

A STUDY ON CONSUMER PERCEPTION TOWARDS SUPERMARKET SELECTION IN THOOTHUKUDI CITY

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Abstract: India's substantial middle class and mostly unexplored retail market are the main factors drawing international retail behemoths seeking to enter emerging countries, which would hasten the expansion of the nation's retail sector. Branded goods in categories including apparel, cosmetics, shoes, watches, food, drinks, and even jewellery are increasingly becoming popular options for both business and pleasure, and urban Indian consumers have greater purchasing power than ever before. India's retail industry is expected to grow to an astounding US\$2 trillion in value by 2032, according to a recent forecast from the Boston Consulting Group (BCG). There are currently additional super markets opening at Thoothukudi. Researching supermarket customers' preferences and inclinations toward the available options is so crucial.

Keywords: super market, retail sector, Consumer preference

1. INTRODUCTION

India has been one of the fastest-growing retail destinations in the world over the last ten years, and its growth has been steady. Population expansion, particularly among young people, is the cause of this rebound. When designing modern food and grocery store formats, consumer behaviour becomes critical based on purchasing habits. For both conventional and new forms, it is also essential to comprehend the elements that affect customer happiness. To increase customer satisfaction and retention, the supermarket must enhance management and perform a comprehensive review of its retail marketing mix. The purpose of this study is to determine which elements of the retail marketing mix make it difficult for customers to visit Sending Supermarket and to improve customer satisfaction and retention.

2. OBJECTIVES

1. To identify the factors influencing customers to choose supermarket stores in Thoothukudi City.
2. To analyse the impact of store environment on customers' selection of supermarket stores in Thoothukudi City.

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

India's retail industry has grown quickly as a result of shifting customer lifestyles, rising spending power, and supermarket expansion. Supermarkets give consumers a number of advantages, including a wide selection of high-quality products, appealing deals, easy access to shopping areas, and improved store settings. However, a number of criteria, including price, quality, location, offers, reputation, and shopping atmosphere, affect consumers' preferences



and choice of supermarkets. The growing number of supermarkets in Thoothukudi City has given customers more options. Thus, it's critical to comprehend what influences consumers' choice of supermarket and how the store environment affects their purchasing selections. Therefore, this study aims to examine Thoothukudi City consumers' perceptions on supermarket selection.

4. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Arie Goldmann & Hayiel Hino (2005) in this article entitled. "Supermarkets vs. traditional retail stores: diagnosing the barriers to supermarkets market share growth in an ethnic minority community". Rise in market share within a community of ethnic minorities this paper is of a different interest to us. We concentrate on the organisation and modernization of the food retail system that serves these customers: the shift from a system dominated by small, traditional retail forms to one that is dominated by supermarkets.

2. Madhukar S M, Dr. M. G. Krishnamurthy, Ashwitha Karkera N(2010) in this article entitled. A Study with reference to Supermarkets in Mangalore "This paper is an attempt to explore Consumer Behaviour towards marketing mix in organized retail with specific reference to Mangalore city. Of the total sample used in the study, majority were females, graduates, salaried employees belonging to the age group of 25 to 45 years. The study reveals that Marketing Mix Parameters such as People, Physical Evidence, Price, Process and Promotion have a very significant impact on consumer behaviour in Organized Retail, whereas Place and Product parameters show a slightly lower level of significance. The study concludes that all the marketing mix parameters play a significant role in consumer behaviour but Promotional Schemes, Pricing and Process are the prominent ones.

3.A. HAMIL & ED. PRIYADHARSHINI (2014) in this article entitled. IMPACT OF SUPERMARKETS ON UNORGANIZED RETAIL "Supermarkets in Tirunelveli have affected unorganised retail establishments in a number of ways. The three main effects are a decrease in sales volume, a decrease in profit, and the inclusion of family members in the company to cut costs associated with employee salaries. The number of employees in unorganised retail establishments has significantly decreased. Nonetheless, unorganised shops believe that supermarkets are not the main cause of the workforce loss.

4. Dr.Rabiyathul Basariya S. And Rahim Jafar Mohammad (2019) in this article entitled. "IMPACTING CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN SUPERMARKET" This study captures the 5 main factors that impact customer satisfaction in Nilgiris supermarkets, which can help food Super market retailers formulate strategies and marketing activities to attract and retain customers.

5. A.Sabarirajan, P.S.Venkateswaran, B.Arun (2021) in this article entitled. "Consumer Buying Behavior – A Contemporary Study in Hypermarkets, Tamil Nadu" Retailing in India has been increasing at a rapid speed over the last decade. More significantly it witnessed most important changes in terms of retail mix, quality and scale of retailing, varieties of retail formats and over above change in consumer preferences and shopping habits. Many Indian business houses have made their investment plans in this booming sector. Leading international hypermarketers are waiting in line to enter in the Indian retail market.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1. Data collection

Primary data is used in the study. It is original data for the purpose of collection of primary data, questionnaire were filled by the respondents. The questionnaire comprises of close ended.

5.2. Research Design

Sample technique

A convenient sampling technique tool was adopted for data collection.

5.3. Sample size

Sample size taken in this is 60 customers.

5.4. Area of study

The area of the research will be confined to Thoothukudi city.

5.5. Tools for analysis

The various tools use for the data analysis is

Percentage Analysis

Ranking analysis

6. LIMITATION OF STUDY

The study is limited only to Thoothukudi City, and therefore the findings may not be applicable to other areas. The study is based on a convenience sampling method, which limits the generalisation of the results. The sample size is restricted to 60 respondents due to time and resource constraints. The study is based on the opinions and responses provided by the respondents, which may vary according to their personal preferences and shopping experiences. Further, the study considers only selected factors influencing supermarket selection and store environment, while other factors may also influence consumer decisions.

7. RESULTS& DISCUSSION

Table no. 7.1. Gender of the Respondents

Gender	No. of. Respondents	Percentage
Male	21	35%
Female	39	65%
Total	60	100%

Table no. 7.2. Age of the Respondent

Age	No. of. Respondent	Percentage
Below 20 years	12	20%
20 years to 40 years	18	30%
Above 40 years	30	50%
Total	60	100%

Table no. 7.3. Education of the Respondent

Education	No. of. Respondent	Percentage
School level	16	20%
UG	21	35%
PG and above	27	45%
Total	60	100%

Table no. 7.4. Residential Area

Area	No. of. Respondent	Percentage
Rural	18	30%
Semi urban	24	40%
Urban	18	30%
Total	60	100%

Interpretation

The survey data gives a thorough picture of the respondents' demographics. Gender-wise, 35% were men and 65% were women. In terms of age distribution, 20% were younger than 20, 30% were between 20 and 40, and 50% were older than 40. In terms of education, 20% had finished school, 35% had an undergraduate degree, and 45% had a postgraduate degree or above. 30% were self-employed, 40% worked for private companies, and the remaining 30% were categorised as "others." Geographically, 30% of respondents lived in rural areas, 40% in semi-urban areas, and 30% in metropolitan areas. Understanding the diverse viewpoints and preferences of the surveyed community is made easier with the help of this thorough demographic breakdown.

Table no. 7.5. Factor the Influence a Customer to Choose a Super Market.

Particular	SA	A	N	DA	SDA	Total	Mean	Rank
Price	115	84	30	4	4	237	3.95	IV
Locality	100	80	45	6	2	233	3.88	V
Quality	150	72	27	4	1	254	4.23	II
Special offer	95	84	36	10	3	228	4.8	I
Variety of option	130	92	27	2	1	252	4.2	III
Delivery option	45	128	45	6	1	225	3.75	VII
Reputation	45	124	54	2	1	226	3.77	VI

Source: Primary data

Mean scores and ranks are the results of evaluating each factor according to various criteria. This is a summary: Price: It is ranked IV with a mean score of 3.95 and a total score of 237. Locality: V, total score of 233, mean score of 3.88. Quality: rated II with a mean score of 4.23 and a total score of 254. Special offer: rated I, total score of 228, mean score of 4.8. Delivery option: rated VII, total score of 225, mean score of 3.75. Reputation: VI, total score of 226, mean score of 3.77. Five criteria appear to be used to evaluate each factor: SA (Strongly Agree), A (Agree), N (Neutral), DA (Disagree), and SDA (Strongly Disagree). These ratings are then used to compute the overall scores.

Table no.7.6. Store Environment Effect the Choice of Selecting the Super Market

Particular	SA	A	N	DA	SDA	Total	Mean	Rank
I prefer a clean environment while shopping	155	56	36	4	1	252	4.2	I
I prefer a calm atmosphere while shopping	60	144	30	2	1	237	3.95	VI
I prefer to shop in a well organized store	140	44	48	6	2	240	4.00	V
The shop should have good lighting and ambiance	130	96	18	6	1	251	4.18	II

I would like to have easy access to the aisle	110	112	18	4	2	246	4.10	III
The store should be visually appealing	100	92	45	4	0	241	4.01	IV

Interpretation

Preference for a clean atmosphere With a mean score of 4.2 and a total score of 252, I was ranked. Preference for a serene environment VI with a mean score of 3.95 and a total score of 237. Preference for an orderly store: Ranked V, with a mean score of 4.00 and a total score of 240. Preference for pleasant atmosphere and lighting: With a mean score of 4.18 and a total score of 251, it was ranked II. Preference for aisle accessibility: With a mean score of 4.10 and a total score of 246, it was ranked III. Preference for an eye-catching store: IV, total score of 241, mean score of 4.01. These preferences show how important the shopping environment is to consumers, taking into account elements like ambience, organization, cleanliness, and simplicity of use.

8. FINDINGS

1. The demographic analysis shows that female respondents were higher (65%) compared to male respondents (35%).
2. Regarding age, the majority of respondents were above 40 years (50%), followed by those between 20 and 40 years (30%) and below 20 years (20%).
3. In terms of educational qualification, the majority of respondents had postgraduate and above qualifications (45%), followed by UG (35%) and school-level education (20%).
4. With regard to occupation, 40% of respondents were private employees, while 30% were self-employed and 30% belonged to other categories.
5. The residential profile indicates that the majority of respondents were from semi-urban areas (40%), while rural and urban respondents accounted for 30% each.
6. The weighted ranking analysis shows that special offers secured the first rank with the highest mean score of 4.8, indicating that attractive offers are the major factor influencing customers to choose supermarkets.
7. Quality of products secured the second rank with a mean score of 4.23, showing that customers give importance to quality while selecting supermarkets.
8. Good lighting and pleasant ambience secured the second rank with a total score of 251 and a mean score of 4.18, showing that customers prefer a comfortable shopping atmosphere.

9. SUGGESTIONS

1. Supermarkets should develop marketing strategies by considering the age, education, occupation, and residential background of different customer groups.
2. Supermarkets should provide customer-friendly services, quality products, and attractive offers to satisfy consumers from different demographic backgrounds.
3. Supermarkets should provide more attractive offers and discounts to attract customers and increase customer preference.
4. Supermarkets should focus on maintaining product quality and improving delivery facilities to enhance customer satisfaction and encourage repeat purchases.
5. Supermarkets should maintain a clean, well-organised, and attractive shopping environment to improve customer satisfaction and encourage repeat visits.
6. Supermarkets should focus on better lighting, easy aisle accessibility, and pleasant ambience to provide customers with a comfortable shopping experience.

10. CONCLUSION

Self-service stations and parking lots are examples of facilities that disorganised retail companies could try to offer. • The government should put policies in place to control expenses. Well-known cosmetic companies like Unilever, Nestle, and Coca-Cola may choose not to supply these stores directly, enabling them to buy products at

reduced prices. Unorganised retail outlets in Thoothukudi have been impacted by supermarkets in several ways. The primary consequences include a decline in sales volume, a drop in profit, and the engagement of family members in the business to reduce expenses related to employee compensation. Unorganised retail establishments now employ a much smaller number of people. However, unorganised stores don't think supermarkets are the primary source of the labour shortage.

Disorganised retail operations have not benefited from the supermarkets. The only thing that has improved is the neat layout. Unorganised retailers have not made any changes to their businesses. Some of the changes they've made have nothing to do with the opening of supermarkets.

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