

FDI in Multi-Brand Retailing : A Case Study of Mysore

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Abstract

The present study was conducted in the city of Mysore to analyze the perceptions of the common man about foreign direct investment (FDI) in multi-brand retailing (MBR). The review of literature evinced the fact that a number of studies have been conducted in the area of FDI in general, and its impact on single brand retail, in particular. There are only a few studies that are available on the impact of FDI in multi brand retailing in India. The major objectives of this study are: (i) to know the perceptions of the common man about FDI in multi-brand retail in India (as the common man's perceptions on the said topic have been less explored) ; and (ii) to know the differences in their perceptions. The data required for this study was collected both from primary and secondary sources. Using convenience sampling method, 100 persons were considered as the respondents for the present study. The differences in their perceptions have been analyzed using SPSS to draw meaningful conclusions. The respondents were of the opinion that the impact will be felt on an increase in the general price level supported by an increase in the prices of food products, land, and organized real estate stock prices. However, the respondents were of the opinion that the impact of allowing FDI in MBR will be favorable for the Government and for the producers. To conclude, future studies conducted at the micro level would help policymakers to understand the problems and frame guidelines addressing the critical issues with the major aim of benefiting the society.

Keywords: foreign direct investment, retail, single brand retail, multi brand retail

A . T. Kearney's Global Retail Development Index (GRDI, 2011) ranked India number one in terms of attractiveness to global players. It reported that the Indian retail sector accounts for 22% of the country's GDP and contributes to 8% of the total employment. Thus, the retail industry in India is currently growing at a fast pace and is expected to go up to US \$ 833 billion by the current year (2013). It is further expected to reach US \$ 1.3 trillion by the year 2018 at a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of 10%. Odisha emerged as the top destination for FDI in 2011-12, accounting for 27% of the value of all investments in India. The total value of the investments amounted to nearly ₹ 50,000 crore. Andhra Pradesh was ranked second, with FDI proposals of about ₹ 34,000 crore. The state accounted for about 19% of the value of all investment proposals. Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, and Maharashtra were ranked third, fourth, and fifth respectively. The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry ranked Karnataka the fifth among Indian states in terms of attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) proposals in 2011-12. The total value of the 48 FDI proposals in the State amounted to ₹14,000 crore, which was 8% of the value of all the proposals for FDI in India in 2011-12. It was also reported that the retail sector will create 50,000 jobs in the next few years (Business Standard, August 28, 2012).

In this background, the present debate on FDI in multi brand retailing is a welcome move by the politicians and the academicians. The review of literature made for this study evinced the fact that a number of studies have been conducted in the area of FDI in general, and its impact on single brand retail, in particular. However, there are only few studies available on the impact of FDI in multi brand retailing in India. The present study aims at examining the perceptions of the common man about FDI in multi-brand retail in the city of Mysore. The announcement made by the Government - regarding allowing FDI in multi brand retailing - has stipulated that it is allowed only in cities with more than ten lakh population as per the 2011 census. The city of Mysore with more than ten lakh population is also a prospective destination for big retailers to enter the city through FDI in multi brands.

Objectives of the Study

The major objectives of this study are: (i) to examine the perceptions of the common man about FDI in multi-brand

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retail in India; and (ii) to analyze the differences in their perceptions. The common man's perceptions on the said topic have been less explored in the past.

Review of Literature

FDI in MBR (multi brand retailing) refers to a retail store with a foreign investment that can sell multiple brands under one roof. The review of literature made for this study shows that the major impact of FDI in multi brand retailing will be felt by the farmers, the local retailers, the SMEs, and it will also have an impact on the creation of employment opportunities and in the area of use of technology. The results of few important studies have been discussed below :

❖ **Impact on Farmers :** According to Bisaria (2012), the biggest beneficiary of FDI in retail would be farmers who will be able to improve their productivity; they will get maximum benefits of direct selling. The large retailers will also save 10-15% in commissions by purchasing fruits and vegetables directly (Bisaria, 2012; Popli & Singh, 2012). Supplying to large chain supermarkets would give both potential and large opportunities to our Indian farmers (Baskaran, 2012a). She also added that in India, 40% of the harvest perishes in storage and transportation. India is the second largest producer of fruits and vegetables, but the country is losing ₹1 trillion per annum due to the lack of storage facilities and difficulty to link far-away markets. A similar opinion was expressed in the study by Patil & Hurne (2012), who put forth that farmers can benefit from the “farm-to-fork” policy.

A survey conducted by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) found that more than 40% (more than 4 million since 1991) of the farmers were willing to quit farming for any opportunity of a job. Permitting FDI in the organized retail sector is likely to open opportunities for assured and remunerative marketing for farmers, most likely in fruits and vegetables. The argument that Indian farmers would benefit heavily is not quite convincing at this point. Import of fruits or vegetables by these retail chains as well distribution of their own domestic farm products would be the most probable eventuality (Prasad & Perumal, 2012).

❖ **Impact on Local Retailers :** There are arguments that granting permission to FDI in multi brand retailing can hurt financially, the unorganized retailers, which would lead to them losing the livelihood. Baskaran (2012b) opined that if Walmart and other retail chains get a foothold in India, it will mean the displacement of small retailers and farmers. The experience of the West shows that corporate retail chains kill small businesses. However, these arguments were rejected in a study conducted by Mathew, Soundararajan, Gupta, and Sahu (2012) (for the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER)) who opined that both the unorganized and organized retail are bound not only to coexist, but also to achieve rapid and sustained growth in the coming years. This has been found true in the case of Kerala State, where it was found that no *kiranas* were replaced on a one to one basis in Kerala due to the entry of big organized stores. Instead, they became more professional and customer friendly (The AMIC infoserries (numbered 8) of Kerala Agricultural University).

The rate of closure of unorganized retail shops is only 4.2% p.a, which is much lower than the international rate. Similarly, the rate of closure on account of competition from organized retail was found to be still lower, at 1.7% per annum. This was achieved through competitive response from traditional retailers and through improved business practices and technology upgradation (PSA E-Newslines, 2011). Popli and Singh (2012) opined that the experience of the last decade shows that small retailers have flourished in harmony with large outlets. On the contrary, in a briefing paper, Singh (2011) illustrated the case of Thailand, where three foreign retailers took over 38% of the market within 13 years, thereby throwing thousands of local retailers out of business. In the U.S. also, the number of stores declined from 1.77 million in 1951 to 1.5 million in 2011. Though the local retailers will be killed, there is indeed a competitive response from the traditional business practices in terms of technology upgradation to brace themselves against the onslaughts by large organized retailers (Baskaran, 2012a).

❖ **Impact on SMEs :** The small and medium enterprises sector is also set to gain from this move due to the preference given by retailers to private label brands (Baskaran, 2012b ; Chari & Raghavan, 2012). The Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, Government of India's discussion paper (2010-2011) focused on perceived benefits to the agricultural sector and rural areas. It also believes that the new policy would benefit Indian MSMEs, which in the past have failed to reach the global markets due to their inability to access latest technology and improve its marketing interface (DIPP Discussion Paper on FDI in MBR, 2010, p.6). The Indian Government recommends that retail firms

source a percentage of manufactured products from the small and medium domestic enterprises (DIPP Report, 2010). With a restriction of this sort, the opening up of the retail sector to FDI could, therefore, provide a boost to small and medium enterprises.

❖ **Impact on Employment Opportunities :** According to the DIPP Discussion Paper on FDI in MBR (2010), more than 2/3rd of the total employment, in the broad category of trade, hotels, and restaurants, is in the retail sector. There will be huge job opportunities in the country (in crores) as there will be opening of malls and store houses. The entry of modern retailers will expand the market, creating large amount of additional jobs in retail. The job opportunities will vary from ordinary workers to specialized officers (Bisaria, 2012).

❖ **Impact on Consumers :** From the stand point of consumers, organized retailing would help reduce the problem of adulteration, short weighing, and substandard goods. According to Bisaria (2012), the Indian consumers will get access to quality goods at a low cost.

❖ **Impact on Retail Workers :** The allowing of FDI in multi brand retailing is also expected to have an impact on retail workers as they are one of the major stakeholders in the retail industry. According to Kenneth Jacobs of the University of California, Berkeley, "Walmart workers earn an estimated 12.4% less than retail workers as a whole, and 14.5% less than workers in large retail in general in the U.S." (Walmart Stores Inc v. Massmart Holdings Limited , CT Case No. 73/LM/Nov 10). A report by UNI global union on "Walmart's Global Track Record and Implications for FDI in multi-brand retail in India" brought out various problems pertaining to retail workers at various branches of Walmart.

Research Methodology

The present study is a case study in nature. Data required for this study was collected both from primary and secondary sources. Primary data relating to perceptions of people regarding FDI in multi brand retailing in India in the city of Mysore was collected by using a questionnaire. The questionnaire included 32 statements revealing the impact of FDI expected on MBR (political and legal issues concerning the topic are outside the purview of this study). Data was collected during the month of December 2012. Using the convenience sampling method, 100 persons were considered as the sample for this study. The differences in their perceptions have been analyzed by using SPSS package to draw meaningful conclusions.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data relating to perceptions on FDI in MBR were collected from 100 respondents belonging to the city of Mysore. A questionnaire was developed, which consisted of 32 statements. The responses of the sample respondents were obtained on a 5 - point Likert's Scale ranging from '*Strongly agree to Strongly Disagree*'. All the statements dealt with the perceptions regarding the impact of FDI on MBR in one or the other following nine areas :

1. Producers, 2. Local Retailers, 3. Agro Based Activities, 4. Types of Consumers,
5. Benefits to Customers, 6. Prices, 7. Government, 8. Employment generation, 9. Wholesalers

❖ **Sample Description:** Out of 100 samples chosen for the study, 41 respondents were males and 59 respondents were females. 69 respondents belonged to the age group of 21- 40 years, 30 respondents belonged to the age group of 41-60 years, and 1 respondent was above 60 years of age. 67 respondents earned less than ₹ 3 lakhs per annum, 27 respondents earned between ₹ 3 lakhs and ₹ 6 lakhs, and six respondents earned more than ₹ 6 lakhs per annum.

❖ **Analysis and Interpretation:** It may be observed from all quarters that the allowing of FDI in MBR is perceived to affect the producers to a large extent. The perception of the respondents in this regard was collected from four statements, and the mean scores obtained are presented in the Table 1. The mean scores shown in the Table 1 clearly indicate that the respondents were of the opinion that allowing FDI in MBR will be favorable to the producers.

As per the respondents' opinion(s) presented in the Table 2, the sales of local retailers will decrease due to allowing of FDI in MBR, however, the respondents were not certain with regards to the closure of the small unorganized retail stores in their area. From the Table 3, it can be inferred that the respondents had a favorable opinion about FDI in MBR

Table 1: Respondents' Opinion about the Impact (of FDI on MBR) on Producers		
Sl. No.	Statements	Mean Score
1.	Producers will get an opportunity to enter new markets.	4.11
2.	Producers will get better prices.	3.66
3.	Commission payable to middlemen will decrease.	3.60
4.	Producers' time is saved as they directly deal with purchasers.	3.92
	Overall mean score	3.81
Source: Field Survey		

Table 2 : Respondents' Opinion about the Impact (of FDI on MBR) on Local Retailers		
Sl. No.	Statements	Mean Score
1.	Sales by local retailers will decrease.	3.87
2.	Problems of storage will arise.	3.23
3.	Many local retailers will shut shops.	3.41
4.	Refrigeration facilities will be enhanced.	3.61
	Overall mean score	3.53
Source: Field Survey		

Table 3 : Respondents' Opinion about the Impact (of FDI on MBR) on Agro Based Industries		
Sl. No.	Statements	Mean Score
1.	Number of agro-based industries will rise.	3.59
2.	Imports by SMEs will increase.	3.56
3.	Number of agro processing industries will increase.	3.71
	Overall mean score	3.81
Source: Field Survey		

Table 4 : Respondents' Opinion about the Impact (of FDI on MBR) on types of Customers		
Sl. No.	Statements	Mean Score
1.	Customers aspiring for different varieties of products will increase.	4.38
2.	The number of customers who are quality conscious will increase.	4.05
3.	Number of customers demanding branded products will increase.	4.1
	Overall mean score	4.18
Source: Field Survey		

Table 5 : Respondents' Opinion about the Impact (of FDI on MBR) on Customers		
Sl. No.	Statements	Mean Score
1.	Spending power of individuals will increase.	3.50
2.	Consumers' time would be saved as they can purchase all their requirements from the same store.	4.02
3.	Consumers will get all products at better prices.	3.45
4.	Standard of living of the people will increase.	3.75
	Overall mean score	3.69
Source: Field Survey		

with respect to the agro based industries. The Table 4 shows that the respondents had positive views regarding the impact of FDI in MBR on the different type of customers. They opined that permitting FDI in MBR will result in the emergence of different types of customers, whose proportion was comparatively less in the past.

The Table 5 shows that the respondents were of the opinion that allowing FDI in MBR will accrue various benefits to the customers. As per the respondents' opinion, one of the major benefits of FDI in MBR would be that the customers would be able to save a lot of time as all the items would be available in one store. Also, the mean score obtained for this statement is the highest amongst the four benefits listed in the Table. The Table 6 depicts that the respondents were of the opinion that the price of land will increase due to allowing of FDI in MBR. The Table 7 shows that the respondents perceived that the revenue earned by the Government will increase by way of increase in service tax and exports. Out of the two, people were of the opinion that the former - revenue from service tax - will increase for the Government. It can be inferred from the Table 8 that the respondents opined that more employment opportunities

Table 6 : Respondents' Opinion about the Impact (of FDI on MBR) on the General Price Level		
Sl.No.	Statements	Mean Score
1.	Prices of food products will increase.	3.62
2.	Prices of land will increase.	4.47
3.	There will be an increase in the general price level of products.	3.69
4.	There will be pressure on SMEs to reduce prices.	3.51
5.	Organized retail real estate stock prices will increase.	3.93
	Overall mean score	3.85
Source: Field Survey		

Table 7 : Respondents' Opinion about the Impact (of FDI on MBR) on the Government		
Sl.No.	Statements	Mean Score
1.	Revenue earned by the Govt. from service tax and other taxes will increase.	4.03
2.	Revenue earned by the Govt. through exports will increase.	3.71
	Overall mean score	3.86
Source: Field Survey		

Table 8 : Respondents' Opinion about the Impact (of FDI on MBR) on Employment		
Sl.No.	Statements	Mean Score
1.	More employment opportunities will be created for skilled workers.	3.89
2.	Number of institutes providing business education will increase.	3.84
3.	Retail workers will work under pressure.	4.04
4.	More employment opportunities will be created for unskilled workers.	4.99
5.	Number of courses relating to retailing will increase.	3.64
6.	On the flip side, there may be an increase in women employees getting exploited.	3.05
	Overall mean score	3.56
Source: Field Survey		

Table 9: Respondents' Opinion about the Impact (of FDI on MBR) on Wholesalers		
Sl.No.	Statements	Mean Score
1.	Number of wholesalers will reduce	3.61
	Overall mean score	3.61
Source: Field Survey		

Table 10: Mean Scores of Respondents' Perceptions on the Impact (of FDI on MBR) on Nine Dimensions		
Sl No.	Dimensions	Mean Scores
1.	Producers	3.81
2.	Local Retailers	3.53
3.	Agro-based industries	3.62
4.	Types of Customers	4.18
5.	Benefits to Customers	3.69
6.	General Price Level	3.85
7.	Government	3.86
8.	Employment	3.56
9.	Wholesalers	3.61
	Grand Mean	3.90
Source: Field Survey		

will be created with the introduction of FDI in MBR for unskilled workers, and they will also work under pressure due to increased competition. The respondents were undecided about the exploitation of the employee, especially female employees. The Table 9 reveals that the sample employees were of the opinion that the number of wholesalers will reduce with the introduction of FDI in MBR.

The Table 10 shows the overall mean scores for the nine factors which were perceived to be affected due to permitting FDI in MBR. In the opinion of the respondents, the following are the areas where the impact of FDI in MBR would be favorable: **(i)** types of customers, **(ii)** the Government, **(iii)** general price levels, and **(iv)** producers. The mean scores of the respondents' perceptions were high in these areas followed by agro-based industries, wholesalers, employment generation, local retailers, and benefits offered to customers in that order. However, the impact of FDI on MBR resulting in benefits to customers was not well established. But the same may result in the creation of different types of customers with brand awareness and quality consciousness. Thus, the Government's claim - that allowing FDI in MBR will result in benefits to customers - is not valid on the basis of the present study. Instead, the respondents were

Table 11: Perceptual Differences: Gender-wise					
Sl No.	Dimensions	Gender	N	Mean	Significance
1.	Producers	Male	41	3.55	0.001
		Female	59	3.99	
2.	Local Retailers	Male	41	3.64	0.203
		Female	59	3.46	
3.	Agro-based industries	Male	41	3.49	0.103
		Female	59	3.71	
4.	Types of Customers	Male	41	3.72	0.000
		Female	59	4.48	
5.	Benefits to Customers	Male	41	3.24	0.000
		Female	59	4.01	
6.	General Price Level	Male	41	3.77	0.221
		Female	59	3.91	
7.	Government	Male	41	3.62	0.017
		Female	59	4.02	
8.	Employment	Male	41	3.30	0.000
		Female	59	3.74	
9.	Wholesalers	Male	41	3.78	0.136
		Female	59	3.49	
Source: Field Survey					

of the opinion that the Government would benefit the most.

Let us now discuss the differences in perception of the respondents on the allowing of FDI in MBR. The analysis was done using (i) independent sample t-test for analyzing the gender-wise differences in perceptions on each of the nine dimensions, and (ii) ANOVA, for studying the differences in perception of the respondents on the basis of their incomes and age-groups. All the tests were done using SPSS, and the results were tabulated at the 5% level of significance. The Table 11 reveals that there was a significant difference in the perception of male and female respondents with respect to their opinions on the impact (of FDI on MBR) on producers, the types of customers, benefits to customers, the Government, and employment related issues. On the other dimensions, the perceptual differences were not significant.

Table 12: Perceptual Differences: Age-wise			
Sl No.	Dimensions	F	Significance
1.	Producers	11.378	0.000
2.	Local Retailers	2.188	0.118
3.	Agro-based industries	3.24	0.044
4.	Types of Customers	10.241	0.000
5.	Benefits to Customers	11.381	0.000
6.	General Price Level	2.841	0.063
7.	Government	5.124	0.008
8.	Employment	2.888	0.061
9.	Wholesalers	1.721	0.184

Source: Field Survey

Table 13: Perceptual Differences: Income-wise			
Sl No.	Dimensions	F	Significance
1.	Producers	11.216	0.000
2.	Local Retailers	0.446	0.641
3.	Agro-based industries	0.953	0.389
4.	Types of Customers	8.221	0.001
5.	Benefits to Customers	15.708	0.000
6.	General Price Level	0.534	0.588
7.	Government	2.413	0.95
8.	Employment	3.093	0.50
9.	Wholesalers	1.691	0.190

Source: Field Survey

The Table 12 reveals that there existed differences in the perception of the respondents of different age-groups, which means that the perceptions of the respondents belonging to different age groups differed with respect to their opinion on allowing FDI in MBR, and its impact on the said nine areas. Using ANOVA, it was found that there existed perceptual differences in the opinions of the respondents belonging to different age groups, namely respondents falling in the age groups of 21-40 years, 41-60 years, and above 60 years. The differences are significant with respect to their opinion on producers, agro-based industries, and types of customers.

The Table 13 shows perceptual differences in the opinion of the respondents belonging to different income groups, as revealed by ANOVA. The different income groups covered being: respondents earning less than ₹ 3 lakhs per annum; respondents earning ₹ 3 to ₹ 6 lakhs p.a.; and respondents earning above ₹ 6 lakhs p.a. It was found that the perceptual differences were significant on the four dimensions, namely, producers, types of customers, benefits to customers, and the government.

Summary of Findings

The findings of this study may be summarized as follows:

- ❖ The respondents had a favorable response with regard to the impact of FDI (on MBR) on the following : **(i)** types of customers, **(ii)** the Government, **(iii)** general price level of products, and **(iv)** producers, as the mean scores of their perceptions were high in these areas followed by agro-based industries, wholesalers, employment generation, local retailers, and benefits to customers in that order.
- ❖ The respondents were of the opinion that the impact will be felt on an increase in the general price level supported by increase in prices of food products, land, and organized real estate stock prices, as revealed by the mean scores of the statements regarding the same.
- ❖ The gender-wise differences in perceptions were significant (with respect to the respondents' opinion on the impact of FDI on MBR) with reference to five factors - producers, the types of customers, benefits to customers, the Government, and employment related issues.
- ❖ The perceptual differences were significant among the respondents of different age- groups with reference to five factors - producers, agro-based industries, types of customers, benefits to customers, and the Government.
- ❖ The perceptual differences were significant among the respondents belonging to different income groups with reference to four factors - producers, types of customers, benefits to customers, and the Government.

Limitations of the Study

The major limitation of this study is that the results may not be universally applicable as it is a case study. The perceptions of the same people may differ at different points of time. If a large number of sample respondents had been considered for the study, the results might have differed in that case. Another limitation is that the study does not directly deal with the perceptions of the producers and retailers, who are the major stakeholders in multi brand retailing.

Conclusion

To conclude, according to the perceptions of the people of Mysore city, the impact of allowing FDI in multi brand retailing will be quite favourable for the Government and for the producers. Perceptions of the respondents differed depending upon their gender, age- group, and the income group of the respondents. The claim of the government that allowing FDI in multi brand retailing would create more employment opportunities could not be proved in this study as the mean score of this factor as compared to the other factors was low. Similarly, the impact of allowing FDI in MBR on the local retailers is also not established in this study. To conclude, studies of this kind conducted at the micro level, especially in cities with more than 10 lakh population, will help policymakers in understanding the problems and prospects better, and would enable them to frame guidelines addressing the critical issues with the major aim of benefiting society at large.

Managerial Implications

The introduction of FDI in multi brand retailing (MBR) in India will bring a new set of challenges with reference to managing a diversified groups of people at work. In addition, the supply chain would have to be managed effectively through capacity building and modern technology to handle wastages and ensure proper storage facilities. A number of job opportunities will be created due to the adoption of modern technology in the areas of processing, grading, handling, packaging, bar coding, transportation of goods, etc. So, the recruitment policies and strategies need to be revised. The quality and variety of products must be enhanced. Customer satisfaction would have to be given utmost care since the local brands will be competing with the international brands once multi brand retailing is allowed. Hence, the shopping environment would have to be made congenial for customers – both local and international. There will also be an effect on the type of pricing policy that is adopted by the companies, since allowing FDI in multi brand retailing will challenge the monopoly of certain domestic companies. Thus, all these aspects would require proper planning and management by the organizations in the future to face international competition in India.

Scope for Future Research

The scope of FDI in MBR must be looked at from various perspectives in addition to the common man's perspective. The perception of small retailers, real estate industry, and the legal community also need to be studied. The findings of the present study indicate that the Government, producers, and customers could be the prospective beneficiaries if FDI is allowed in multi brand retailing in India. Future studies in this area can focus on any one of the aforementioned beneficiaries so that the results may be substantiated.

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