identify, attract, and increase retention of profitable customers by managing relationships with them and further identifying strategically significant customers.

Review of Literature

The goal of this review was to emphasize the relatedness of the subject explored that follows the path of the problem area undertaken. Popli and Rao (2009) reviewed CRM in Indian banks and found that the private sector banks have been able to implement the CRM practices more effectively when compared to their public sector counterparts. This indicated that the private sector banks have been more innovative in understanding their customers and in building good relations with them. Kumar and Velu (2011) attempted to study the CRM in Indian retail banking industry. The results of the research study revealed that there appears to be lack of

awareness with the bank employees as well as adoption of CRM packages available in the market. The study also suggested that the successful implementation of CRM package could be achieved only if the bank could create the right environment, culture and attitude of the employee aiming to serve the customers in the best possible manner. Singh and Kaur (2011) determined the factors that have an impact on customer satisfaction as regards the working of select Indian universal banks. The major findings of the study showed that customer satisfaction is influenced by seven factors: employee responsiveness, appearance of tangibles, social responsibility, services innovation, positive word-of-mouth, competence, and reliability. Chary and Ramesh (2012) examined the CRM in banking sector as a comparative study between State Bank of India (SBI) and Housing Development Finance Corporation (HDFC) Bank. To conduct the study, primary data were collected from a sample of 120 customers of the selected banks, SBI (60 customers) and HDFC (60 customers) of Warangal District of Andhra Pradesh. The study concluded that when banks through CRM activity attended the needs of the customers without any time delay it could create more customer awareness and a significant customer base. The study also argued that although SBI is a public sector bank, it has taken much care in implementation of CRM, fine tuning the CRM and finally putting it on track whereas, HDFC was not at par with SBI in most of the aspects like database management, responding to the customers in mean time and the services as expected by the customers. Kavitha (2013) conducted an empirical investigation on employees' perception on electronic CRM in banks in Tamil Nadu. This study was conducted with an objective to know the employee's perception on E-CRM tools and effectiveness of usage of these tools. The research study was descriptive in nature as it described the employees' opinion as it existed. The study found that due to the invention of computers and its usage in all business processes, it has lost the direct personal touch. Therefore, bank employees consider the fact of decreasing direct communication with the customers as the main problem in E-CRM usage. George and Manoj (2013) were of the view that one of the approaches that are fast gaining significance is CRM. The study found that apart from focusing on developing product strategies alone, banks need to accord equal or higher priority to customer service particularly by way of installing an effective CRM system. Sampath and Narender (2014) examined the CRM practices in banking sector and observed that CRM has been a key element of the modern marketing in recent years. Kalidoss and Manjula (2015) attempted to explore and analyse CRM practices of the new private banks in Nagapattinam district. The total number of new generation private sector banks under the study comprised of Axis, HDFC, ICICI, Kotak Mahendra and Indus Ind. The study was based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through questionnaires distributed to the customers and employees of the new generation private banks. To collect data from the sample size of 480 number of respondents under the study convenient sampling technique was applied. The data collected were analysed by applying appropriate statistical techniques such as rank correlation, chi-square, student's t test, F test, analysis of variance (ANOVA), multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) and factor analysis. The study found that out of the given factors, account and transaction accuracy, carefulness, efficiency in correcting mistakes, friendliness and helpfulness of personnel were important selection criteria for the banks. Bhat and Darzi (2016) conducted a study on determining the role of employee's perception towards CRM practices and customer retention. The findings of the study revealed two prominent CRM practices that are customer knowledge and customer orientation which have significant positive impact on the customer retention. The study also contributed to the theory by evaluating the role of knowledge management and customer-oriented behaviour in developing long term relationships with the customers. Thus, the findings of the study indicated that the banks that were able to understand their customers and manage customer information properly were in a better position to prevent customer defection.

It is evident from the review of earlier studies that customer relationship management particularly in banking sector has not been given much attention so far. In the context of ever compounding competition in the banking industry, comprehending the perceptions of bankers as regards the components contributing to relationship building is of paramount importance so that value delivery can be maximized. The customer relationship management-based services provided by banks to their customers are to be studied in-depth to unravel the effectiveness of the banking strategies. Moreover, the studies relating to the subject considered remained un-researched in the private sector banks in the area under study.

Banking Network in the Study Area

The Goalpara district is an administrative district in the state of Assam in India. The district is having a network of 19 number of banks with 56 number of branches of banks; of which 41 number branches of commercial banks (33 branches of public sector banks and 08 branches of private sector banks), 12 number of branches of RRBs ie, Assam Gramin Vikas Bank and 03 number of branches of Assam Cooperative Apex Bank. The banking network of the district under study is shown in table 1.

Table 1: Banks operating in Goalpara District as on 31.03.2016

Sl. No.	Banks	No. of Branches	
1.	Commercial Banks:		
	A. Public Sector Banks:		
	Allahabad Bank	01	
	Central Bank of India	07	
	State Bank of India	07	
	United Bank of India	03	
	UCO bank	09	
	Union Bank of India	01	
	Punjab National Bank	01	
	Bank of India	01	
	Canara Bank	01	
	Oriental Bank of Commerce	01	
	Syndicate Bank	01	
	Sub Total		**33**
	B. Private Sector		
	Axis Bank	01	
	HDFC Bank	02	
	ICICI Bank	01	
	IDBI Bank	01	
	Bandhan Bank	01	
	North East Small Finance Bank	02	
	Sub Total		**08**
2.	Regional Rural Bank:		
	Assam Gramin Vikash Bank	12	**12**
3.	Cooperative Bank		
	Assam Cooperative Apex Bank	03	**03**
	Total	**56**	**56**

Source: Lead Bank Office (UCO Bank), Goalpara District, Assam.

Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to examine the perceptions of private sector bank employees on CRM in the banking sector particularly private sector commercial banks operating in Goalpara District of Assam.

Research Methodology

A sample of 24 number of bank employees from 08 number of branches of private sector commercial banks under Goalpara District were selected for the study. With the help of the questionnaire specially developed for the employees, data were collected to analyse the perception of bank employees on CRM. The study mainly used the primary source of data collected through a structured questionnaire. The set of questionnaires was circulated to managerial level and front office employees of the banks. Convenience sampling procedure was followed to collect the desired information. The statistical techniques like descriptive statistics and Garret Ranking were used to analyse the data.

On the basis of literature review and CRM models, the researcher has considered the variables to examine the perception of bank employees towards CRM practices, Knowledge and ideas about CRM; Training and skills of the employees; Handling customers' grievances; Providing special incentives; Understanding business benefit; Functional boundaries; Top management involvement; Effective measurement and reward system; Attention to customers; Expectation of customers; Cross functional working system; Making personal calls. Besides these, factors which influence customers on their selection of banks, and the banker customer relationship, have been considered based on Bank Service Quality (BSQ) scale as proposed by Bahia and Nantel (2000). These factors have been grouped under three heads; bank products related variables; bank services related variables and personnel related reasons.

Analysis and Discussion

In order to find out the most significant factors which influences the respondents, Garrett's ranking technique is used. This technique provides the change of orders of influences into numerical scores. The advantage of this technique is that the factors are arranged based on their severity from the point of view of respondents. Hence, the same number of respondents on two or more factors may have given different rank. The study had the respondents rank different factors and outcome based on their impact thereby converting into score value and rank with the help of the following formula -

Percent position $= \dfrac{100(R_{ij}-0.5)}{N_j}$

Where,

R_{ij} = Rank given for the ith variable by jth respondents

N_j = Number of variables ranked by jth respondents

With the help of Garrett's Table, the percent position estimated is converted into scores by referring to the table given by Garret and Woodworth (1969). Then for each factor, the scores of each individual are added and then total value of scores and mean values of score is calculated. The factors having highest mean value is considered to be the most important factor.

Bank Products influencing the perceptions of bank employees

The following table2 depicts the ranking analysis of bank products influencing customers in their selection of banks - Bank employees' perception**.**

Table 2: Ranking Analysis of Bank Products Influencing Customers in their Selection of Banks - Bank Employees' Perception

Sl. No.	Bank Products	R 1	R 2	R 3	R 4	R 5	R 6	R 7	R 8	R 9	R 10	R 11	R 12	Total of GS	Average of GS	GR
1	ATM Facility	0	10	5	3	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1599	66.6	**2**
2	Demat Facility	0	0	0	0	10	2	1	0	0	2	6	3	1093	45.5	**7**
3	Service Variety	3	0	2	13	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	1520	63.3	**3**
4	Ambience	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	11	5	4	0	992	41.3	**9**
5	Parking Facility	0	0	0	0	0	3	7	4	1	9	0	0	1080	45.0	**8**
6	Loan Facility	21	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1971	82.1	**1**
7	Interest Rates	0	12	0	0	1	3	4	2	2	0	0	0	1472	61.3	**5**
8	Safety Vaults	0	0	0	2	2	3	1	0	3	1	0	12	940	39.2	**12**
9	Bank Image	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	0	6	3	2	979	40.8	**10**
10	Number of Branches	0	0	5	1	0	1	2	2	6	0	6	1	1120	46.7	**6**
11	Debit/Credit Card Facility	0	1	10	5	2	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	1493	62.2	**4**
12	Advertisement	0	0	0	0	0	2	7	2	1	1	5	6	957	39.9	**11**

(R = Ranks, GS = Garrett Score, GR= Garrett Rank)
Source: Field Survey

In table 2, the bank product facilities reported by the bank employees has been calculated by Garrett Ranking method. It is observed that the bank employees' perception across all the eight bank branches and found that the loan facility has appeared as 1st rank, ATM facility in 2nd rank, service variety in 3rd rank, debit/credit card facility in 4th rank and so on. Hence, considering the respective order of importance, loan facility and ATM facility along with service variety are found as the major factors influencing customers in selecting a bank.

Bank Services influencing customers in their selection of banks

The following table-3 depicts the ranking analysis of bank services influencing customers in their selection of banks - Bank employees' perception**.**

Table 3: Ranking Analysis of Bank Services Influencing Customers in their Selection of Banks - Bank Employees' Perception

Sl. No.	Bank Services	R 1	R 2	R 3	R 4	R 5	R 6	R 7	R 8	R 9	R 10	R 11	R 12	R 13	R 14	Total of GS	Average of GS	GR
1	Location	6	0	0	0	3	0	6	0	3	0	0	5	1	0	1361	56.7	**6**
2	Banking Hours	0	4	0	0	0	3	0	7	0	2	0	0	5	3	1137	47.4	**10**
3	Holiday Service	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	1	4	13	793	33.0	**14**
4	Door to Door Services	5	1	0	3	0	0	6	3	3	0	0	0	1	2	1387	57.8	**5**
5	Speedy Operations	0	7	13	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1636	68.2	**2**
6	Simplicity in Procedures	0	0	1	9	7	1	2	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	1401	58.4	**4**
7	Computerized Services	0	0	1	0	9	3	0	2	0	0	0	2	6	1	1161	48.4	**9**
8	Quality of Services	9	3	6	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1768	73.7	**1**
9	Bank Charges	3	3	0	0	0	11	4	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1444	60.2	**3**
10	Internet Banking	1	6	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	3	0	8	0	2	1198	49.9	**8**
11	Mobile Alerts	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	8	1	11	0	0	0	1101	45.9	**11**
12	Handling Complaints	0	0	2	6	0	1	0	7	1	1	3	3	0	0	1244	51.8	**7**
13	Security Secrecy	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	6	7	1	2	5	0	1045	43.5	**12**
14	Transparency	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	8	6	2	2	3	964	40.2	**13**

(R = Ranks, GS = Garrett Score, GR= Garrett Rank)
Source: Field Survey

The variables relating to bank service facilities as reported by the bank employees have been calculated by Garrett Rank method and is presented in table -2. As per bank employees' perception across all the eight bank branches, it is found that quality of services placed in the 1st rank followed by speedy operations (2nd rank), bank charges (3rd rank) and simplicity in procedures (4th rank) and so on. This indicates that good quality of services with speedy operational practices and low bank charges are the decisive factors influencing the customers for selecting his or her branches. In other words, quality of service alongwith procedural simplicity and convenience is the most important factor for evolving an effective CRM practice.

Personnel Related Reasons influencing customers in their selection of banks

The following table 4 depicts the ranking analysis of personnel related reasons influencing customers in their selection of banks from Bank employees' perspective.

Table 4: Ranking Analysis of Personnel Related Reasons Influencing Customers in their Selection of Banks - Bank Employees' Perception

Sl. No.	Personnel Relationship	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10	Total of GS	Average of GS	GR
1	Personal Touch	8	0	1	8	0	3	1	2	1	0	1470	61.3	**2**
2	Attentiveness	0	1	4	1	6	8	4	0	0	0	1244	51.8	**5**
3	Responsiveness	0	2	0	2	8	5	1	5	1	0	1163	48.5	**6**
4	Courteous Service	0	2	1	6	0	1	5	1	6	2	1055	44.0	**7**
5	Trust Worthiness	0	7	4	0	1	4	4	3	1	0	1291	53.8	**3**
6	Replying to Queries	0	0	1	2	7	0	0	0	13	1	938	39.1	**9**
7	Experienced Personnel	1	3	0	0	0	0	3	3	1	13	789	32.9	**10**
8	Timely service	12	4	7	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1747	72.8	**1**
9	Keeping up Promises/ Time Schedules	0	5	1	2	2	0	0	5	1	8	986	41.1	**8**
10	Reliable	3	0	5	3	0	3	5	5	0	0	1269	52.9	**4**

(R = Ranks, GS = Garrett Score, GR= Garrett Rank)
Source: Field Survey

The bank personnel relationship facilities of the bank reported by the bank employees have been calculated by Garrett Rank method and is presented in table-3. As per bank employees' perception across all the eight bank branches, it is observed that the timely service has appeared in 1st rank, personal touch in 2nd rank, trust worthiness in 3rd rank, and so on. This indicates that bank personnel's involvement is very essential for building CRM. The important factors influencing the customers for selecting a bank is timely services with trust worthy behaviour of the employees. Personal relation of the employees with their customers matters a lot for selecting the bank and retaining the customers.

Reasons for customers switching banks - Bank Employees' perception

The reasons for customers switching banks - bank employees' perception have been calculated through mean and standard deviation. The following table-5 presents the reasons for customers switching banks.

Table 5: Reasons for Customers Switching Banks - Bank Officials' Perception

Sl. No.	Problems	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Problematic ATM Debit Credit Card Facility	24	4.96	.204
2	Limited variety in service	24	4.58	.504
3	Poor Ambience	24	3.25	.944
4	Poor Parking Facility	24	3.04	1.268
5	Limited no of Branches	24	4.21	.721
6	Undue Banking Hours	24	3.83	.702
7	Lack of Holiday Service	24	3.54	.658
8	Slow Operations	24	4.96	.204
9	Poor Service Quality	24	5.00	.000
10	Lack of Secrecy Security	24	4.96	.204
11	Discourteous Service	24	4.71	.464
12	Unreliability	24	4.71	.464
13	Poor Attention	24	4.75	.442
14	Poor Response	24	4.71	.464

Source: Field Survey

From the analysis of mean scores and standard deviation, it is seen that out of 14 reasons listed from the literature review, bank officials' perception towards poor parking facility (Mean score-3.04, standard deviation-1.268), poor ambience (mean score- 3.25, standard deviation – 0.944) and lack of holiday service (mean score-3.54, standard deviation-0.658) influences the most in customers switching from one bank to another.

Perceptions of Bank Employees on CRM

In order to know the perception of bank employees on CRM, mean and standard deviation have been calculated and presented in table 6.

Table 6: Perception of Bank Employees on CRM

Sl. No.	Statements	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Knowledge and ideas about CRM	24	4.67	0.637
2	Training and skills of the employees	24	4.79	0.415
3	Handling customers grievances	24	4.96	0.204
4	Providing special incentives	24	4.04	1.268
5	Understanding business benefit	24	4.88	0.338
6	Functional boundaries	24	4.58	0.584
7	Top management involvement	24	4.46	0.588
8	Effective measurement and reward system	24	4.38	0.711
9	Attention to customers	24	4.88	0.448
10	Expectation of customers	24	4.96	0.204
11	Cross functional working system	24	4.29	0.751
12	Making personal calls	24	4.88	0.338

Source: Field Survey

The above table describes the statements on CRM to know the perception of bank employees. It is observed that out of 12 statements for understanding respondents' perception, the mean score for providing special incentives is 4.04 with standard deviation value 1.268, mean score of cross functional working system is 4.29 with standard deviation 0.751, and mean score of effective measurement and reward system is 4.38 with Standard deviation 0.711, depicts the maximum difference in understanding CRM as per the perception of bank employees. Hence, banks need to give more attention on special incentives, functional work system and effective reward for evolving CRM for acquiring, retaining and partnering with selective customers to create superior value for the banks and the customers.

Conclusion

This study provides a step in understanding the perceptions of private sector bank employees on CRM in the banking sector. The findings indicate that there are certain loop holes in the existing CRM strategies applied in the banks. This study is an example of the knowledge that can be gained in understanding the importance of bank employees' perception on factors influencing customers in their selection of banks and the reasons for customers switching from one bank to another. It is suggested that effective CRM practices is the need of the hour for acquiring the customers and retaining the existing customers to create superior value for the banks and the customers.

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Relative Worth of Attributes of Celebrities Endorsing Female Face Cream: A Study in Silchar Town of Assam

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Abstract

The present study is aimed at identifying the attributes of celebrities that are capable to attract customers for purchasing female face cream, and also to identify the capability of these attributes in terms of the degrees in which these are capable to lure. For the study, thirty-five attributes were identified and put under five categories. A six points rating scale questionnaire was used for the study. The attributes of celebrities were grouped based on Physical Appearance, Trustworthiness, Expertise, Personal choice, and Field of celebrity. The survey was initiated as a census survey with 281 respondents, who were female students from Assam University, but could only traced 246 as traceable respondents. For analysis of the data; means, ranks and standard deviations were used. In terms of the degree in which the attributes are capable of luring, the components; Inspiring, Genuineness, Dressing Sense, Being Dermatologist and Performance in his/her field were found as top five among all the attributes.

Keywords: Celebrity endorsement, female face cream, attributes, female students.

Introduction

In addition to certain other things, it is the degree of commitment of the rulers of the countries practicing market economy about the extent of freedom accorded to business to operate and also the age of the market economy which decides the degree of the fierceness of the competition in the market. It may be a bit difficult, to either guess or speak on the basis of the facts available to list the commodities which face more or for that matter less competition in the market. However, with some amount of firmness it can be said that the cosmetic products in general and the products like face cream faces more competition in the market probably for the reason that the consumers of this product generally are very touchy, sensitive, cautious and sometimes even fussy especially when this face cream is for the use of females.

How do then the producers overcome this challenge? They time to time try to know the changing tastes and likings of the customers of such products; so that they are in a position to tune up the product as per the latest demand of the customers is the answer. However, this solution to the problem is termed as mundane under the changed scenario in which the competitors have discovered other ways to lure the customers. In addition to being able to provide the product to the customers of their choice the producers also try to ensure that they reach the customers about the product in the best possible manners. One such way has been to communicate the customers about the product putting certain celebrities as ambassadors. It happens so because certain sets of customers to some extent get lured in favor of the product if it is endorsed by such celebrity who is in their heart and mind. The crux in such cases thus becomes the celebrity more than the product itself. In the process, promoters spend a lot of money annually on celebrity endorsement with a hope that celebrities are an effective spokesperson for their products and/brands (Katyal, 2007). To put it differently the producers take due care to communicate not only about their products but also try to lure the customers through the chosen celebrities who are the 'Heroes' and 'Heroines' for the target customers. The Indian advertisement industry has understood that celebrity endorsement plays a crucial role in delivering a message which helps the customers to recall and persuasion for a product/brand (Dixit, 2005).

Objectives of the Study

- To identify and select the attributes of celebrities endorsing female face creams.
- To gauge the relative capacity of the attributes in terms of its capacity of luring customers.
- To compare the relative capacity across the medium of instruction at the school level as a demographic characteristic of the respondents.

Research Methodology

The study is descriptive in nature. To attain the objectives of the study initially, a review of literature was carried out to identify the attributes of celebrities endorsing female face cream preferred by its ladies customers. In order to ensure the correctness of the attributes identified through the said literature review personal interviews with a dozen girl students were carried out. The two exercises as above facilitated the identification and selection of attributes of celebrities endorsing female face cream. The same was included in the questionnaire for identifying the relative capacity of the attributes to lure its customers. The population comprised in it students studying select science and the technology subjects at post-graduation level in Assam University. The survey was census with a population of 281 but only 246 respondents' views could be obtained. The respondents were the female students of Assam University. A six-point scale was used in the questionnaire. Statistical tools such as mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the data.

Review of Literature

Anjum, Dhanda, & Nagra(2012) initiated a study to know the reasons of adopting celebrities' in endorsing products; impact of sales after roping in celebrities and lastly to measure the impact of advertisements endorsed by celebrities. The study was based on both primary and secondary data. A questionnaire with five points Likert scale was used. A sample size of 60 was considered for the study. For analysis of the data, factor analysis was done. The result showed that celebrity endorsements are helpful in brand equity. Such endorsements create an impression on the customers about the reliability of the products. It also helps to recall and retain the products by the consumers. And lastly, it also has a positive influence on the demand for the product. Kumar & Hundal (2015) initiated a study to know the perceptions and attitude of the customer towards celebrity endorsement and factors that influence the purchase behavior of the customer. The study was with a sample of 100. A questionnaire with five points Likert scale was used. The research results match with the findings of *Speck et al, 1988* and found that expert celebrities produced higher recall of product information in comparison to the non-expert and less popular celebrities. It also showed that the products which are endorsed by celebrities in comparison to that of others have more market share. Radha & Jija (2013) conducted a study in Coimbatore to analyze the influence of celebrity endorsement on the consumer's purchase decision. The research focused on consumers who have shown a very different yet interesting way of recognizing celebrities and stars. In India where stars and cricketers are idolized and looked up to, marketers can see this opportunity promote their products and create a wider consumer base.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Relative worth of the attributes relating to Physical Appearance

Physical Appearance-related attributes	Mean	Rank	S.D	Rank
Attraction	2.98	6th	1.52	7th
Beauty	3.26	5th	1.36	3rd
Weight	2.88	7th	1.37	4th
Elegance	3.65	2nd	1.24	1st
Cuteness	3.54	3rd	1.32	2nd
Height	3.70	1st	1.42	5th
Complexion	3.36	4th	1.50	6th

Source: Primary data.

Note: The highest mean ranks first and the lowest SD ranks first

While identifying the relative worth of the components, out of seven, the component height secured 1st rank with a mean score of 3.70 followed by Elegance secured 2nd rank with a mean score of 3.65 and Cuteness 3rd with a mean score of 3.54. While determining the degree of dispersion in the opinions over the seven components, the component; Elegance ranked 1st with an S.D. of 1.24, Cuteness 2nd with an S.D. of 1.32 and the component Beauty ranked 3rd with an S.D of 1.36.

Table 2: Relative worth of the attributes relating to Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness-related attributes	Mean	Rank	S.D	Rank
Credible	3.05	7th	1.19	1st
Familiar	3.49	5th	1.22	2nd
Inspiring	4.03	1st	1.33	4th
Genuineness	3.99	2nd	1.37	6th
General image	3.79	3rd	1.32	3rd
Charitable image	3.60	4th	1.36	5th
Favorite celebrity	3.46	6th	1.41	7th

Source: Primary data.

Note: The highest mean ranks first and the lowest SD ranks first

While identifying the relative worth of the components, out of seven, the component Inspiring secured 1st rank with a mean score of 4.03 followed by Genuineness secured 2nd rank with a mean score of 3.99 and General image 3rd with a mean score of 3.79. While determining the degree of dispersion in the opinions, over the seven components, the component credible ranked 1st with an S.D. of 1.19, Familiar 2nd with an S.D. of 1.22 and the component General image ranked 3rd with an S.D. of 1.32.

Table 3: Relative worth of the attributes relating to Expertise

Expertise-related features	Mean	Rank	S.D	Rank
Detailing the product	3.44	3.5th	1.57	7th
Seniority	3.00	7th	1.30	2nd
Womanhood	3.68	1st	1.33	4th
Queenly	3.30	5th	1.28	1st
You find yourself in her	3.08	6th	1.48	5th
Popular	3.67	2nd	1.31	3rd
TRP based image	3.44	3.5th	1.49	6th

Source: Primary data.

Note: The highest mean ranks first and the lowest SD ranks first.

While identifying the relative worth of the components, out of seven component, under the feature expertise related feature, the component Womanhood secured 1st rank with a mean score of 3.68 followed by Popular secured 2nd rank with a mean score of 3.67, Detailing the product and TRP based image ranked 3.5th with an equal mean score of 3.44.While determining the degree of dispersion in the opinions, over the seven components, the component Queenly ranked 1st with an S.D. of 1.28, Seniority 2nd with an S.D. of 1.30 and the component Popular ranked 3rd with an S.D. of 1.31.

Table 4 depicts that for the respondents who studied in English medium schools, the component elegance ranked 1st as the mean score of the responses was 3.66, height though 2nd but very close to 1st as the mean score of the responses was 3.64 and cuteness 3rd as the mean score of the concerned responses was 3.48. The table also depicts that for the respondents who studied in English medium schools the component Weight ranked last i.e., the 7th as the mean score for this component was 2.86 and Attraction 6th with a mean score of 3.04. For the respondents who studied in Vernacular medium schools, the component height ranked 1st, as the mean score of the responses was 3.86, cuteness 2nd as the mean score of the responses was 3.72 and complexion3rd as the mean score of the concerned responses was 3.61.

**Table 4: Relative worth of the attributes relating to physical appearance based
on the medium of instruction at the school**

Physical appearance related attributes	English		Vernacular	
	Mean	**Rank**	**Mean**	**Rank**
Attraction	3.04	6th	2.83	7th
Beauty	3.25	5th	3.28	5th
Weight	2.86	7th	2.97	6th
Elegance	3.66	1st	3.62	4th
Cuteness	3.48	3rd	3.72	2nd
Height	3.64	2nd	3.86	1st
Complexion	3.27	4th	3.61	3rd

Source: Primary data

The table also depicts that for the respondents who studied in vernacular medium schools the component Attraction ranked last i.e., the 7th as the mean score for this component was 2.83 and Weight 6th with a mean score of 2.97.

**Table 5: Relative worth of the attributes relating to trustworthiness based
on the medium of instruction at the school**

Trustworthiness related attributes	English		Vernacular	
	Mean	**Rank**	**Mean**	**Rank**
Credible	2.97	7th	3.28	7th
Familiar	3.45	5th	3.61	6th
Inspiring	3.96	1st	4.21	2nd
Genuineness	3.87	2nd	4.34	1st
General image	3.71	3rd	4.03	3rd
Charitable image	3.48	4th	3.95	4th
Favorite celebrity	3.34	6th	3.75	5th

Source: Primary data

Table 5 depicts that for the respondents who studied in English medium schools, the component Inspiring ranked 1st as the mean score of the responses was 3.96, Genuineness 2nd as the mean score of the responses was 3.87 and General image 3rd as the mean score of the concerned responses was 3.71. The table also depicts that for the respondents who studied in English medium schools the component Credible ranked last i.e., the 7th as the mean score for this component was 2.97 and Favourite celebrity ranked 6th with a mean score of 3.34.For the respondents who studied in Vernacular medium schools, the component Genuineness ranked 1st, as the mean score of the responses was 4.34,Inspiring 2ndas the mean score of the responses was 4.21 and General image 3rd as the mean score of the concerned responses was 4.03. The table also depicts that for the respondents who studied in vernacular medium schools the component Credible ranked last i.e., the 7th as the mean score for this component was 3.28 and Familiar 6th with a mean score of 3.61.

Table 6 depicts that for the respondents who studied in English medium schools, the component Womanhood ranked 1st as the mean score of the responses was 3.75, Detailing the product 2nd   as the mean score of the responses was 3.61, Popular 3rd as the mean score of the concerned responses was 3.60. The table also depicts that for the respondents who studied in English medium schools the component Seniority and You find yourself in her ranked last i.e., 6.5th as both the components scored equal in terms of mean with a score of 3.10.For the respondents who studied in Vernacular medium schools, the component popular ranked 1st, as the mean score of the responses was 3.87,TRP based image 2nd as the mean score of the responses was 3.81 and Seniority 3rd as the mean score of the concerned responses was 2.70.

Table 6: Relative worth of the attributes relating to Expertise based on the medium of instruction at the school

Expertise related attributes	English		Vernacular	
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Detailing the product	3.61	2nd	2.95	7th
Seniority	3.10	6.5th	2.70	3rd
Womanhood	3.75	1st	3.47	4th
Queenly	3.28	5th	3.34	5th
You find yourself in her	3.10	6.5	3.059	6th
Popular	3.60	3rd	3.87	1st
TRP based image	3.31	4th	3.81	2nd

Source: Primary data

The table also depicts that for the respondents who studied in vernacular medium schools the component Detailing the product ranked last i.e., the 7th as the mean score for this component was 2.95 and You find yourself in her 6th with a mean score of 3.05.

Conclusion

In terms of the relative capacity of the attributes for its capacity of luring customers under the three categories of attributes of celebrities endorsing a female face cream, the components *Height* and *Elegance* were found to be in the top two positions under the category of Physical-appearance related attributes, whereas *Weight* and *Attraction* occupied the status of the bottom two. Again, for the category Trustworthiness related attributes, the attribute Inspiring and Genuineness were found to be in the top two positions whereas Credible and Favorite beautician got pushed to the stage of bottom two. For the category Expertise related attributes, the attributes *Womanhood* and *Popular* were found to be in the top two positions whereas *Seniority* and *You find yourself in her* got placed in the bottom two strata of the layers.

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Workforce Challenges and Customer Satisfaction: A Study based on Hotel Industry of Kolkata and its adjoining areas in West Bengal, India

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Abstract

Presently the hotels based on Kolkata and adjacent areas are facing with the workforce challenges which tremendously effect on the customer satisfaction. This study is about model solutions for the industry. Based on detailed background research, hours of interviews, feedback from the hotel guest, discussions, site visits at twelve hotels, located in Kolkata and its adjacent areas, the authors have drawn a comprehensive picture of this critical industry. Being a people oriented industry; it is a well-established fact that the customers become satisfied when the quality service offered to them. But at present, this sector is facing challenges due to shortage of skilled employee and detainment of quality workforce. Naturally, it is very essential for the hotels to fulfil the customer need with a quality service delivery and thus the major components of human capital prevailing in those hotels are necessary to examine. Employees have competencies that are critical for the survival of an organization. The competencies and skills of the employees of hotels have become extremely vital it could be concluded that employers in this sector need to focus developing distinctive and sound employee retention strategies which recognizes some of the dynamic challenges faced by the hotels in Kolkata.

Keywords: Hotels, Customer Satisfaction, Work force Challenge, Competency, Skill

Introduction

West Bengal is situated in the Eastern Part of India and is one of the most diverse state in terms of culture, tradition and civilization. In terms of area, West Bengal is the 13th largest state in India. Kolkata, is the capital of West Bengal and this is one of the largest cities in India among others. The hotels in West Bengal contributes largely to tourism by providing facilities and services with its highest standard. As per the report of India Tourism Statistics, 2018, West Bengal has forty two approved 4 & 5 star hotels with 3796 rooms. However, a large number of investors are showing interest to invest in this sector and the number is set to increase significantly over the next 2-3 years. In addition to the above, Tourist Lodges are maintained by the 'West Bengal Tourism Development Ltd' at all important areas. There are 10-12 luxurious hotels established in the city with 2,400-odd rooms, most of which will be operational soon. A few star-category hotels will be established at major industrial towns like Durgapur and Siliguri. The hospitality sector in Bengal is besieged with few teething problems like, scarcity of land, high taxation rates, problems with service providers, health and hygiene issues, political issues and so on. The hospitality industry is facing severe shortage of rooms in India especially in West Bengal. West Bengal targets to become an ideal tourism and tourism-related investment destination by influencing its exclusive geographical location and tourism-related assets.

Highlights of Hotel Industry in India

Hospitality industry of India contributes approximately 2.2 percent of India's GDP. The Industry is expected to attain INR 230 billion increasing at a compound growth rate of 12.2 percent. The Industry also witnessed an

increase in the number of hotel rooms with a growth of 5% during the last five years. In the coming two years, a total investment of US$12.2 billion (INR545.2 billion) is estimated that will include over twenty new global brands in the hospitality sector. The government of India is planning to develop the budget hotels in the country to catch the attention of the tourist. The growth of the Hotel sector is mainly dependent on increasing business opportunities, strong economic growth and foreign investments. Presently India has 110, 000 hotel rooms and yet there is a scarcity of 150,000 rooms. A gap exists between demand and supply which influences the level of occupancies and average room rates. Occupancy rates all over India have enhanced from 52 percent in 2005-2006 to 67 percent in 2009- 2010. Simultaneously, average room rates of the hotels have increased from USD 51.6 to USD 76.4 in the same period. Gradually the demand for the five stars-hotels has been increasing.

Hotel Scenario in Kolkata and its Adjacent Areas

Since the reforms in the Indian economy and the boom in the IT sector, there has been a visible change in the hospitality industry with the younger generation taking over. The hotels in modern day Kolkata include some of the major names in the hospitality industry such as the Taj Group, Oberoi Group, Hyatt Group and so on. The hotels in Kolkata are increasingly finding pride of place among the best hotels in the country. Out of total premium category hotel rooms coming up in the top 10 cities in the country in the next three years, about eight per cent will be in Kolkata. Currently, there are around 45 to 46 hotels in various categories operating in Kolkata. In the premium category, there are around 2,296 rooms. Total number of rooms is expected to be 3,796 within few years. This is followed by First Class Segment, which will add total rooms of 700. In the budget segment, however, only 240 rooms will be added. The premier hotels chains like Marriott Hotels and Resorts, Hilton Group, Peerless Group, Sarovar Hotels, as well as DLF in collaboration with Dubai-based Emaar Group are setting up five-star and five-star deluxe properties in the city. Presently hotels like Grand, Great Eastern Hotel as well as MBD Airport Hotel are under renovation and these will fulfill the requirement of rooms.

The horizontal expansion of the city limits in the eastern and north-eastern part of Kolkata, including Rajarhat and Salt Lake, has seen many global IT companies setting up operations there. The proximity to the airport, availability of large land parcels and upcoming industrial set-ups has fulfilled the demand for hotels to be located in this region. Kolkata's attractiveness as an investment option is increasing due to the city developing as a major industrial and medical hub and the lack of new hotels opened this year. The promotion of large-scale IT and non-IT industries in West Bengal will further enhance the demand for hotel rooms, the study said. Though there are a number of luxury hotels in the city, the industry is feeling the heat due to an acute shortage of business category rooms to accommodate mid-level and lower-level executives. Buoyant on the industry's growth, international hospitality players have now started taking Kolkata seriously. Emaar-MGF combine has just acquired a plot of land adjacent to the existing ITC Sonar Bangla Hotel to set up a five-star deluxe property on the busy Eastern Metropolitan Bypass. DLF-Hilton combine is also planning to set up a business hotel in the city. City-based Shristi Infrastructure Development Corporation (SIDCL) along with HUDCO, the PSU has tied up with InterContinental Hotels Group to set up a five-star hotel complex at New Town in Kolkata. Even ITC has plans to set up another hotel in the state.

In this study, the existing hospitality resources have been analyzed to find their strength, weakness and potential. However, image and branding are determined by the quality of facilities and amenities. This study also explores the level of satisfaction among the respondents (Tourists) visiting Kolkata. Attempt has been made to get an in-depth knowledge of visitor's perception and behavior on the facilities and services at different hotels of Kolkata. The findings of the study can help the state to transform changes in terms of improving the facilities and services at different hotels. The study will immensely help West Bengal to adopt strategic marketing tools to target niche markets. The study is highly justified in the context of exploiting the enormous potential of the hotels of Kolkata thereby economic development can be possible. In the end, the study will expand the scope of tourism business opportunities that will bring about drastic economic development of hotel sector in the state.

Human Resource Issues and Challenges in Hotels

In India, particularly in Kolkata there is a tremendous shortage of trained manpower in the hotel sector. Thus there is a need to develop required human resource in various segment of the hotel industry. By the very nature

of tourism as a service industry, its efficient administration and successful operation depend largely on the quality of manpower. In the eastern region of India the shortage of skilled manpower poses a major threat to the overall development of hotels. The success a hospitality industry depends to a great extent up on the quality of human resource. The competent work force with dynamic management and responsive government and responsible society are the pillars of the hotel industry. There is a widely accepted assumption that the role of people within organizations is required to change and develop in response to developments in markets, products and technology. Most of the large hospitality companies recognized this assumption and has started organizing work and support human resource functions. Most of the services required in the hotel organizations are highly personalized, and no amount of automation can substitute for personal service providers. The hotel and catering sector is now highly personalized. Customer satisfaction is the prerequisite for a smooth and successful operation in the hotel industry, requiring professionally trained and highly skilled personnel. As per this survey the requirements for trained manpower at each level of employment would focus on general management trainees, trainees in kitchen management, housekeeping management, operational trainees, front office and accounting management, chefs, butlers, captains, bakery, confectionery and other specialized cooking.

Effects of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction in Hotels

Service quality and customer satisfaction are the main motto of any organization especially of hotels. There is a close relationship between customer satisfaction and service quality. According to some social science researchers the quality of service delivery is a reflection of the quality of its human capital. In hotel industry, the concept of quality holds the main position. The association with the customer is based on the commitment of providing standard service by the organization. In fact, quality level of services is the leading phenomena to plan strategies in the service firms. Service quality has stood as an importance for the hotel industry. It has been identified as a major factor for building a competitive position and improving organizational performance.

Customer satisfaction is identified as the distinction between assumed quality of service and the customer's feelings after having perceived the service. The customer satisfaction is the ultimate goal for any organization. The customer with optimum level of satisfaction mobilizes and generates goodwill in business. The customer satisfaction is mainly dependent upon the employee's attitude and the service rendered to the customers. Due to this reason more or less all hotel authorities are trying to meet the needs of the customers. It is more important for the survival and growth of a service industry particularly the hotel sector. The growth of the hotels depend upon their ability to create or attract new customers and retention of satisfied customers. It leads to their survival in the long run. In order to be successful, hotels are competing themselves to satisfy their customers so that they can attract and retain loyal customers which ultimately helps hotels to earn higher profits in the future.

Importance of Customer Satisfaction in Hotels

The principal purpose of a business is to create satisfied customers. Customer satisfaction has direct and indirect impact on business results. Customer satisfaction positively affects business profitability. Increasing customer satisfaction has been found to lead to higher future profitability and higher levels of customer retention and loyalty. Organizations need to retain the existing customers while targeting new customers. The hotel industry is experiencing increased globalization, competition, higher customer turnover, growing customer acquisition cost and rising customer expectations. Hotel's performance is dependent on their ability to satisfy customers effectively. In today's environment, the true measure of a company's success lies in its ability to satisfy customers continually. The key to sustainable competitive advantage in today's competitive environment lies in delivering high-quality service that result in satisfied customers. To enhance profitability and guest satisfaction, hotels must now-a-days focus on implementing Customer Relationship Management (CRM) strategies that aims to seek, gather and store the right information, validate and share it throughout the entire organization and then use it throughout all organizational levels for creating personalized, unique guests' experiences.

Challenges faced by the Hotel Industry

This study examines the difficulties faced by the hotel industry as a whole including the challenges faced by the owners and operational staff working in it. It is a well-known fact that competition for the survival in the

industry has been getting tougher with every passing year. Occupancy level in hotels all over India has been reported as getting lower and discount rate is getting higher affecting Revenue-par, which has almost halved during the last six-seven years. Hotel Industry today is very hopeful and expecting sunny days as the room inventories are increasing on daily basis, thus creating more opportunities for the service staff. This study follows the flaws in some of the government policies directly related to Hotel Industry which are effecting hotels and also discusses other issues related to hotel Industry as well such as Taxation Policies of Indian Government, Debt- funding by Indian Banks, Licensing Issues, Visa Issues, Descending Indian economy, Online Travel Agents, Guest Profiling, Human Resource Management, Quality of Guest Services in the era of Social Media, Safety and Security etc. These are few of the most important concerns which have a long lasting effect upon the business of the hospitality.

Advancement of information technology and other technologies by all levels in a company is a huge challenge faced by hotel industries. For example, when the systems are updated and new technology has been introduced the worker finds it difficult to adapt to it. The globalization and continuing advancement in technology are varying the nature of the workforce. The worker with skill and knowledge are known for their special characteristics. Their main value to an organization is worker's ability to gather and analyse information and make decisions that will benefit the company. Managing these set of employees plays a very important role in the development of the organization. Because of their own hand experience they fail to obey the management principles. A knowledge worker's personality is typically an achievement oriented one. These people focus on achieving their individual goals and not in the growth of the organization. For example, when a new employee joins to an organization and he has less experience, he doesn't follow the management principles.

It is utmost important to defeat the various challenges that are faced by the organization to achieve success. Company's now a days are developing the function of human resource because the importance of Strategic Human Resource has been felt in the strong market competition that exists today. Today competition has increased on both the local as well as global scale. In order to attain success, companies have become stronger, more elastic and customer oriented. In this respect, Human Resource department also has to adjust according to these shifting trends in the market. Thus, the department of HR must be able to comprehend the overall picture of the business activities of the company and put all the policies and decisions into practice. Preserving strategic personnel and promoting employee talent are the basics setbacks that HR has to face today. In order to overcome these barriers, the human resource managers are required to plan progressions of the business and provide supervision to the staff members.

Non-availability of trained, experienced and well-behaved staff in budget hotels also stands as a problem. Satisfying the customers is the most difficult thing since services is highly personalized. In today's business world, retention of valuable employees is one of the most critical issues confronting leaders. Employees have competencies that are critical for the survival of an organization. The HR department has to play a key role in designing the policies, practices and topologies, which can enable an organization to retain the human resources contributing significantly to the business. This study examines the phenomenon of employee retention in the hotel industry in India in order to suggest appropriate strategies, which can help the organizations in this sector to retain their valuable talent as its major objective.

Effect of Employee Engagement on Hotel Industry

Employee engagement is the latest human resource practice which has been implemented by each and every organization of the world. By engaging employees toward the jobs, organization increases their productivity as well as profitability Employee engagement is critical to any organization that seeks to retain valued employees. It is very important for effective utilization of human resource and smooth running of the organization. Without employee engagement organizations cannot survive for long period of time. To enhance the level of hospitality services for the tourist the Ministry of Tourism Government of India has introduced the concept of **"Atithi Dev Bhava"** for providing better hospitality services. If the employee working in hospitality sector is engaged towards the job, definitely they will provide better hospitality to the guest. Some of the effect of employee engagement on hospitality industry is listed below,

- Engaged employees will continue in the organization and care about its products and services.
- They are well motivated towards hospitality and services.
- Engaged employees creates emotional attachment with the guest and the guest is also get connected with the organization and comes again and again.
- Engaged employees improves customer satisfaction and service levels.
- Engaged employees Provides a high-energy working atmosphere

Conclusions & Recommendations

Indian hotel market attracts largest number of expats across management verticals. The industry is responding to the attrition issue. The hotel industry is seeing a change in its approach and attitude towards better human resource management. Human Resource Department recruits new employees and sends them for training so as to understand the work and work culture. Human resources are complex and not easy to understand. This research is significant in providing the views of HR managers in the hotel industry on the key aspect of employee retention. Retention of valuable employees is one of the most critical issues. Retaining the employees will help in the long-term growth of an organization and will also add to their goodwill. But the most difficult task faced by an organization today is retaining as well as satisfying these resources. All the professionally managed organizations make an all-out attempt to acquire, retain and develop the talent pool that they encompass. Importance of human resources has increased manifold, firstly because of their scarce availability and secondly due to an increasing demand by the growing number of business units seeking quality talent. HR department has to play a key role in designing the policies and practices which can enable an organization to retain the human resources contributing significantly to the business. Hence, the hotel industry of Kolkata and its adjoining areas should aim and focus at showcasing the retention policy of the Human Resource Department.

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Adoption of Cashless Payment Method: A Study on Perceptional Constraints of Retailers

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Abstract

Cashless payment options are becoming more widely available and diverse, but they have yet to establish themselves as viable replacements to cash due to a lack of adoption and the additional difficulties they impose. However, the nature of these costs and the extent to which cashless payment mechanisms differ from cash are unknown. Retailers who only accept cash miss out on the advantages of cashless payments, such as lower cash handling expenses, lower risks, and increased sales. It's also worth noting that some establishments use cashless payment options as a preventative strategy to keep their customers. India is likewise confronted with numerous obstacles on its path to digitalization. Before the concept of digitization became popular, India was a currency-dominated economy. According to various surveys, digital transactions account for barely 20% of total transactions and 5% of Personal Consumption Expenditure. According to recent statistics, the Indian economy is largely based on cash today. 90% of all transactions are still carried out in cash. In its December 2016 report, the Ministry of Finance's Committee on Digital Payments noted that cheques remain the primary method of payment, accounting for 54 percent of volume and 82 percent of value in retail electronic payments. Most retail traders, who have direct contact with customers, have yet to use cashless payment services to the extent that they should. The elements that have contributed to this condition of things are still unknown. As a result, it is critical to identify the factors influencing the adoption of cashless payment methods, particularly in terms of businesses' willingness to accept cashless payment methods. The purpose of this study is to better understand the barriers that retail traders in Diphu, Assam face in adopting cashless payment methods, with a focus on the level of adoption, factors that contribute to low adoption, and the impact of retailer characteristics on cashless payment method adoption.

Keywords: Consumers, financial sector, government, reforms.

Introduction

Retailers are at the crossroads of the cash economy, and they can help consumers utilise cashless payments more widely. The regularity and frequency with which consumers make purchases from everyday businesses determines the value of retail payment solutions and creates an anchor for them within the formal financial system. (Source: World Bank, 2016)

Despite gains in raising financial access and inclusion at both the global and country levels, and the essential role retail traders play in the economy, retail merchants in developing economies show little acceptance and use of cashless payment services. Developing countries have a higher percentage of paper-based payment transactions, according to the global market sizing survey (cash and cheques). Small businesses, particularly nomadic and fixed-store shops, are more likely to avoid cashless transactions, such as utilising debit or credit cards, due to additional costs (such as transaction and bank fees), lack of awareness, trouble accessing financial services, and other issues.

Most shops accept and process payments largely in cash, owing to their conviction that it is "secure," limited access to formal financing for inventory and working capital, and a lack of integration with supplier and consumer products businesses' computerised supply chains. Cashless payments have failed to acquire significant

size and widespread adoption in underdeveloped countries to influence user payment behaviour. Small businesses, particularly nomadic and fixed-store shops, are more likely to avoid cashless transactions, such as utilising debit or credit cards, due to additional costs (such as transaction and bank fees), lack of awareness, trouble accessing financial services, and other issues.

Most shops accept and process payments largely in cash, owing to their conviction that it is "secure," limited access to formal financing for inventory and working capital, and a lack of integration with supplier and consumer products businesses' computerised supply chains. Cashless payments have failed to acquire significant size and widespread adoption in underdeveloped countries to influence user payment behaviour. Both the government and commercial companies are promoting the use of UPIs, debit and credit cards, mobile/e-wallets, and other modalities as part of the transition to a cashless economy.

Problem Statement

Cashless payment options are becoming more widely available and diverse, but they have yet to establish themselves as viable replacements to cash due to a lack of adoption and the additional difficulties they impose (European Payment Council, 2014). However, the nature of these costs and the extent to which cashless payment mechanisms differ from cash are unknown. New payment systems will be developed, but they will still fail to attract consumers who are strongly reliant on cash, such as retail traders, as long as the gap between cash and new cashless payment methods is not understood and addressed.

Retailers who only accept cash miss out on the advantages of cashless payments, such as lower cash handling expenses, lower risks, and increased sales (Gorka, 2012). India is likewise confronted with numerous obstacles on its path to digitalization. Before the concept of digitization became popular, India was a currency-dominated economy. According to various surveys, digital transactions account for barely 20% of all transactions and 5% of personal consumption expenditure today (VISA, 2016). According to recent statistics, the Indian economy is largely based on cash today. Until now, 90% of transactions had been conducted in cash (Das, 2010). Furthermore, (Humphrey, 2010) states that some merchants use cashless payment methods as a preventative measure. The Committee on Digital Payments, which is chaired by the Ministry of Finance, GOI, reported in December 2016 that cheques remain the preferred method of payment, accounting for 54 percent of volume and 82 percent of value in retail electronic payments. Most retail traders, who have direct contact with customers, have yet to use cashless payment services to the extent that they should. The elements that have contributed to this condition of things are still unknown. As a result, it is critical to identify the factors influencing the adoption of cashless payment methods, particularly in terms of businesses' willingness to accept cashless payment methods.

Review of Literature

According to Gholami et al. (2010) individuals can now carry out numerous types of transactions for products and services using new ways rather than traditional means such as cash and cheques, convenience, safety, transparency, and time and cost savings are just a few of the benefits of electronic payment systems. They did, however, discover a low rate of e-Payment usage, which could be attributable to the country's poor infrastructure, which includes a low rate of Internet adoption. According to Gustavo A. Del Angel (2016), there are various reasons why cash persists, and three kinds of factors can be identified. The first group is concerned with a lack of financial inclusion, which makes it difficult to use digital financial services. Low financial inclusion is caused by at least two factors. The first is the structure and scope of the financial system. Payment choice is connected with three aspects, according to Christopher et al (2015): pricing, demography, incentives such as prizes, and customers' opinions of payment instruments. Older, lower-income, and high-school-educated respondents rely heavily on cash. Because 73 percent of respondents say they have rewards on their credit cards, pricing incentives are important. These people have a better income and education, yet they use cash less frequently. Cash is preferred by consumers over debit and credit cards because of its low cost, security, convenience of use, and widespread acceptance for payment. According to the World Economic Forum (2016), multiple factors are preventing shops from accepting electronic payments. Major roadblocks, particularly in poor nations, have been cited as key constraints to deepening these payments: insufficient aggregate customer

demand, needed to reach the "tipping point" that drives demand and supply towards an electronic payments ecosystem; inconsistent technological infrastructure and regulatory environment in developing markets to support e-payments; weak product and stakeholder economics in traditional card models; insufficient aggregate customer demand, needed to reach the "tipping point" that drives demand and supply towards an electronic payments ecosystem; insufficient aggregate customer demand, needed to reach the "tipping point" that drives demand and supply towards an electronic payments ecosystem; insufficient aggregate customer demand.

Objectives of the Study

This study is an attempt to understand the constraints to adopt cashless payment method by retail traders of Diphu town of Assam; specifically

1. To examine the level of adoption of cashless payment method by the sample respondents.

2. To examine the factors attributable for low adoption of cashless payment method by the sample respondents.

3. To examine the influence of retailers characteristics on adoption of cashless payment method

Hypotheses of the Study

For the study, to examine the factors attributable for low adoption of cashless payment method, the following hypotheses were taken in to consideration, that

H_O 1a: poor customer demand for cashless method has no influences on adoption of cashless payment method.

H_O 1b: inadequate value proposition of retailers has no influences on adoption of cashless payment method.

H_O 1c: poor cashless product design has no influences on adoption of cashless payment method.

H_O 1d: ineffective services distribution model of has no influences on adoption of cashless payment method.

H_O 1e: inconsistent infrastructure for services has no influences on adoption of cashless   payment method.

H_O 1f: informal business establishment of retailers has no influences on adoption of cashless payment method.

Further, to examine the influence of retailers' characteristics on adoption of cashless payment method, the following hypotheses were taken in to consideration, that-

H_O 2a: level of education of retailers has no influences on adoption of cashless payment method.

H_O 2b: level of knowledge of cashless payment method of retailers has no influences on   adoption of cashless payment method.

H_O 2c: type of retailers has no influences on adoption of cashless payment method.

H_O 2d: level of income of retailers has no influences on adoption of cashless payment method.

Methodology of the Study

The research is mostly descriptive and analytical in nature. The focus of the research is on Diphu's retail dealers. Diphu is the district headquarters of Assam's Karbi Anglong tribal district, which is part of the Indian constitution's VI schedule. There are both itinerant and fixed shop retailers in Diphu town. Hawkers and pedlars, Market traders, and Street Traders are itinerant retailers that sell goods by the side of the road, in streets, railway compartments, bus stops, and fairs, among other places. Fixed Shop Retailers occur on a small and big scale, with small scale retailers active in street stalls, general stores, specialty stores, and large-scale retailers engaged in Departmental Stores, Multiple Shops or Chain Stores, Co-operative Stores, and One Price Shops. As a result, all of these types of retailers make up the population of the study. The target population was all retailers of Diphu town. A total of 120 retailers participated in this study, comprising Itinerant retailers, small fixed shop retailers and large scale fixed shop retailers at the rate 40, 60 and 20 nos. respectively. A large number of small scale fixed shop retailers are taken as sample because this category constitutes the largest part of the population. Data for the study was collected from primary source in order to gather information relating to the study. The survey instruments involved in this study were a set of questionnaire, which were administered personally,

which were completed and returned by respondents. Primary data were collected from the sample retailers during the months of February and March 2017. Secondary data were collected from Library work, collecting information from internet sources, consulting persons of related matters etc. The analysis was conducted using percentage, distinguishable attributes, five point scales from highly agreed to highly disagreed and hypotheses are tested by applying chi-square test. In order to ensure validity of frequency where it is less than five, the frequency was pooled with preceding frequency and d.f. also reduced by one for such pooling.

Analysis and Discussion

The characteristics of sample retailer respondents exhibit *[Table-1]* that majority were belongs to age groups > 25-<35 years and >35-<50 years (30.83% and 43.33% respectively). With respect to level of education, it was found that 40% of sample respondents had education up to matriculation and 36.67% between matriculation and graduation level. However, a distinction was observed between itinerant and fixed shop small scale retailers, where 80% sample itinerant retailers had education up to matriculation level while 53.33% sample fixed shop small scale retailers had education between matriculation and graduation level. Regarding nature of business of sample respondents, it was found that itinerant retailers were mostly engaged in hawkers & pedlars (37.5%), market traders (25%) and street traders (37.5%). The ample fixed shop small scale retailers were mostly engaged in general shop (60%) and street stall shops (20%) and 70% ample fixed shop large scale retailers were involved in multiple shops. The level of income also varies among the retailers, the itinerant retailers opined either low (50%) or very low (42.5%), fixed shop small scale retailers opined moderate (30%) to low (45%) and fixed shop large scale retailers opined high (35%) to moderate (40%).

On an enquiry to usage pattern of CLP by sample respondents, it revealed that *[Table-2]* 47.5% retailers had not adopted till date; more prominently by itinerant retailers (70%). All the CLP adopted retailers had been adopting such method partially only. Except 10% fixed shop large scale retailers, all the respondent retailers opined to have moderate to low level of knowledge on CLP. 20.83% respondents accept all types of CLP instruments while 12.5% and 15% accept card and e-wallet only respectively. Uses of CLP appeared to be low as 38.33% and frequency of uses also observed to be occasional (20.83%) and rare (28.33%) as opined by the sample respondents.

Based on survey of literatures of Gustavo (2016), Christopher et. al (2015), World Economic Forum (2016) and observations; few variables as considered factors attributable for low adoption of cashless payment method were taken in to consideration to examine among the samples categorised as itinerant retailers, fixed shop small scale and fixed shop large scale retailers. The variables were poor customer demands due to "sticky" habits of financial behaviour; inadequate value proposition in terms of expected sales, less active cardholders; poor product design-lack of interoperability and cost involved in CLP method; ineffective distribution model-poor sales, training and customer service; inconsistent infrastructure-poor and unreliable connectivity and electricity and informal business establishment. *(Table-3)*

It was observed that majority of all category respondents opined either highly agreed and agreed (34.17% each) that poor customer demand is an important factor for low adoption of cashless payment method. However, 50% itinerant retailer respondents opined neither agreed nor disagreed due to poor knowledge on cashless payment system.

Regarding inadequate value proposition also majority respondents opined either highly agreed and agreed (46.67% and 26.67% respectively) as another important factor for low adoption of cashless payment method, particularly by itinerant retailers and fixed shop small scale retailers; which did not encourage them due to cost involved and return thereon. As to the poor product design of cashless payment methods, 47.50% respondents opined neither agreed nor disagreed, which is more prominent among itinerant retailers (70%). This observation might be due to poor knowledge on product types, features and related merits among the retailers.The ineffective distribution model was also considered as a critical factor for low adoption of cashless payment method as opined by majority respondents either agreed or highly agreed (60%). Of course 20.83% respondents were found to be undecided, which might be due to non adoption of such methods.

Inconsistent infrastructure, particularly non availability of uninterrupted power supply and frequent network coverage failure including non accessibility to some localities, were opined as factor hindering adoption of cashless payment methods (31.67% respondents opined highly agreed and 35.00% agreed). 20.83% respondents opined neither agreed nor disagreed, who were yet to adopt such payment methods. Another factor, informal business establishment, were observed as hindering for adoption of cashless payment methods; as opined (36.67% highly agreed and 43.33% agreed) by sample respondents, particularly noticeable among itinerant and fixed shop small scale retailers (100% and 93.34% respectively). The x^2 test of hypotheses for factors attributable for low adoption of cashless payment methods by retailers revealed that *(Table-4)*:

The poor customer demand for cashless method has no influences on adoption of cashless payment method reveals that the calculated value (61.15)> table value (7.81) and hence the hypothesis is rejected. Regarding the hypothesis that the inadequate value proposition of retailers has no influences on adoption of cashless payment method, it was found that the calculated value (67.56)> table value (7.81) and hence this hypothesis is rejected. Another hypothesis that the poor cashless product design has no influences on adoption of cashless payment method revealed the calculated value (64.00)> table value (7.81) and hence this hypothesis also rejected. The hypothesis that the ineffective services distribution model of has no influences on adoption of cashless payment method also rejected as the calculated value (37.06)> table value (7.81). The calculated value (44.40) was found to be higher than the table value (7.81) in the x^2 test for the hypothesis that the inconsistent infrastructure for services has no influences on adoption of cashless payment method and, therefore, the hypothesis did not hold true and rejected. The case was also same regarding the hypothesis that the informal business establishment of retailers has no influences on adoption of cashless payment method where calculated value (81.42) was found higher than the table value (9.49) and hence the hypothesis is rejected. From the analysis, it may be inferred that informal business establishment, inadequate value proposition, poor customer demands and product design, inconsistent infrastructure and fruitless distribution model are some of the important factors attributable for low adoption of cashless payment method by retailers. The variables like level of education, level of knowledge of cashless payment method, type of retailers and level of income of retailers were taken as retailers' characteristics to examine the influence on adoption of cashless payment method using x^2 test.

The hypothesis that the level of education of retailers has no influences on adoption of cashless payment method, the calculated value (5.559) was found less than the table value (7.815) at 3 d.f, means the hypothesis holds true *[Table 5 (a)]*. Regarding the hypothesis that the level of knowledge of cashless payment method of retailers has no influences on adoption of cashless payment method, it was found that calculated value (9.84) > table value (5.991) at 2 d.f., which falls in the rejection region *[Table 5(b)]*. Hence, the hypothesis is rejected. The calculated value (13.534) > table value (5.991) at 2 d.f. *[Table 5(c)]* observed for hypothesis that the type of retailers has no influences on adoption of cashless payment method. The hypothesis was not true and hence, rejected. The test of hypothesis that the level of income of retailers has no positive influences on adoption of cashless payment method revealed that calculated value (2.80) < table value (7.815) at 3 d.f. *[Table 5(d)]*, hence the hypothesis holds true and accepted.

From the above analysis it may be concluded that the level of education and level of income of retailers were independent, hence these characteristics have no influence on adoption of cashless payment methods. On the other hand, the characteristics level of knowledge of cashless payment methods and type of retailers have a positive influences on adoption of this methods.

Conclusion

Despite this significant market opportunity, businesses encounter barriers to implementing cashless payment solutions. Adopting new payment methods, such as electronic payments, necessitates a high level of confidence. While confidence is an important component of economic transactions, trust in financial institutions is especially low among low-income people, who may incur fees or other expenses when withdrawing funds or making payments to suppliers [Bachas et al, 2016]. While buying with cash may be more expensive for users, [World Bank, 2015a] they may find it more convenient than paying electronically. However, innovations that encourage shops to accept cashless payments are constantly being developed. They do, however, hold

tremendous promise for accelerating trade among marginalised areas and increasing financial inclusion for both businesses and consumers. However, a few initiatives might be taken as a matter of priority to speed up the adoption of cashless payment options. Efforts could be made to raise awareness about the benefits of cashless transactions. A concentrated effort to raise public awareness of the benefits of cashless payments is a good place to start. Regular inflows into accounts and cashless payments have a significant favourable link. Aside from G2P payments, which are now directly credited to accounts, an incentive (in the form of tax rebates) for individuals who make payments/remittances in accounts will see a significant increase.

Despite the fact that mobile payments dominate the cashless landscape, the majority of mobile wallet loading is presently done through bank accounts. Allowing users to put funds straight into their mobile wallet could be more effective. Indeed, allowing this during the current demonetization process would result in enormous short- and long-term benefits. Perhaps the most intriguing subject to be addressed in India is the blueprint for how cashless payment infrastructure might encourage financial inclusion. Furthermore, with the recently established GST, integrating cashless payments to enable more efficient tax collection would be a novel governmental intervention. A new situation has emerged as a result of the recent demonetization of high-value money. Based on the information available, one needs to see the impact of this sudden shock on cashless payments (Mukhopadhyay Financial Innovation, 2016).

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ANNEXURE
Table 1: Profile Characteristics of Sample Respondents

Profile Characteristics	Nature of Observations	Type of Retailers								Total Profile-wise
		Itinerant Retailers		Fixed Shop Retailers [Small Scale]		Fixed Shop Retailers [Large Scale]		Nature wise		
		No	%age	No	%age	No	%age	No	%age	
Sex	Male	30	75	52	86.67	18	90.00	100	83.33	120
	Female	10	25	8	13.33	2	10.00	20	16.67	
Age	< 20 years	7	17.5	5	8.33	0	0.00	12	10.00	120
	>20-<35 years	14	35	17	28.33	6	30.00	37	30.83	
	>35-<50 years	17	42.5	26	43.33	9	45.00	52	43.33	
	>50 years	2	5	12	20.00	5	25.00	19	15.83	
Marital Status	Married	33	82.5	21	35.00	20	100.00	74	61.67	120
	Unmarried	7	17.5	39	65.00	0	0.00	46	38.33	
Level of Education	< HSLC	32	80	16	26.67	0	0.00	48	40.00	120
	>HSLC-<Graduate	8	20	32	53.33	4	20.00	44	36.67	
	>Graduate	0	0	12	20.00	11	55.00	23	19.17	
	Professional	0	0	0	0.00	5	25.00	5	4.17	
Nature of Business	Hawkers and pedlars [IR]	15	37.5		0.00		0.00	15	12.50	120
	Market traders [IR]	10	25		0.00		0.00	10	8.33	
	Street Traders [IR]	15	37.5		0.00		0.00	15	12.50	
	Street stalls holders [SS]		0	12	20.00		0.00	12	10.00	
	General Shops [SS]		0	40	66.67		0.00	40	33.33	
	Speciality Shops [SS]		0	8	13.33		0.00	8	6.67	
	Multiple Shops, [LS]		0		0.00	14	70.00	14	11.67	
	Co-operative Stores [LS]		0		0.00	4	20.00	4	3.33	
	One Price Shops [LS]		0		0.00	2	10.00	2	1.67	
Level of Income	Very High	0	0	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	120
	High	0	0	4	6.67	7	35.00	11	9.17	
	Moderate	3	7.5	18	30.00	8	40.00	29	24.17	
	Low	20	50	27	45.00	5	25.00	52	43.33	
	Very Low	17	42.5	11	18.33	0	0.00	28	23.33	

Table 2: Usage Pattern of Cashless Payment Methods by Sample respondents

Particulars	Nature of Observations	Type of Retailers						Total		
		Itinerant Retailers		Fixed Shop Retailers [Small Scale]		Fixed Shop Retailers [Large Scale]		Nature wise		Profile-wise
		No	%age	No	%age	No	%age	No	%age	
Adoption of Cashless Payment method	Yes	12	30.00	36	60.00	15	75.00	63	52.50	120
	No	28	70.00	24	40.00	5	25.00	57	47.50	
Extent of Adoption of Cashless Payment method	Fully	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	120
	Partial	12	30.00	36	60.00	15	75.00	63	52.50	
	No	28	70.00	24	40.00	5	25.00	57	47.50	
Knowledge on Cashless Payment method	High	0	0.00	0	0.00	12	60.00	12	10.00	120
	Moderate	18	45.00	44	73.33	8	40.00	70	58.33	
	Low	22	55.00	16	26.67	0	0.00	38	31.67	
Types of Cashless Payment method	Card	0	0.00	15	25.00	0	0.00	15	12.50	120
	e-wallet	12	30.00	6	10.00	0	0.00	18	15.00	
	e-banking	0	0.00	5	8.33	0	0.00	5	4.17	
	All Types	0	0.00	10	16.67	15	75.00	25	20.83	
	No	28	70.00	24	40.00	5	25.00	57	47.50	
Uses of Cashless Payment method	High	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	120
	Moderate	0	0.00	10	16.67	7	35.00	17	14.17	
	Low	12	30.00	26	43.33	8	40.00	46	38.33	
	No Usage	28	70.00	24	40.00	5	25.00	57	47.50	
Frequency of Cashless Payment method	Regular	0	0.00	0	0.00	4	20.00	4	3.33	120
	Occasional	0	0.00	18	30.00	7	35.00	25	20.83	
	Rarely	12	30.00	18	30.00	4	20.00	34	28.33	
	No Usage	28	70.00	24	40.00	5	25.00	57	47.50	

Table 3: Opinion of Sample Respondents on Adoption of Cashless Payment Methods

Nature of Problem	Extent of Opinion	Itinerant Retailers		Fixed shop Retailers				Total	
				Small-scale Retailers		Large-scale retailers			
		No	%age	No	%age	No	%age	No	%age
Poor Customer Demand	Highly Agreed	11	27.50	25	41.67	5	25.00	41	34.17
	Agreed	9	22.50	26	43.33	6	30.00	41	34.17
	Neither Agreed nor Disagreed	20	50.00	9	15.00	2	10.00	31	25.83
	Disagreed	0	0.00	0	0.00	7	35.00	7	5.83
	Highly Disagreed	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Inadequate Value Proposition	Highly Agreed	26	65.00	25	41.67	5	25.00	56	46.67
	Agreed	11	27.50	19	31.67	2	10.00	32	26.67
	Neither Agreed nor Disagreed	3	7.50	6	10.00	2	10.00	11	9.17
	Disagreed	0	0.00	10	16.67	8	40.00	18	15.00
	Highly Disagreed	0	0.00	0	0.00	3	15.00	3	2.50
Poor Products	Highly Agreed	8	20.00	6	10.00	0	0.00	14	11.67
	Agreed	4	10.00	18	30.00	5	25.00	27	22.50
	Neither Agreed nor Disagreed	28	70.00	24	40.00	5	25.00	57	47.50
	Disagreed	0	0.00	12	20.00	10	50.00	22	18.33
	Highly Disagreed	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Ineffective Distribution Model	Highly Agreed	12	30.00	10	16.67	2	10.00	24	20.00
	Agreed	20	50.00	22	36.67	6	30.00	48	40.00
	Neither Agreed nor Disagreed	8	20.00	12	20.00	5	25.00	25	20.83
	Disagreed	0	0.00	16	26.67	7	35.00	23	19.17
	Highly Disagreed	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Inconsistent Infrastructure	Highly Agreed	15	37.50	18	30.00	5	25.00	38	31.67
	Agreed	12	30.00	24	40.00	6	30.00	42	35.00
	Neither Agreed nor Disagreed	8	20.00	12	20.00	5	25.00	25	20.83
	Disagreed	5	12.50	6	10.00	4	20.00	15	12.50
	Highly Disagreed	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Informal Business Establishment	Highly Agreed	22	55.00	22	36.67	0	0.00	44	36.67
	Agreed	18	45.00	34	56.67	0	0.00	52	43.33
	Neither Agreed nor Disagreed	0	0.00	4	6.67	3	15.00	7	5.83
	Disagreed	0	0.00	0	0.00	9	45.00	9	7.50
	Highly Disagreed	0	0.00	0	0.00	8	40.00	8	6.67

Table 4: Opinion on Factors Attributable for Low Adoption of Cashless Payment Methods

Level of Opinion		Nature of Problems											
		Poor Customer Demand		Inadequate Value Proposition		Poor Products		Ineffective Distribution Model		Inconsistent Infrastructure		Informal Business Establishment	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%age
Highly Agreed		41	34.17	56	46.67	14	11.67	24	20.00	38	31.67	44	36.67
Agreed		41	34.17	32	26.67	27	22.50	48	40.00	42	35.00	52	43.33
Neither Agreed nor Disagreed		31	25.83	11	9.17	57	47.50	25	20.83	25	20.83	7	5.83
Disagreed		7	5.83	18	15.00	22	18.33	23	19.17	15	12.50	9	7.50
Highly Disagreed		0	0.00	3	2.50	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	8	6.67
Total=		120	100.00	120	100.00	120	100.00	120	100.00	120	100.00	120	100.00
x^2 (Chi square) Value	d.f	3		3		3		3		3		4	
	Calculated Value	61.15		67.56		64.00		37.06		44.40		81.42	
	Table Value	7.81		7.81		7.81		7.81		7.81		9.49	

Table 5 (a): Influence of Retailers Characteristics [Level of Education] on Adoption of Cashless Payment Methods

Level of Education	Level of CLP Adoption			
	Fully Adopted	Partially Adopted	Not Adopted	Total
<HSLC	0	20	28	48
>HSLC-<Graduate	0	26	18	44
>Graduate	0	12	11	23
Professional	0	5	0	5
Total	0	63	57	120
Calculated Value of x^2 (Chi square) at 3 df is 5.559 and Table Value is 7.815				

Table 5 (b): Influence of Retailers Characteristics [Level of Knowledge on CLP] on Adoption of Cashless Payment Methods

Level of Knowledge of CLP	Level of CLP Adoption			
	Fully Adopted	Partially Adopted	Not Adopted	Total
High	0	7	5	12
Moderate	0	44	26	70
Low	0	12	26	38
Total	0	63	57	120
Calculated Value of x^2 (Chi square) at 2 df is 9.84 and Table Value is 5.991				

Table 5 (c): Influence of Retailers Characteristics [Type of Retailer] on Adoption of Cashless Payment Methods

Nature of Retailer	Level of CLP Adoption			
	Fully Adopted	Partially Adopted	Not Adopted	Total
Itinerant Retailers	0	12	28	40
Fixed Shop Retailers [Small Scale]	0	36	24	60
Fixed Shop Retailers [Large Scale]	0	15	5	20
Total	0	63	57	120
Calculated Value of x^2 (Chi square) at 2 df is 13.534 and Table Value is 5.991				

Table 5 (d): Influence of Retailers Characteristics [Level of Income] on Adoption of Cashless Payment Methods

Level of Income	Level of CLP Adoption			
	Fully Adopted	Partially Adopted	Not Adopted	Total
Very High	0	0	0	0
High	0	6	5	11
Moderate	0	19	10	29
Low	0	25	27	52
Very Low	0	13	15	28
Total	0	63	57	120
Calculated Value of x^2 (Chi square) at 3 df is 2.80 and Table Value is 7.815				

Human Development and Jute Farmers in India

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Abstract

The paper deals with the concept of human development in connection with the marginalized jute farmers in India. According to Human Development Report, the marginalized people are emerged as victims of these processes of development. In every society there are some sections of people who are deprived of socio-economic opportunities for their sustenance and are victims of social, cultural and political exclusion. In India the marginalized communities are rural poor, scheduled tribes and castes, manual workers in unorganized sectors etc. The marginalized people have very little or no participation in the development process. The initiatives are channeled through pre-existing power structure. Their conditions have remained unchanged over the centuries even after government initiatives implemented for their upward mobility. There has been serious thinking about the participation of marginalized communities in the process of development. Due to government failure of integrating them in the development process, an alternative has emerged in the form of civil society to evolve the strategy for empowerment of the marginalized people. The study is an exploratory one and based on secondary data and information.

Keywords: human development, marginalized sectors, jute farmers.

Introduction

The concept of development is no longer the limited to the quantification of growing incomes or outputs in terms of GNP or GDP but has been widened by the inclusion of human dimensions of development, such as, poverty alleviation, distribution of resources and freedom of choice. Despite of its limitations, evolution of the human development approach has a deep impact on the philosophy and policy of development. Human development was formally defined on the first Human Development Report as "a process of enlarging people's choices". The most critical of these wide- ranging choices are to live a long and healthy life, to be educated and to have access to resources needed for a decent standard of living. Additional choices include political freedom, guaranteed human rights and personal self-respect (Mahore, 2003). According to Human Development Report, 1996, published by United Nations Development Program, "human development is the end-economic growth means; it is true that economic growth, by increasing a nation's total wealth, also enhances its potential for reducing poverty and solving other social problems. But history offers a number of examples where economic growth was not followed by similar progress in human development. Instead growth was achieved at the cost of greater inequity, higher unemployment, weakened democracy, loss of cultural identity, or over consumption of resources needed by future generations (Nettimi and Fidzani, 2003). The jute industry is one of the oldest and big industries and provides livelihood to millions of people in our country as well as plays a very important role in the economic growth of the country. The jute farmers in our country facing plenty of troubles by its side; though jute in India it is not only one of the oldest industries of India but also among the major employer of the nation. There are a lot of strengths and also much chance to seize them but it could only be done if it overcomes its weaknesses and threats. The present study gives brief overview of the economic condition of marginalized jute farmers in India in context to human development.

Jute Industry in India: An Overview

Jute is a gift of Nature, a fibre derived from a plant that we largely found in India and many other South Asian countries, also known as 'golden fibre'. Jute cultivation is a matter of culture to the marginal farmers of Bengal

a part of the Indian sub-continent. Jute is a *cash crop* for millions of poor and marginal farm families of India. The cultivation process of jute runs only in the rainy season i.e. for three to four months only in a year. Thousands of people are engaged in jute cultivation all over the country as it is the one of the largest and oldest industry which provides livelihood to many families (http://nationaljuteboard.org/jute).

Jute is popular for its ability to use in various forms in handicraft industry. The industry contributes greatly in country's economy and has potential to move forward the economy at least for next few decades. It supports nearly 4 million farm families, besides providing direct employment to 2.6 lakh industrial workers and livelihood to another 1.4 lakh people in the tertiary sector and allied activities. Realizing its major contribution and important role in the Indian economy, the Government has decided to pay special attention to the industry in its National Common Minimum Programme. Keeping the industry's increasing contribution in consideration, the Government then started the "Jute Technology Mission" to benefit jute growers, the workers, jute manufacturers, exporters and others engaged in the sector (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/jute).

A great number of the Indian Jute manufacturers have set up their Mills in the states of West Bengal, Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, Tripura, Bihar and Chhattisgarh. At present, there are 84 jute mills planted in India out of which 64 are located alone in West Bengal. 7 in Andhra Pradesh, 3 in Bihar, 3 in Uttar Pradesh, 2 in Assam, 2 in Orissa, 2 in Chattisgarh, and 1 in Tripura (National Jute Board).

Despite being a mother industry, Indian jute industry has emerged as a huge decentralized and unorganized sector in the current scenario. The landmark in the history of jute industry in India dates back to 1854 when the British industrialist George Auckland set up the first jute mill at Rishra in the Hooghly district of West Bengal. In 1870 altogether five jute mills started production in Bengal (http://nationaljuteboard.org/jute).

Objective of the Study

The paper is an attempt to highlights the current scenario of jute farmers involved in the industry in India from the point of view of human development.

Data Source and Methodology

The study is mainly based on secondary data and information. The information were collected from various published sources. Such sources include books, journals, JMDC reports, NJB reports, government reports and publications, research articles, websites, newspapers, etc.

The Four Pillars of Human Development

There are four essential components or pillars in the human development paradigm, namely, *equity, sustainability, productivity and empowerment*. Each of them needs to understand in its proper perspective, from the economic point of view of jute farmers, since they distinguish the human development paradigm from the more traditional economic growth models.

Equity

If development is to enlarge people's choices, people must enjoy equitable access to opportunities. Development without equity means a restriction of choices of many individuals in a society. Depending on how inequitable the development process is, it can disenfranchise whole section of the society. Equity should be understood as equity in opportunities, not necessarily in results. What people do with their opportunities is their own concern; equity in opportunities may not always lead to similar choices or to similar results. Equal access of opportunities is based on the philosophical foundations of the universalism of the life claims of everyone. The human development paradigm values human life for itself. It does not value life merely because people can produce material goods- important though it is. It values life because of its built-in assumptions that all individuals must be enable to develop their human capabilities to the fullest and to put those capabilities to the best use in all areas of their of their lives (Mishra, 2009).

Sustainability

The next generation deserves the opportunities to enjoy the same well being that we now enjoy, a right that makes sustainability another essential component of human development paradigm. The concept of sustainability is sometimes confused with the renewal of natural resources, which is just one aspect of sustainable development. It is the sustainability of human opportunities that must lie at the centre of our concerns. And that, in essence, means sustaining all forms of capital physical, human, financial and environmental. Depleting any capital mortgages the chances for sustainable development, it robs future generations of their options. So, the only viable strategy for sustainable development is to replenish and regenerate all forms of capital. In the last analysis, it is human life that must be sustained (Reddy, 2009).

The concept of sustainability does not require preserving every natural resources, species, or environment in its current form. That is environmental Puritanism, and it has little to do with true sustainable development. Technological progress will always create substitutes for natural resources. And if efficient and cost effective substitutes are available, they must be used to sustain future human choices. To begin, sustainability does not mean sustaining presents level of the poverty and human deprivation. Sustainability is an essential feature of human development paradigm. It matters little whether the paradigm is labeled "sustainable human development" or "sustainable development" or simply "human development" (Reddy, 2009).

Productivity

An essential part of human development paradigm is productivity, which requires investments in people and an enabling macroeconomic environment for them to achieve their maximum potential. Economic growth is therefore a subset for human development models is an essential part but not the entire structure. That is why productivity should treat only as one part of the human development paradigm with an equal importance give to equity, sustainability and empowerment.

Empowerment

The human development paradigm is neither paternalistic nor based on charity or welfare concepts. Its focus is on development by the people, who must participate in the activities, events and processes that shape their lives. A comprehensive concept, empowerment means that people are in a position to exercise choices of their own free will. It implies a political democracy in which people can influence decision about their lives. It means that all members of civil society, particular non- governmental organizations, participate fully in making and implementing decisions. The empowerment of people distinguishes the human development paradigm from other development concepts with which it is normally confused. Moreover, the human development paradigm embraces all choices, particularly political, social and cultural while the basic need concept is generally limited to economic choices. The human development paradigm consistently takes the view that growth is not the end of economic development. Economic growth is essential for human development, but to fully exploit the opportunities for improved well- being that growth offers, it needs to properly manage (Nayak, 2005).

Scenario of Marginalized Jute Farmers in India

Problems faced by the marginalized jute farmers in their growth and development.

- **Irregular Income**

As raw jute is cultivated during the rainy season i.e. 3 to 4 months in a year; naturally for the rest of the year those marginalized farmers whom are directly dependent on cultivation of raw jute only are actually unemployed. This is a major problem for the marginalized jute farmers in India.

- **Standard of living**

Due to irregular income marginalized jute farmers are not able to maintain basic needs of their life. As a result they have been suffering from very low standard of living which is serious issue as per the HDI of marginalized section of raw jute cultivators in India is concerned.

- **Health and Hygiene**

The nature of work performs by the jute farmers is not very healthy because they have to work in an unhygienic condition particularly they have to work several hours continuously in water bodies. In a process the jute yarns are collected after spending lots of time in the water land. So many diseases attack their bodies in the form of insect biting and other skin related diseases.

- **Education**

As income level of the marginalized jute farmers are very low so most of farmers are not able to send their children even for primary level school also. So the literacy rate among the marginalized jute farmers family is not good at all. In spite of some initiative taken by the government of India to attract the children in government schools to provide at least basic education in the form of introducing mid-day meal in schools, among the marginalized section of jute farmers those who are engaged in raw jute cultivation the success rate is not impressive because they use to engage their children in some field works as their family earning is not sufficient to run their day to day life.

- **Life expectancy**

As most of the marginalized jute farmers living in below poverty line simultaneously they are not very much caring about their health and hygiene and due to the nature of their job they have to perform for their living hood the life expectancy rate is also poor among them. Due to some natural calamities waste of their crops, low prices of raw jute in the market, pressure of providing every day to day facilities to the family etc., it is observed from different news stories of different daily's, committing suicide is a common tendency among the marginalized jute farmers in India.

Conclusion

In sum, we can say as jute industry is one of the primary industries in our country which largely depends on the raw jute for smooth running the industry. So the big industrialist and the proprietor of the jute firms have some duty towards the marginalized jute farmers. As the income levels of marginalized jute farmers are not sufficient enough, it demolish the day to day life of the family, it include standard of living, health, education, etc.

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