SPORTING GOODS SHOPS MANAGEMENT IN JAPAN -A DISCUSSION WITH RESPECT TO THE PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF CUSTOMERS-  
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[Introduction] In recent years, the Japanese sporting goods retailing industry has been suffering economic slowdown (Matsushita,1998). We previously presented the current status of sporting goods shop management in Japan and its challenges (Horie,et al.,2006)(Kita,et al.,2006). This study was intended to determine whether there were any differences in methods for sporting goods shops management depending on target customers.

[Methods] From the 17,949 retail sporting goods shops listed in Japan, 880 shops were selected at random for this survey. Survey period was June 1 through August 31,2005. The questionnaire was delivered by mail and responses were collected by mail. Responses were collected from 180 sporting goods shops (percentage of respondents: 20.5%). All data were analyzed using chi-square tests. All in cases p<0.05 was considered statistically significant.

[Results and Discussion] The average of the percent distribution of customers in sporting goods shops which responded to our questionnaire was as follows: 64.5% of goods sold to general consumers, 19.1% to schools, 9.3% to various organizations, and 6.3% to others. Among shops selling not less than 50% of goods to general consumers, the answers that their in-shop displaying standards were based on consumers’ lifestyles and/or not dependent on manufacturers’ or wholesalers’ advice accounted for a significantly higher percentage. Among shops selling less than 50% of goods to general consumers, the answers that they did not use the Internet in marketing and/or not use e-direct mails, newspaper inserts, and magazines to advertise their shops had a significantly higher proportion. These trends may have partly resulted from the fact that many sporting goods shop owners were in their 40s to 60s. On the other hand, among shops selling less than 50% of goods to schools, the answers that their in-shop displaying standards were based on consumers’ lifestyles and/or not dependent on manufacturers’ or wholesalers’ advice accounted for a significantly higher rate. This appears to reflect the response from shops selling not less than 50% of goods to general consumers, given the correspondence between significant items in both comparisons. It is our future task to conduct more focused, in-depth research based on these results.


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