A Study on Exploring Consumer Awareness, Behavior, and Challenges in Hypermarkets in Coimbatore City

Dr.B.Janani MBA.,M.Phil.,NET.,Ph.D.,

Assistant Professor

Department of Business Administration with CA and Logistics

Hindusthan College of Arts & Science (Autonomous), Coimbatore

Abstract

This study explores consumer awareness, behavior, and challenges associated with hypermarkets, with a focus on Coimbatore city. Using a sample of 140 respondents, the research aims to understand factors influencing consumer preferences, challenges faced, and satisfaction levels. The data was collected through structured questionnaires and analyzed using percentage analysis. The findings provide insights into consumer behavior, highlighting factors like quality, convenience, and pricing as significant determinants of hypermarket preference. Recommendations for enhancing customer experience are also provided.

Keywords: Consumer behavior, Hypermarkets, Awareness, Challenges, India

Introduction

With the rapid growth of retail markets in India, hypermarkets have become a significant component of the retail landscape. Hypermarkets, offering a wide range of products under one roof, have transformed the shopping experience by providing convenience, variety, and competitive pricing. Coimbatore, one of the prominent cities in Tamil Nadu, has witnessed the emergence of several hypermarket chains catering to a growing urban population. The rising demand for quality products, coupled with the convenience of shopping in large retail outlets, has led to an increased interest in understanding the factors influencing consumer preferences and behavior towards hypermarkets in the city.

The purpose of this study is to explore the awareness, behavior, and challenges faced by consumers when shopping at hypermarkets in Coimbatore. This research aims to understand the key factors that influence consumer preferences, the barriers they encounter during their shopping experience, and their overall satisfaction levels. The study focuses on how aspects such as product quality, pricing, store layout, customer service, and convenience play a role in shaping consumer choices.

This research uses a sample of 140 respondents from Coimbatore city, and data has been collected through structured questionnaires. The responses are analyzed using percentage analysis to draw insights into consumer behavior and preferences. The findings of this study aim to provide valuable recommendations for hypermarket managers to enhance customer experience, streamline operations, and maintain competitive advantages in the rapidly evolving retail sector.

Scope of the Study

This study aims to explore consumer awareness, behavior, and challenges in hypermarkets, focusing on understanding key factors that drive customer preferences. It covers essential aspects such as consumer demographics, purchasing habits, satisfaction levels, and the impact of promotional strategies. The study provides insights into how hypermarkets can enhance customer loyalty through better service, efficient billing, and effective product arrangements. It also aims to guide hypermarket managers, marketers, and policymakers in making data-driven decisions to improve customer experience and operational efficiency. The findings are expected to contribute to the broader understanding of retail management and support the growth of organized retail in emerging markets like India.

Objectives of the Study

- To assess the awareness level of consumers towards hypermarkets.

- To examine factors influencing consumer behavior towards hypermarkets.

- To understand consumer opinions regarding hypermarkets.

- To identify the challenges faced by consumers in hypermarkets.

Limitations of the Study

- The study is geographically limited to Coimbatore, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions.

- The use of convenience sampling might introduce bias, as it focuses on respondents who were easily accessible.

- The scope of the study is restricted to consumer behavior without a deep dive into financial performance or operational challenges of hypermarkets.

Review of Literature

1.   **Dr. G. Amudha and Ms. G. Ragini (2021)** - Their study on consumer preference in supermarkets highlighted that factors like price, quality, and income levels significantly influence consumer satisfaction. They found that high-quality products and effective marketing strategies are key drivers for customer loyalty and profitability.

2.   **Swapna Dubha (2021)** - This research focused on understanding overall consumer behavior in D-mart, revealing that income levels strongly impact purchasing decisions. It also emphasized the importance of customer satisfaction in retaining loyalty.

3.   **Lamaan Sami and Pushpender Kumar (2021)** - Their study examined the demographic shifts in consumer behavior, noting that younger consumers tend to prefer supermarkets for their convenience and variety, highlighting a trend towards organized retail.

4.   **Jahangir Alam (2021)** - This study identified the challenges faced by customers in supermarkets, including higher costs due to increased taxes and the limited geographic reach of organized retail formats.

5.   **Debendra Prasad Kundu (2022)** - Focused on the comparison between organized and unorganized retail, this study highlighted the growing preference for supermarkets among urban consumers, emphasizing factors like convenience, product quality, and better shopping experiences.

 Research Methodology

The study was conducted in Coimbatore, a growing commercial hub known for its openness to new retail formats. Primary data was collected using structured questionnaires distributed to 140 respondents, selected through convenience sampling. The responses were analyzed using simple percentage analysis to identify key trends.

Analysis and Interpretation

Demographic Profile of Respondents

- **Age Group:** Majority (34.3%) of respondents belong to the age group 21-30 years.

- **Educational Qualification:** 60.7% are undergraduates.

- **Occupation:** 44.3% are employed.

- **Family Size:** 62.1% have 3-4 family members.

- **Monthly Income:** 49.3% earn between ₹10,000 to ₹40,000.

Shopping Preferences and Behavior

- **Familiarity with Hypermarkets:** Most respondents (25.7%) prefer DMart, followed by Lulu (22.9%).

- **Source of Awareness:** 40.7% learn about hypermarkets through advertisements.

- **Frequency of Visits:** 52.1% visit hypermarkets monthly.

- **Reasons for Preference:** 31.4% prefer hypermarkets for quality, while 25% choose them for better service.

- **Purchase Behavior:** 60.8% follow pre-planned budgets, but 33.3% tend to buy unplanned items regularly.

Chi-Square Analysis

To examine the relationship between **Monthly Income** and **Selection of Shop**, a chi-square test was conducted. The results are as follows:

Monthly Income	Retail Outlet	Supermarket	Factory Outlet	Online Shopping	Showroom
Below 10,000	5	4	3	2	0
10,000-40,000	10	20	35	4	0
40,000-80,000	3	8	20	3	1

Above 80,000	2	5	13	3	2

- **Chi-Square Value (χ²)**: 17.06

Degrees of Freedom (df): 12

p-value: 0.147

- **Interpretation:**

With a p-value of 0.147, which is greater than the typical alpha level of 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. This indicates that there is no statistically significant relationship between Monthly Income and Selection of Shop at the 5% significance level.

Findings and Recommendations

Findings:

- Majority of respondents (60.7%) are undergraduates.

- Most consumers (49.3%) have moderate family incomes (₹10,000 to ₹40,000).

- Quality (31.4%) and convenience (42.9%) are major drivers for frequent hypermarket purchases.

- 55.7% avoid stock clearance sales due to concerns about substandard quality.

- Majority of respondents prefer quality as the main reason for selecting hypermarkets (31.4%).

- 86.4% of respondents are aware of discounts and offers in hypermarkets.

- 89.3% of respondents are comfortable with product arrangements in hypermarkets.

- 53.6% of respondents are highly satisfied with their hypermarket shopping experience.

- 55.7% of respondents avoid stock clearance sales due to concerns about substandard quality.

- There is no statistically significant relationship between Monthly Income and Selection of Shop

Recommendations:

- **Improved Billing:** Faster checkout processes to reduce crowding and enhance customer satisfaction.

- **Better Packaging:** High-quality packaging to improve customer perceptions.

- **Staff Training:** Professional behavior and product knowledge to improve customer service.

- **Enhanced Product Arrangement:** Clear labeling and strategic placement to ease shopping experience.

- **Effective Advertising:** Increased promotional efforts to reach a wider audience.

Conclusion

Hypermarkets have significantly influenced consumer shopping habits by offering convenience, variety, and competitive pricing. This study highlights the critical factors that drive consumer preferences and the challenges faced in hypermarkets. While hypermarkets have grown rapidly, they must continue to innovate and address key challenges like efficient billing, staff training, and customer service to retain customer

loyalty. By understanding and addressing customer needs, hypermarkets can strengthen their market position and contribute to the overall growth of the retail sector in India.

Summary of Key Findings

Metric	Finding	Percentage
Age Group	21-30 years	34.3%
Education	Undergraduates	60.7%
Occupation	Employed	44.3%
Family Size	3-4 members	62.1%
Monthly Income	₹10,000 - ₹40,000	49.3%
Preferred Hypermarket	DMart	25.7%
Source of Awareness	Advertisements	40.7%
Visit Frequency	Monthly	52.1%
Key Purchase Reason	Quality	31.4%
Budgeting	Pre-planned	60.8%
Stock Clearance	Avoided	55.7%
Customer Satisfaction	Highly Satisfied	53.6%

References

- Janani, B., & Baranikumar, D. (2019). A study on consumer buying behaviour towards fast moving consumer goods with special reference to health drinks in Coimbatore city. International Journal of Advance and Innovative Research, 6(2), 122-125.https://iaraedu.com/pdf/ijair-volume-6-issue-2-v-april%E2%80%93june-2019.pdf

- K. Kalyanaraman, H. N. Ramanathan, P. N. Harikumar, *Statistical Methods for Research* (2021).

- Ajai S. Gaur, Sanjaya S. Gaur, *Statistical Methods for Practice and Research* (2021).

- S. Kumar, *Retail Management: A Strategic Approach* (2020).

- R. Kotler, G. Armstrong, *Principles of Marketing* (2020).

- P. Choudhury, *Consumer Behavior and Retailing* (2021).