A Study on Problem and Prospects of Sales Representative in Kanyakumari District

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ABSTRACT - **Personal selling is a crucial marketing tool for different types of products. It plays at least three main roles, disseminating factual information, presenting persuasive information and rendering a service. The main role of the salesperson is to inform the market about all the product's characteristics, technical details, prices, and conditions of contracts. And in its turn, the market informs the company through the salespeople about its recent changes. Personal selling not only performs the important demand creation function, but also creates a great promotional effect for other marketing tools, multiplying it in several times. In most companies, it is the single most important link to the customer, and at the same time, for the customers, the salesperson represents the company. The study mainly based on both primary and secondary data. The total sample was fixed at 300 sales representatives in Kanyakumari district. Stratified Random Sampling technique was used to collect data through well structured interview schedule.**

Key words: Sales Representatives, Problem & Prospects and Personal Selling

I. INTRODUCTION

Sales representatives are the key point of contact between an organization and its clients, answering queries, offering advice and introducing new products. Sales representatives are the conductors of a company's revenue engine. They create and nurture high performance sales and lead them to generate hit revenue forecasts and meet customer needs. Sell products to businesses, organizations, and governments on behalf of manufacturers. They might work directly for the company producing the goods, or for an independent sales agency whose clients are manufacturers and wholesalers. Today nearly 34,000 sales representatives sell scientific and technical products. Approximately 1.9 million sales representatives worked in wholesale and manufacturing in 2019.

II. OBJECTIVES

The following are the important objectives of the present study are,

- ❖ To analyses the socio-economic profile of sales representatives in Kanyakumari district.
- ❖ To analyze the various factors influencing sales representatives in the study area.
- ❖ To analyze major obstacles faced by sales representatives in Kanyakumari district.

III. METHODOLOGY

The research design adopted for the study is descriptive in nature. The study is based on both primary data and secondary data. For collecting required primary data from the sales representatives in Kanyakumnari district, well-structured and pre-tested interview schedule was used. Secondary information was also collected from various books, journals and websites relevant to the sale representatives. The sample size was fixed at 300, sample sales representatives were selected through stratified random sampling method.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Socio – Economic background of the selected Sales Representative

Under this section, the age, sex, education, marital status, nature of family, family size, monthly family income and family expenditure of the selected sales representatives are analyzed.

Table.1 Socio – Economic background of the selected Sales Representative

Factors	Classification	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Age	Below-26	25	8.33
	26 - 36	141	47.00
	36 - 46	97	32.33
	Above - 46	37	12.34
Sex	Male	284	94.67
	Female	16	5.33

Education	School level	17	5.67
	Under Graduate	134	44.67
	Post Graduate	85	28.33
	Others	64	21.33
Marital status	Married	127	42.33
	Un married	173	57.67
Nature of family	Nuclear family	192	64.00
	Joint family	108	36.00
Family size	Up to - 3	71	23.67
	4 - 5	162	54.00
	Above-5	67	22.33
Family income	Up to - 10000	76	25.33
	10000-20000	131	43.67
	Above-20000	93	31.00
Family expenditure	Below-5000	41	13.67
	5000-10000	178	59.33
	Above-10000	81	27.00

Source: Primary data

The table.1 reveals that, out of 300 respondents, 141 (47.00 per cent) sales representatives fall in the age group 26-36 years, the maximum 284 (94.67 percent) sales representatives are male, 134 (44.67 per cent) sales representatives possess under graduate college level education, 173(57.67 per cent) of the sales representatives are unmarried, majority 192 (64.00 per cent) of the sales representatives are belonging to the nuclear family system, 162 (54.00 per cent) of the sales representatives fall in the family size of 4-5 members, 131(43.67per cent) sales representatives fall in monthly family income group of Rs.10000-Rs.20000 and 178 (59.33 per cent) of the sales representatives fall in the monthly family expenditure group of Rs.5000–Rs.10000.

4.2 Various Factors Influencing Sales Representatives

The different factors which influence the sales representatives were studied like Qualification, Sales Skills, Interested in Sales, Good Salary, Unemployment, Interested in Earnings, Risk Taking, Sales Experience, Friends Support, Employment Opportunities, Self-Confidence and No other work. The respondents were asked to rate different factors influencing the sales representatives on a five-point scale as extremely important, very important, important, least important and not at all important. It is presented in the table.2

Table.2 Factors Influencing Sales Representatives

Sl.No	Factors	Mean Score	SD	Z-Value
1	Qualification	92.3	0.68	13.42*
2	Sales Skills	87.5	0.94	9.84*
3	Interested in Sales	84.9	0.86	8.67*
4	Sales Experience	81.1	0.84	7.42*
5	Self-Confidence	78.6	1.29	7.21*
6	Interested in Earnings	75.4	0.96	5.55*
7	Employment Opportunities	73.0	0.91	5.32*
8	Good Salary	69.5	1.38	3.27
9	Friends Support	64.3	1.21	4.97*
10	Unemployment	59.8	1.51	(-) 1.67
11	Risk Taking	55.4	0.96	(-) 4.42
12	No other work	46.7	0.74	(-)12.41*
	Z-value =1.96			

Sources: Computed data

Note   : * Significant at 5% level of significance

The table.2 shows that the important factors influencing sales representatives were Qualification (mean - 92.3), Sales Skills (mean - 87.5), Interested in Sales (mean – 84.9), Sales Experience (mean – 81.1) and Self Confidence (78.6). Z-test results reveals that in case of sales representatives, the observed mean value for factors such as qualification, sales skills, interested in sales, sales experience, self-confidence, interested in earning, employment opportunities, friends support and no other work was significantly different from the assumed mean value of 3 at 5 per cent level of significance.

4.3 Obstacles faced Sales Representatives

The problems which are generally faced by the sales representatives were stress, losing deals, difficult prospects, pressure from management, hard work, transport problem, poor incentives, market changes, lack of knowledge, competitors and customer reactions. In this table, the problems so identified and ranked by the respondents converted into scores by using the Garrett's Ranking Technique. The mean scores were worked out for each problem and arranged in a descending order.

Table.3 Obstacles faced by Sales Representatives in Kanyakumari district

Sl.No	Problems	Mean Score	Rank
1	Stress	80.72	II
2	Losing deals	62.78	V
3	Difficult prospects	42.87	XI
4	Pressure from Management	83.39	I
5	Hard Work	54.76	VII
6	Low Salary	55.63	VI
7	Transport Problem	50.22	IX
8	Poor Incentives	39.65	XII
9	Market Changes	44.53	X
10	Lack of Knowledge	51.03	VIII
11	Competitors	67.55	IV
12	Customer Reactions	72.49	III

Source: Primary data

Table.3 shows the obstacles faced by the sales representatives; the problem of pressure from management with a mean score of 83.39 was ranked first, stress with mean score of 80.72 contributed second rank, customer reactions with mean score of 72.49 contributed third rank, competitors with mean score of 67.55 contributed fourth rank, losing deals with mean score of 62.78 contributed fifth rank, low salary with mean score 55.63 contributed sixth rank, hard work with mean score 54.76 contributed seventh rank, lack of knowledge with mean score of 51.03 contributed eighth rank, transport problem with mean score of 50.22 contributed ninth rank, market changes with mean score of 44.53 contributed tenth place, difficult prospects with mean score 42.87 contributed eleventh place and poor incentives with mean score 39.65 contributed last place.

V.   FINDINGS

❖ The study express that, out of 300 respondents, 141 (47.00 per cent) sales representatives fall in the age group 26-36 years, the maximum 284 (94.67 percent) sales representatives are male, 134 (44.67 per cent) sales representatives possess under graduate college level education, 173(57.67 per cent) of the sales representatives are unmarried, majority 192 (64.00 per cent) of the sales representatives are belonging to the nuclear family system, 162 (54.00 per cent) of the sales representatives fall in the family size of 4-5 members, 131(43.67per cent) sales representatives fall in monthly family income group of Rs.10000-Rs.20000 and 178 (59.33 per cent) of the sales representatives fall in the monthly family expenditure group of Rs.5000–Rs.10000.

❖ The study shows that the important factors influencing sales representatives were Qualification (mean - 92.3), Sales Skills (mean - 87.5), Interested in Sales (mean – 84.9), Sales Experience (mean – 81.1) and Self Confidence (78.6). Z-test results reveals that in case of sales representatives, the observed mean value for factors such as qualification, sales skills, interested in sales, sales experience, self-confidence, interested in earning, employment opportunities, friends support and no other work was significantly different from the assumed mean value of 3 at 5 per cent level of significance.

❖ The study reveals that obstacles faced by the sales representatives in Knaykumari district, the problem of pressure from management with a mean score of 83.39 contributed first rank, stress with mean score of 80.72 contributed second rank, customer reactions with mean score of 72.49 contributed third rank and poor incentives with mean score 39.65 contributed last place.

VI.   CONCLUSION

This study has given a clear picture about, "Problem and Prospects of Sales Representatives in Kanyakumari district". Nowadays personal selling is the significant sector providing vast employment opportunity to urban and rural areas in Kanyakumari district. The sector mainly suffers from skilled and trained personal. So the government must take necessary steps to improve the skill of the sales representatives. The major problem of the sales representatives are stress, losing deals, pressure from management, market changes, lack of knowledge, competitors and customer reactions. So the government and companies should take necessary steps to rectify the above problems. Finally, qualification is the major factor influencing the sales representatives in Kanyakumari district.

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