



CUSTOMER SATISFACTION TOWARDS INDANE AND HP GAS – A COMPARITIVE STUDY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO COIMBATORE DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

The present scenario of the LPG industry in India provides many opportunities for LPG to contribute to improved living standards of people. The main purpose of the study is to understand the attitude and satisfaction of consumers towards two different agencies namely Indane and HP. The study will help the company to make proper strategy and emphasize on their weaker areas so as to improve their performance and excel in their respective areas.

Keywords: Liquefied Petroleum Gas, Indane, HP Gas

I. INTRODUCTION

LPG's domestic uses can never be ignored. It has played a revolutionary role when it comes to changing the face of domestic fuels used for heating and cooking. LPG for household consumption is nearly 89% of total LPG off-take in India. Total LPG consumption in the country for the year 2011-12 is projected to be more than 16.5 MMT (Million Metric Tons) and is expected to grow at 8-9% as envisaged in Vision 2015 document of Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas. There are still many rural areas where they have no awareness on use of LPG for domestic purpose. In developing countries the main benefits of LPG is in helping people to switch from unsustainable biomass use to a clean and safe cooking fuel. This provides enormous health benefits helping to avoid the 1.6 million deaths per year from respiratory problems caused by smoke and other pollutants released by inefficient biomass burning in enclosed spaces. It also releases

women and children from the drudgery of collecting firewood and health problems associated with carrying heavy bundles long.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Humanity faces a unique and far-reaching challenge. Our energy needs are growing as a result of continued population increases, economic growth, and individual fuel/energy consumption. At the same time, emissions from fuel are many opportunities for LPG to contribute to improved living standards. LPG is known to be the most useful and effective energy alternative for domestic, as well as business, use. The fact that it offers versatile usage at lower costs than other energy sources, accompanied with its environmentally-friendly nature, greatly increases the demand among people. This can sometimes make some suppliers charge more than they should. LPG is subsidized by the government in India. Increase in LPG prices has been a politically sensitive matter in India as it potentially affects the urban middle class voting pattern. Customer oriented market should make sure that there is healthy competition in the market between different companies. This is necessary because in a competitive business environment, not only the companies but also the customers obtain benefits in the form of competitive prices; along with quality services and facilities provided by the LPG gas company. Consumer satisfaction is the basic tenet (true) of modern concept of marketing. It is the basic philosophy of management, which forces the organization to align its actions with the market mandates

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the customer satisfaction towards the Indane and HP Gas
- To evaluate the factors that influencing the customers in choosing a LPG service provide

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design adopted for this study is Analytical and Descriptive in nature. It basically seeks to extract information regarding the customer satisfaction towards different LPG gas companies. The study is based on Primary as well as Secondary data. The primary data is collected through Personal Interview Schedule from the area of study. Secondary Data is collected from various books, journals, publications etc. For collecting information Convenience Sampling method was followed. Under this technique samples are collected as per the convenience of the researcher. The sample size taken for the study is 56 respondents. The statistical technique applied includes the Simple Percentage Analysis.

V. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- It is a micro level study and therefore the findings of the study are applicable only to the market segments possessing the characteristics of Coimbatore central zone.
- Due to the time constraint the sample size were restricted to 56 respondents only.
- The response received from consumers may not represent the views of the entire universe

- Since the study is based on the primary data collected through questionnaire, the results of the study is subject to all the limitations of the primary data.
- The analysis based on some statistical tools which has its own limitation. The findings and suggestions are based on the information given by the respondents.

VI. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- **Chike Chikwendu (2011)** in his study entitled, “Changeover from Kerosene to LPG use”, concluded that, “Making LPG accessible to all through making it available across socioeconomic groups can be achieved by locating LPG depots strategically across the country to assure uninterrupted product availability and price stability
- **Ruangwud Jarurungsipong & Nopalak Rakthum (2012)** in their study, Price Controls Support LPG Fuel Consumption argues that, LPG consumption will be significantly reduced if the government allows the retail prices of LPG in all segments to rise to market price level
- **Vinayagamoorthy, C. Sankar and M.Sangeetha (2013)**, in their article titled “A Study on Service Quality Perception of Domestic LPG” concluded that in this the competitive environment, service quality has become the success mantra in all service sector. Keeping this in mind, this study has conducted at Salem city to discover the service quality of Indane gas. The results indicate that customers are not highly satisfied with the service provided by the Indane gas. So the company took some severe action to improve the service quality.

VII. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

TABLE NO 1

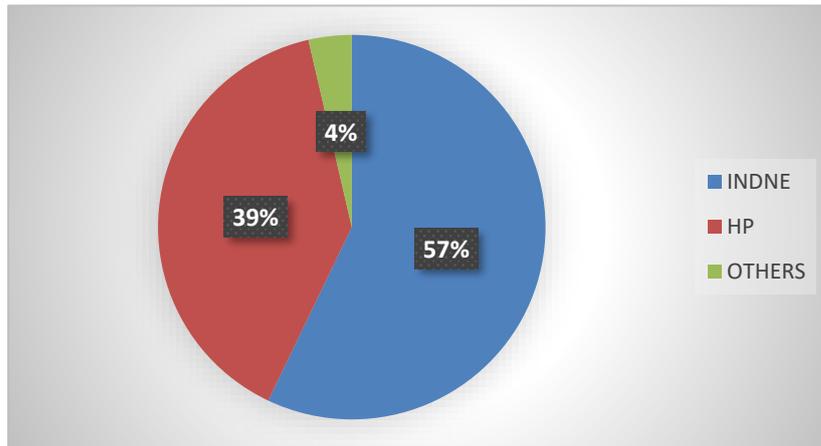
AGENCY PREFERRED BY CUSTOMERS

FACTORS	NO.OF RESPONDENTS	% OF RESPONDENTS
INDANE	32	57.1%
HP	22	39.3%
OTHERS	2	3.6%
TOTAL	56	100%

Source: Primary Data

CHART NO 1

AGENCY PREFERRED BY CUSTOMERS



The above table shows that 57% of the respondents prefer Indane gas agency. 39% of the respondents prefers HP and 2% of the respondents prefers other gas agencies.

TABLE NO 2

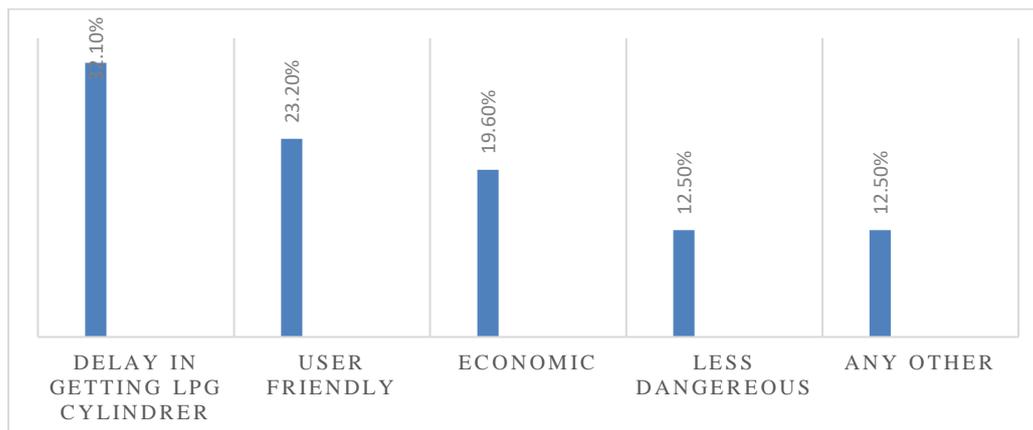
FACTORS INFLUENCING THE CHOICE

FACTORS	NO OF RESPONDENTS	% OF RESPONDENTS
FASTER DELIVERY	18	32.1%
USER FRIENDLY	13	23.2%
ECONOMIC	11	19.6%
LESS DANGEROUS	7	12.5%
ANY OTHER	7	12.5%
TOTAL	56	100%

Source: Primary Data

CHART NO 2

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE CHOICE



The above table shows the reasons for choosing the Indane fuels. 32.1% of the respondents says faster delivery of LPG is the main reason. 23.2% of the respondents said that it is user friendly. 19.6% of the respondents says that it is more economical. 12.5% of the respondents says that it is less dangerous and 12.5% prefers due to several other reasons.

VIII. FINDINGS

1. The study reveals that out of the respondents under study almost 57% prefers Indane gas over HP gas.
2. The study showed that the faster delivery of gas is the main reason because of which the respondents choose Indane agency.

IX. SUGGESSTION

- There should be some more gas dealers in Coimbatore central area. This would help in increasing the sales and in turn, it would improve the service quality on distribution
- Most of the customers are facing the irregularity of increasing the price of the gas. So gas Agencies and Government should take the necessary action to rectify it or make the customers aware about the reasons for the increasing price of the gas.

X. CONCLUSION

“The customer is always right” is a famous business slogan. The underlying truth behind this statement is realizing that, customers are the life blood for any business. In this competitive environment, quality service has become the secret of success in all service sectors. Quality service means, it is absolutely to satisfy the customer needs. Keeping this in mind, this study has been conducted at Coimbatore district to identify the customers’ attitude and satisfaction towards the domestic LPG services. It can be concluded that majority of the respondents choose Indane agency over other agencies. The findings of the study depict that the customers has faced the irregularity of price increase and some have issues like delayed supply of LPG gas cylinders. It is suggested that the HP gas company should take some necessary action to improve their service quality by the way they can introduce some more dealers and provide constant service to the customers.

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