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A Study on Effectiveness of Customer Retention Strategies Adopted by Kerala Kaumudi, Thiruvananthapuram

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Abstract

The present study examined the efficiency of customer retention techniques employed by Kerala Kaumudi, which is one of the prominent Malayalam language daily newspapers situated in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. In today's age, retention of loyal consumers is crucial for print media houses owing to decreased profitability of the print medium as well as the competitive nature of the environment. For conducting the research, descriptive method was applied, and primary data were gathered from 384 respondents using Cochran's formula in case of unknown population size. The two most significant statistical methods were Factor Analysis and Mann-Whitney U Test. According to KMO test results ($KMO = 0.787$; $p < 0.001$), the suitability of data for factor analysis was determined, and quality of contents and reliability, usefulness of information, and credibility of newspapers were established as three key factors. Based on the Mann-Whitney U Test findings, a significant difference between male and female consumers with regards to their satisfaction with newspaper distribution was found. From the obtained results, it may be stated that consumer satisfaction, brand credibility, and effective distribution are key factors driving customer retention.

Keywords: Customer Retention, Factor analysis, Kerala Kaumudi, Newspaper Industry, Print Media

Introduction

Customer retention refers to a series of measures taken by an enterprise aimed at preventing a client from becoming a churner. This process begins at the very start of cooperation and continues throughout the entire process. Its success is contingent upon both the quality of the provided products and services and the reputation of the company in the eyes of the client. However, for customer retention, it is necessary not only to meet clients' demands but go beyond them so as to make customers' experience positive enough to foster their loyalty to the company. Create a brand. Strategies

that prioritize clients tend to put emphasis on value creation and delivery of high-quality services as distinctive competitive advantages of an enterprise. There is no doubt that customer retention affects the income of an enterprise. Engaged clients mean profit, regardless of the extent of the improvement. Customer retention reflects the attitude of customers to the company in general and the degree to which their expectations were met.

Review of Literature

According to many researchers, customer retention is now becoming one of the key issues that companies have to deal with. They claim that the retention of customers is a lot cheaper compared to attracting new ones and contributes to the company's profitability and sustainability (Muhammed Zakir Hossain, Fabiha Enam and Fariha Tazin, 2026). The strategies for customer retention include relationship marketing, customer relationship management, loyalty programs, individualized services and customer engagement, all of which help increase customer satisfaction and loyalty (Saida Zainurossalamia ZA, 2025). Moreover, scholars show a great interest in studying customer retention because of fast technological advances and changes in customers' behavior (Saida Zainurossalamia ZA, 2025). There is evidence to support the idea that emotional connection, trust, high quality of services and effective communication are essential for building customer loyalty (Alruwaili and Ali, 2025). During the last few years, several researchers have investigated customer retention techniques in various industries including banking, retail, hospitality, telecoms, and service businesses (Eltahir Kabbar and Nuwan Herath, 2025). It is evident from research findings that firms that practice customer-centric techniques perform better in terms of decreasing customer churn and building strong relationships. Further, the inclusion of technology, artificial intelligence, machine learning, and customer relationship management systems has made it easier for firms to recognize customer needs and personalize their experience. Additionally, there is evidence indicating that loyalty schemes, digital personalization, and omnichannel services are some of the essential drivers that improve customer retention in the current business world (Adryan Rachman, Yen Efawati, and Muhammad Daffa Daniswara, 2025). Depending on the type of industry and customer demands, different firms may need diverse techniques and skills to enhance customer loyalty. It should be noted that most of the previous studies concentrated on relationship marketing, customer satisfaction, loyalty schemes, and technology use in customer retention practices. However, this research paper concentrates only on examining the effectiveness of customer retention techniques used by Kerala Kaumudi. In other words, the research particularly focuses on analyzing the variables affecting reader loyalty and assessing the customer retention using Factor Analysis and Spearman's Correlation Analysis.

Research Gap

The existing literature has concentrated primarily on the area of retaining customers in banking, retail, hospitality, and e-commerce industries. There is limited literature on how customer retention can be achieved in the field of newspapers. Retention measures for newspapers could include issues like quality of content, value-added services of subscriptions, and CRM. Some research has pointed towards the significance of loyalty programs, CRM, and big data analysis in customer retention; however, little is known about its application in the print media industry.

Research Methodology

The present study will try to evaluate the effectiveness of customer retention techniques used by Kerala Kaumudi towards its customers in Thiruvananthapuram district. As the exact number of respondents is not known, p is taken as 0.5 and q is 0.5; therefore, the number of samples needed for

the present study using Cochran’s Formula is 384. Out of these 384 respondents, 384 respondents were selected from different places of Thiruvananthapuram district according to their accessibility and availability. Primary data collection was conducted by means of a structured questionnaire along with face-to-face interaction with 384 readers and subscribers. There were ten variables used after testing for validity and reliability in the present study. The responses obtained from readers/subscribers were evaluated by using a five-point Likert scale, i.e., 5=”Strongly Agree” to 1= “Strongly Disagree”. The Convenience Sampling Technique was applied in the present study while approaching the respondents. The descriptive research method was adopted for the analysis of opinions, preferences, and satisfaction level of the readers towards customer retention strategies adopted by Kerala Kaumudi. The statistical techniques used for the analysis of data include Factor Analysis and Mann Whitney U Test.

Objectives

1. To identify the factors that make Kerala Kaumudi popular among its readers.
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of the distribution of Kerala Kaumudi newspaper compared to other newspapers.

Limitations of the Study

1. The research is restricted to a particular region in Thiruvananthapuram, so the results cannot be used by other people living in different geographical areas with varied likes and market conditions.
2. The research depends upon the response of the readers, and the response is based on their perceptions only.

Data Analysis Factor Analysis

There are many factors that influence the popularity of Kerala Kaumudi with its readers like credible news, news related to the local area, quality of writing style, useful information and credibility of newspapers. All these factors play a very vital role in keeping customers loyal and increasing their satisfaction in the extremely competitive newspaper market. In total, five factors have been used to identify the factors affecting the popularity of Kerala Kaumudi.

Table 1 Factor Analysis

Factors	Components		
	News Quality	Information Usefulness	Credibility Factor
Reliable News	.859		
Local News Coverage	.739		
Quality and Writing Style	.690		
Useful Information		.936	
Credibility			.948
KMO	.787		
Approx. Chi - Square	401.572		
df	10		
Sig	.000		

Source: Primary Data

A measure of sampling adequacy using Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure is 0.787, which is adequate enough to perform the test. Proof of Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity is done using Chi-Square (401.572), degree of freedom (10), which makes the test statistically significant, since the p value is within the standard limit of 0.05. Therefore, the above variables are fit for further analysis. In Factor Analysis, three major factors affecting the popularity of Kerala Kaumudi are identified, the first being Reliable News, Local News Coverage, and Quality & Writing Style, thus implying the significance of news qualities to the readers. Another factor is Usefulness of Information, signifying the fact that readers prefer informative material, while the last factor is Credibility. In conclusion, it can be stated that several factors determine the popularity of Kerala Kaumudi. Hence, the Null Hypothesis (H₀) formulated, which says that “There are no significant common underlying factors influencing the popularity of Kerala Kaumudi among readers,” is not accepted. Instead, the Alternative Hypothesis (H₁) formulated, which states that “There are significant common underlying factors influencing the popularity of Kerala Kaumudi among readers,” is accepted.

Mann- Whitney U Test

The efficiency of newspaper distribution is a significant factor influencing the retention of readership in Kerala Kaumudi. The Mann-Whitney U Test was used to determine whether there is any significant difference between males and females regarding their degree of satisfaction with newspaper distribution. Five crucial aspects of newspaper distribution were considered for this study.

Table 2 Mann- Whitney U Test

Effectiveness of distribution	Gender		Z Value	P Value
	Male	Female		
Delivery regularity	197.88	188.66	-.906	.365
Early morning delivery	192.91	192.21	-.068	.946
Distribution efficiency	208.68	180.94	-2.683	.007
Agent service	202.98	185.02	-1.748	.081
Availability in shops	199.05	189.82	-1.087	.277

Source: Primary Data

According to the outcomes obtained through the Mann–Whitney U test, there exists no statistically significant difference between males and females as far as delivery regularity (p=0.365), early morning delivery (p=0.946), agent services (p=0.081), and availability in shops (p=0.277) are concerned, as their p-values are greater than 0.05. Therefore, it can be seen that male and female readers tend to have quite similar viewpoints on the issue of distribution. The null hypothesis (H₀) is thus confirmed. In this case, the factor “distribution efficiency” had a statistically significant difference between male and female readers (Z = -2.683, p = 0.007) since the p-value is lower than 0.05. In fact, the mean rank of males is 208.68 while that of females is 180.94. This shows that male readers were relatively happier with the efficiency of the distribution of the newspaper. As such, for this factor, the Null Hypothesis was rejected while the Alternative Hypothesis was accepted.

Findings

- Factor Analysis revealed three main factors affecting the popularity of Kerala Kaumudi as Reliable News, Local News Coverage, and Quality & Writing Style.
- High KMO value of 0.787 and significant Bartlett’s test (p < 0.05) suggested that the data was

appropriate for factor analysis.

- High appreciation for usefulness of information by readers indicates that usefulness is important in achieving customer satisfaction and loyalty.
- Credibility of the newspaper was another factor which played an important role in the popularity of Kerala Kaumudi.
- No significant difference between males and females was observed for satisfaction related to delivery regularity, early morning delivery, service by agents, and shops' availability. However, male readers were more satisfied with efficient distribution than female readers.

Suggestions

- Speed can be increased without affecting reliability by improving digital reporting methods and increasing news gathering efficiency.
- Credibility and accuracy will always matter, and that is why there is need for fact checking to remain high.
- Delivery consistency can also be improved by monitoring delivery and creating more efficient distribution channels. This is aimed at reducing customer dissatisfaction.
- Value-added services include special editions focused on issues such as education, healthcare, employment, finance, as well as question papers for competitive exams like NEET and JEE.
- Digital media can become stronger when they are complemented by other forms of media such as newspapers.

Conclusion

Analysis on the effectiveness of the customer retention strategy adopted by Kerala Kaumudi reveals an excellent reader base, especially in the category of young consumers including students and young professionals. As per the results, there are very high levels of trust, credibility, and satisfaction among the readers. Majority of the readers are satisfied with the trustworthiness, relevance, writing ability of the news, as well as its usefulness in terms of educational, professional, and social purposes. Also, the high level of loyalty shows that the readers appreciate the paper's quality and are loyal towards it. However, it should be noted that some improvements are required in various aspects. For instance, delivery time, speed of news publication, and opportunities for readers to get engaged in the process of reading can be further enhanced. The relationship between switching cost and loyalty is moderately positive, which means that improving value added services for the readers will positively affect customer retention.

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