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The Impact of Marketing Mix on Consumers' Buying Behavior in Supermarkets of Meerut City, India Babar Mushtaq¹, S. A. Atif Salar²

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of marketing mix elements on consumer buying behavior of supermarket consumers in Meerut city. Empirical evidence from 150 participants shopping at five supermarkets validates a theoretical model, indicating a significant positive relationship between marketing mix variables and consumer purchasing behavior. Factors or the marketing mix elements examined are product, price, shopping convenience, promotion, store atmosphere and personnel. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, comparing mean analysis (i.e. one-way ANOVA) and other analysis (correlation and multiple linear regression) Results reveal that personnel, promotion and price factors exerts greatest influence on consumer buying decision, followed by shopping convenience, store atmosphere, and product respectively. The finding of the study also shows that there is a significant difference between supermarkets product consumers who belongs to different age group, educational background and Income level with regard to product, shopping convenience, promotion, price and store atmosphere and personnel. These findings contribute to the literature relating to retail marketing and have marketing implications for bringing traffic into supermarkets and increasing sales. Supermarkets should set up a comfortable buying atmosphere, drafting more influencing and informative promotion, give up to date training to their employees, should consider level of competition, access to transportation, availability of parking, easy accessibility and long opening hours while making store location decision, should maintain the right pricing decision and carrying deep assortment of products lead them to become super specialist.

Keywords: Consumer behavior, Retail marketing mix, Supermarkets

1. Introduction

Companies and academics have researched heavily the relationship between marketing stimuli and consumer response Kotler et al, (2002). There are many different models that attempt to model buyer's behavior Smith, Marketing Communication: An Integrated Approach, (2004). However, most academic studies and modeling on consumer behavior have taken place in developed nation's e.g. Howard, (1969). The bulk of conceptual literature on shopping behavior in retail supermarket sector also comes from developed countries e.g. McGoldrick, (1990) and so have most of the publicly accessible commercial studies in this domain e.g. Euromonitor, (1986). Theorizing in the marketing stimuli components of the two pioneering complex models Engel, J.K, (1968); Howard, (1969) and six simplified frameworks of consumer behavior has been limited to McCarthy, (1960) traditional marketing mix or the four Ps of marketing i.e. product, price, promotion, and place. Although the Engel, J.K, (1986) model has gone through several revisions and a fact also admitted by its revisers i.e. Engel, J.B, (1995) the revisions have not categorically incorporated the additional Ps of marketing i.e. people, physical evidence and processes. This paper will help

marketing managers in getting a better understanding about what affects the decision making of consumers and help them to utilize these factors in constructing better marketing strategies.

Keeping in mind the importance of understanding consumer behavior, taste and preference, the present study is conducted with the objective of identifying the impact of marketing mix elements on the consumer purchase behavior of goods and services from the supermarkets in Meerut (India).

2. Statements of the Problem

Consumer behavior is defined as the behavior that consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating and disposing of products and services that they expect will satisfy their needs. The preferences, choices and tastes of individual determine their purchasing behavior. There are other different factors that determine the consumer behaviors some of which marketers cannot control, such as cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors. Over the decades, India has seen a surge in the number of retail stores opening in Meerut City. This growing trend which is expected to continue into the future is primarily attributed to the country double digit growth. Urbanization and expanding population of Meerut. There is an estimated 1.76 million people living in the ever expanding and developing capital. As a consequence, more and more urban middle class consumers are turning to grocery stores, mini marts and neighborhood kiosks to satisfy their day to day shopping demand. There are a number of factors influencing the buying behavior of consumers.

3. Objective of the Study

General Objective of the study

This study attempts to investigate the impact of marketing mix elements on the consumer buying behavior of retail supermarket consumers in the context of Ethiopia.

Specific Objectives

i. To examine the relationship between marketing mix variables and a consumer buying behavior.

ii. To identify which elements exert greater influence on retail product buying decision.

iii. To examine if there is a difference among the demographic profile of consumers and factors they perceived to be important influencing their purchase behavior.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Literature

Although the literature does not acknowledge any challenges in defining consumer behavior the variations in the definitions given by different authors suggest otherwise.

—The field of consumer behavior is the study of individuals, groups or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, use and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts these processes have on the consumer and society Hawkins, (2004)

—Consumer buying behavior refers to the buying behavior of final consumers 'individuals and households that buy goods and services for personal consumption Kotler et al, 2002:189). Schiffman, (2000:173) states that —The study of consumer behavior focuses on how individuals make decisions to spend their available resources (time, money, effort) on consumption-related items. That includes what they buy, why they buy it, when they buy it, where they buy it, how often they buy it, and how often they use it.

Hawkins, (2004) definition of consumer behavior is the broadest as it also includes organizations. Organizational buying is in some ways similar to consumer buying since it is not —organizations making the buying decisions but people within those organizations. Buying behavior is often more complex than it appears Smith, Marketing Communication: An Integrated Approach, (2004). Several consumer buying behavior models drawn from various social sciences including marketing have been suggested in the literature. Consumer behavior is a relatively new field with multi-disciplinary roots. Theoretical frameworks borrowed from psychology, sociology, social psychology, cultural

anthropology and economics are now added to by both commercial and academic marketing research into consumer and industrial buyer behavior Smith, Marketing Communication: An Integrated Approach, (2004). Research in these disciplines coupled with later research in marketing combined to form a comprehensive model of consumer behavior that reflects both the cognitive and emotional aspects of consumer decision making Schiffman, (2000).

5. Benefits of Studying Consumer Behavior

Gilaninia, Taleghani and Azizi (2013) examined marketing mix and consumer behavior and they indicate that, consumer behavior analysis is an important domain for a marketing manager as it gives insight into a number of factors which affect sales and relationships that are not in the control of a company. Some of the importance of studying consumer buying behavior includes

Brand Equity: It helps to improve brand equity in which consumer insight that the brand decides it needs to restructure itself, to change its perception in the mind of the people, thereby getting higher turnovers. This can happen when the firm analyses consumer buying behavior.

Product Portfolio: Continues observation of consumer buying behavior can enable the firm in finding gaps in its product portfolio, which can in turn help the firm to launch a new product to its customers.

Segmentation and targeting: also become easier when the firm observing consumer behavior.

Forecasting: where it be demand forecasting or sales forecasting both of them are possible and therein lies the importance of consumer buying behavior. The company will not waste its resources for a product which is going to sell for example in summer, because the company knows that the consumer is not going to buy it in winter. Hence by analyzing the consumer buying behavior, the company can have saved warehousing cost, manufacturing cost and marketing cost as well.

The retail supermarkets endeavor to achieve some competitive advantage over their competitors in the dynamic business environment by using different marketing strategies that influence consumers to purchase products and services. It can be concluded that the marketing mix strategy of any business should consider on the buying behavior of the consumer.

6. RESEARCH METHEDOLOGY AND DESIGN

6.1. Research Design

The purpose of this research is to identify the impact of marketing mix elements on the consumer buying behavior and extent of their influence. According to Gatara (2010), descriptive design is appropriate because it's less expensive and can enable the researcher to examine data from a wider area within a short time. Descriptive design provides quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes and perceptions of population by studying the sample of that population, Kothari, (2008); Best & Khan, (2003).

The research design for this study is quantitative method in the study because, first, quantitative data can be administered and evaluated quickly and the response can be tabulated within a short time frame. Second numerical data obtained through this approach facilitate comparisons between organizations or groups as well as allowing determination of the extent of agreement or disagreement between respondents. In comparison of relative costs with other methods, the quantitative research method is viewed as a more proper and controllable tool to test this context.

6.2. Target Population

Population is a complete set of elements (person or objects) that poses some common characteristics defined by the sampling criteria established by the researcher. The major players in the retail industry establish eight major supermarket chains, with a total of 11 stores are open across Meerut. These major stores are: Big Bazaar, Meeut Super Store, Maya Mega Mart, Easy Day, Spencer, Meerut Mini Mart, etc. supermarkets supply a wide array of products which makes them to be the preferred place to satisfy the shopping demand for these consumer segments in return also making it a better place for this study.

The target population (unit of analysis) of this study comprises all individual consumers who were occasional and/or regularly buyers of goods and services in these five major supermarkets.

7. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The data obtained from the main data collection were subjected to descriptive statistics analysis, comparing mean analysis (i.e. ANOVA) and other analyses (i.e. correlation analysis, regressions and coefficient).

7.1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The purpose of the demographic analysis in this research is to describe the characteristics of the sample such as the number of respondents, proportion of males and females in the sample, range of age, income, education level, marital status... etc. In this study some of demographic related question such as (gender, age, education, and income) were related with other questions to make analysis from different perspectives. The frequency distribution of some demographic variables is presented below. The table exhibited characteristics of the sample based on key demographic factors.

Char	acteristics	Frequency	Percentage%
Gender	Male	57	38.0
	Female	93	62.0
Total		150	100
Age	18-27 Years	23	15.3
	28-45 Years	85	56.7
	46-60 Years	42	28.0
Total		150	100
Monthly Income	< 20000	62	28.0
	20000-40000	42	41.3
	40000-60000	45	30.0
	60000 & Above	1	.7
Total		150	100

Table	1.]	Particinant	Profile	Based	On	Selected	Demographic	Factor
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The gender analysis illustrated on Table: 1.1 showed that most of the participants were female representing 62 per cent of the sample and 38 percent were male. This table indicated that females were responsible for purchasing various item from supermarkets for the household. Whereas the age statistics showed 56.6 percent of the participants were between (28-45) years followed by the group of (46-60) years representing 28 percent and group of (18-27) years representing 15.3 percent of the sample.

Regarding the monthly income illustrated on table: 1.1. From the total sample of 41.3 percent of the participants had monthly income less than Rupees (<20000) per month while only 0.67 percent had family monthly income Rupees 60000/Month & above. Majority of the respondent fall in the income category of (20,000-40,000 Rupees) range.

Overall from the descriptive statistics we learned that, the main consumers of supermarket products in these selected outlets were adult women with relatively moderate budget; hence they would be likely to carefully consider product offerings to maximize expected value when making purchasing decision.

Table 2. Table ANOVAa (Analysis of variance

Model Sum of Square	s df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
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1	Regression	8.587	6	1.431	77.746	.000 ^b
	Residual	2.632	143	.018		
	Total	11.220	149			

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase behavior

b. Predictors: (Constant), Product, Promotion, Shopping Convenience, Store Atmosphere, Price, Personnel

7.2. ANOVA Analysis

The ANOVA table shows the overall significance/acceptability of the model from a statistical perspective. As the significance value of F statistics shows a value of 77.74 and p- value (.000), which is less than p<0.05, the model is significant. This indicates that the variation explained by the model is not due to chance. As it is stated earlier in this chapter, this study aims to identify the most contributing independent variables in the prediction of the dependent variable. Thus, the strength of each predictor (independent) variable influence on the criterion (dependent) variable can be investigated via standardized Beta coefficient. The regression coefficient explains the average amount of change in dependent variable that is caused by a unit of change in the independent variable. The larger value of Beta coefficient that an independent variable has, the more support to the independent variable as the more important determinant in predicting the dependent variable.

Compared to coefficient of determination or R-square, Adjusted R-square is more reliable in measuring a regression model's goodness of fit. The main disadvantage of using coefficient of determination or R-square is more to do with bias of number of independent variables included into the model, which implies that the more independent variable added into the model, the more R-square increasing. Worst of all, this condition does not take into consideration whether independent variable included is significant or insignificant influencing dependent variable. Meanwhile, that situation will not apply in the case of using Adjusted R-square (Pallant, 2010)

7.3. Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was used to investigate the strength and direction of relationships between the studied variables. Strength refers to the larger absolute value of the coefficient, the stronger the relationship between the variables. A value of 0 indicates the absence of a relationship whereas direction refers to the sign of the coefficient indicates the direction of the relationship. If both variables tend to increase or decrease together, the coefficient is positive. If one variable tends to increase as the other decreases, the coefficient is negative.

Pearson correlation analysis was used to provide evidence of convergent validity.

Correlations are perhaps the most basic and most useful measure of association between two or more variables Marczyk, (2005). General guidelines correlations of .10 to .30 are considered small, correlations of .30 to .70 are considered moderate correlations of .70 to .90 are considered large, and correlations of .90 to 1.00 are considered very large. Based on the above assumption, bi-variate correlation was computed to analyze the proposed relationship between variables. The Pearson's correlation coefficients illustrated below here on.

Table 3. Illustrate the Correlation between Dependent variable (Purchase behavior) and Independent Variable
(Retail Marketing Mix Elements)

		Purchase behavior	Personnel	Store Atmosp here	Promotion	Place	Price	product
Purchase behavior	Pearson Correlation Sig.(2-tailed)	1						

	Ν	150						
	Pearson Correlation	.809**	1					
Personnel factor	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000						
	Ν	150	150					
	Pearson Correlation	.698**	.636**	1				
Store atmosphere factor	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	.000					
	Ν	150	150	150				
	Pearson Correlation	.730 ^{**}	.753**	.585**	1			
Promotion factor	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000				
	Ν	150	150	150	150			
	Pearson Correlation	.728**	.739**	.666***	.597**	1		
Place factor	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000			
	Ν	150	150	150	150	150		
	Pearson Correlation	.730**	.720**	.604**	.624**	.684**	1	
Price factor	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		
	Ν	150	150	150	150	150	150	
	Pearson Correlation	.320**	.229**	.267**	.171*	.208*	.194*	1
Product factor	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	.005	.001	.036	.011	.017	
	Ν	150	150	150	150	150	150	150

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4. Regress	ion Model Summary
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Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.875 ^a	.765	.756	.13568

a. Predictors: (Constant), Product, Promotion, Shopping Convenience, Store Atmosphere, Price, Personnel b.Dependent Variable: Purchase behavior.

7.4. Regression Model Summary

As table 4 shown above, the model or the predictor variables have accounted for 76% (adjusted R square) of the variance on the dependent variable. The remaining 24% are explained by other variables out of this model.

		Table 5. Coef	ficients table of th	e regression mo	del		
Model		Unstanda	ardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
		В	Std. Error	Beta			
	(Constant)	.512	.011		46.185	.000	
	Personnel	.085	.021	.309	3.987	.000	
	Store Atmosphere	.045	.016	.165	2.786	.006	

Promotion	.053	.017	.193	3.041	.003
Shopping Convenience	.036	.018	.131	1.954	.043
Price	.048	.017	.176	2.785	.006
Product	.030	.012	.111	2.622	.010

7.5. Coefficients table of the regression model

According to Table: 5, all independent variables contribute significantly for the regression model at p-value less than 0.05. The regression standardized coefficients for all independent variables, i.e. product, shopping convenience, price, promotion, store atmosphere and personnel are 0.111, 0.131, 0.176, 0.193, 0.165 and 0.309 respectively. Thus it supports the entire hypothesis claiming marketing mix elements have a positive influence on consumer buying behavior. The study reveals that personnel (0.309) is the most influential variable impacting purchase behavior followed by promotion (0.193) and price (0.176) respectively.

8. Hypothesis Testing

One of the most commonly used methods in statistical decision making is hypothesis testing. In general, a hypothesis test is a process in which we assume an initial claim to be true and then test this claim using sample data. Ordinarily, the initial claim refers to a population parameter of interest such as the population mean.

Hypothesis tests include two hypotheses: the null hypothesis (denoted by H0) and the alternative hypothesis (denoted by H1). The null hypothesis is the initial claim and is often specified using previous research or common knowledge. The alternative hypothesis is what we may believe to be true or hope to prove true. The alternative hypothesis is sometimes referred to as the research hypothesis.

The decision-making process for a hypothesis test can be based on the probability value (p-value) for the given test.

- If the p-value is less than or equal to a predetermined level of significance, then we reject the null hypothesis and claim support for the alternative hypothesis.
- > If p-value is greater than the α -level, we fail to reject the null hypothesis and cannot claim support for the alternative hypothesis.

Based on the literature review the following six hypotheses are developed

Since, coefficients of the all predictor variables are statistically significant at less than five percent; the null hypothesis related with all independent variables is rejected. Here below Table: 5. provides the hypothesis test result with its justification for either accepting or rejecting the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis	Result	Reason
H1: Product factor has a positive influence on consumer buying behavior.	Ho: Rejected	β= 0.111,P<0.05
	H1: Accepted	
H2: Promotion factor has a positive influence on consumer buying behavior.	Ho: Rejected	β=0.193,P<0.05
	H1: Accepted	
H3: Personnel factor has a positive influence on consumer buying behavior.	Ho: Rejected	β=0.309,P<0.05
	H1: Accepted	

Table 6. Summary of the overall outcome of the research hypothesis

H4: Shopping Convenience has a positive influence on consumer buying behavior.	Ho: Rejected	β = 0.131,P<0.05
	H1: Accepted	
H5: Price has a positive influence on consumer buying behavior.	Ho: Rejected	β=0.176,P<0.05
	H1: Accepted	
H6: Store Atmosphere has a positive influence on consumer buying behavior.	Ho: Accepted	β=0.165,P<0.05
	H1: Rejected	

9. Underlying Factors Affecting Purchase Behavior Based on Respondents' Profile

In order to achieve the objective that aims to examine if there is a difference between the demographic profile of consumers and the factors they consider to be important in influencing their buying behavior, one inferential statistics techniques were employed. One- way ANOVA to compare demographic characteristics and investigate how they are related with product, price, store atmosphere, personnel, promotion and shopping convenience.

Similarly, ANOVA is a test of mean comparisons. ANOVA can compare means across more than two groups or conditions Marczyk, Dematteo and Festinger, (2005). Hence, One-Way ANOVA analysis between the factors (retail marketing mix elements) and four age groups, five educational levels, five income groups, were executed.

9.1. Underlying Factors of Purchase Behavior Based on Age Group

The result of the analysis shows that all factors perceived differently between different age group of respondent as p-value less than 0.05.

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Between Groups	23.162	2	11.581	14.018	.000
Personnel factor	Within Groups	121.443	147	.826		
	Total	144.605	149			
	Between Groups	8.061	2	4.031	4.284	.016
Store atmosphere factor	Within Groups	138.313	147	.941		
	Total	146.374	149			
Promotion factor	Between Groups	21.712	2	10.856	12.972	.000
	Within Groups	123.023	147	.837		
	Total	144.735	149			
Place factor	Between Groups	13.433	2	6.716	7.881	.001
	Within Groups	125.276	147	.852		
	Total	138.709	149			
Price factor	Between Groups	22.062	2	11.031	13.584	.000
	Within Groups	119.375	147	.812		
	Total	141.438	149			

Table 7. One Way ANOVA between educational Background and retail marketing mix elements.

	Between Groups	6.933	2	3.467	3.730	.026
Product factor	Within Groups	136.604	147	.929		
	Total	143.537	149			

9.2. Underlying Factors of Purchase Behavior Based on Educational Background

ANOVA result in Table: 7 shows that there is a significant difference between the respondent's educational level and the retail marketing mix elements as their p-value <0.05. According to the finding of the research, there are all factors except product are perceived differently among respondents, who are in different educational groups.

		Sum Squares	of	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Between Groups	46.206		4	11.552	17.022	.000
Personnel factor	Within Groups	98.399		145	.679		
	Total	144.605		149			
	Between Groups	40.790		4	10.198	14.005	.000
Store atmosphere factor	Within Groups	105.584		145	.728		
	Total	146.374		149			
	Between Groups	31.844		4	7.961	10.226	.000
Promotion factor	Within Groups	112.890		145	.779		
	Total	144.735		149			
	Between Groups	42.994		4	10.748	16.283	.000
Place factor	Within Groups	95.715		145	.660		
	Total	138.709		149			
	Between Groups	51.024		4	12.756	20.457	.000
Price factor	Within Groups	90.413		145	.624		
	Total	141.438		149			
	Between Groups	6.068		4	1.517	1.600	.177
Product factor	Within Groups	137.469		145	.948		
	Total	143.537		149			

Table 8. One Way ANOVA between educational Background and retail marketing mix elements.

9.3. Underlying Factors of Buying Behavior Based on Monthly Income

The results of the analysis are presented in Table: 7.3 from the six factors, significance difference between income levels is observed with regard to all factors (product, shopping convenience, promotion, price, store atmosphere and personnel).

Table 9. One Way ANOVA between Income Group and retail marketing mix elements

	Sum of Squares d	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
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Personnel factor	Between Groups	90.891	3	30.297	82.351	.000
	Within Groups	53.714	146	.368		
	Total	144.605	149			
	Between Groups	71.255	3	23.752	46.163	.000
Store atmosphere factor	Within Groups	75.119	146	.515		
	Total	146.374	149			
	Between Groups	67.090	3	22.363	42.051	.000
Promotion factor	Within Groups	77.645	146	.532		
	Total	144.735	149			
Place factor	Between Groups	85.274	3	28.425	77.665	.000
	Within Groups	53.434	146	.366		
	Total	138.709	149			
	Between Groups	80.970	3	26.990	65.168	.000
Price factor	Within Groups	60.467	146	.414		
	Total	141.438	149			
Product factor	Between Groups	10.015	3	3.338	3.650	.014
	Within Groups	133.523	146	.915		
	Total	143.537	149			

As Table: 9 shows different income groups perceive product, shopping convenience, promotion, price, store atmosphere and personnel differently at F=3.650, 77.665, 42.051, 65.168, 46.163 and 82.351 p<0.05, which is 0.014, 0.000, 0.000, 0.000, 0.000 and 0.000 respectively.

10. Summary & Major Finding

In this study, the researcher finds out the results based on the data presentation and data analysis by using correlation, multiple linear regression and percentage analysis. The research was carried out to measure the impact of marketing mix elements on the consumer buying behavior who buys goods & services from supermarkets in Meerut city, India. Further its objective was to measure the relationship between sub variables of marketing mix and buying behavior. Certain tools were used to identify the impact of marketing mix element on buying behavior.

All sub variables of marketing mix elements (i.e.: product, shopping convenience, price, promotion, store atmosphere and personnel) are significantly correlated with consumer buying behavior.

Another objective was to find out to what extent the marketing mix elements influence the consumer buying behavior.

Regression analysis indicates the marketing mix elements contribute significantly in influencing buying behavior of consumers of supermarket products in Meerut City at 76% and the remaining 24% can be contributed by other factors.

The last objective was to figure out the difference among the demographic profile of consumers and factors they perceived to be important influencing their purchase behavior.

One-way ANOVA analysis indicates that all marketing mix elements perceived differently by respondent age and Income group. However, with Educational background only product is perceived the same since p-value greater than 0.05. While other variables perceived differently among respondent.

11. Discussion and Conclusion

Despite the fact that the retail industry is getting highly competitive and dynamic from time to time. It is characterized by limited and very similar offering of product and services to the market which are not enough of differential element any more. Therefore, retail marketing mix elements are a key differentiator to enable the supermarkets to gain a competitive advantage in the industry. Based on the conceptual framework and measuring instrument employed there are six factors which are identified and measured. Among the factors, the finding provides evidence that consumer buying behavior is significantly influenced by factors such as personnel, price and promotion. The remaining factors namely products, shopping convenience and store atmosphere have a moderate influence on consumer buying behavior in supermarket.

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