



A study on factors influencing Consumer Buying Behaviour in Retail Stores

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Abstract

This study examines the key factors that influence consumer buying behaviour in retail stores. It focuses on how elements such as store layout, product availability, pricing, promotions, customer service, and ambience shape customers' purchase decisions. The research also explores the role of personal preferences, lifestyle, and brand perception in guiding consumer choices. Data is collected from retail shoppers to understand their shopping patterns, expectations, and satisfaction levels. The findings highlight the importance of creating a positive in-store experience to encourage repeat purchases and strengthen customer loyalty. The study provides useful insights for retailers to improve store strategies and better meet consumer needs.

Keywords: Consumer buying behaviour, retail stores, purchase decision, store ambience, pricing, customer service

Introduction

Consumer buying behaviour plays a crucial role in shaping the success of retail businesses. In today's competitive market, customers are exposed to a wide range of product choices, store formats, and promotional strategies. As a result, understanding what motivates consumers to make purchase decisions has become increasingly important for retailers. Factors such as store layout, product display, price, quality, customer service, promotional offers, and overall store ambience significantly influence how consumers perceive a retail store and whether they choose to buy from it.

Retail stores aim to create a shopping environment that meets customer expectations and encourages satisfaction, loyalty, and repeat visits. At the same time, consumers' personal preferences, lifestyle, income level, cultural background, and brand perceptions also shape their buying patterns. By studying these influences, retailers can identify what attracts customers, what barriers they face, and what improvements can enhance their shopping experience.

This study focuses on analysing the various factors that impact consumer buying behaviour in retail stores. It provides insights that can help retailers design effective marketing strategies, improve store operations, and offer better value to customers in a rapidly changing retail environment.

Problem Statement

In the competitive retail environment, consumers are exposed to numerous product options, promotional strategies, and store formats. Despite this, many retail stores struggle to understand what specific factors truly influence customers' purchase decisions. A lack of clarity about how store ambience, pricing, product availability, customer service, and personal preferences affect buying behaviour leads to ineffective marketing strategies and reduced customer satisfaction. Therefore, there is a need to identify and analyse the key determinants that shape consumer buying behaviour in retail stores.

Scope of the Study

The study focuses on examining various factors that influence consumer buying behaviour in retail stores. It

includes store-related factors (layout, ambience, product display, promotions, pricing), customer-related factors (preferences, lifestyle, brand perception), and situational factors (time, urgency, shopping purpose). The study is limited to retail store shoppers and does not cover online shopping behaviour. The findings will help retailers understand customer expectations and improve in-store strategies.

Need of the Study

Retail businesses are facing increasing competition, and consumers' expectations continue to evolve. To attract and retain customers, retailers must understand what drives their purchasing decisions. This study is needed to identify the factors that significantly influence buying behaviour, enabling retailers to design effective pricing, promotional, and store management strategies. It also helps bridge the gap between consumer expectations and retail practices.

Importance of the Study

This study is important because it provides valuable insights into how consumers behave inside retail stores. Understanding these behaviours helps retailers improve customer experience, increase sales, and build long-term loyalty. It also supports academics and researchers by contributing to existing knowledge on consumer behaviour in the retail sector. Policymakers and marketers can use the findings to develop customer-centric strategies and enhance the overall retail environment.

Objectives of the Study

- To identify the major factors influencing consumer buying behaviour in retail stores.
- To examine the impact of store ambience, layout, and product display on purchase decisions.
- To analyse the effect of pricing, promotions, and product availability on consumer choices.
- To study the role of personal preferences, lifestyle, and brand perception in influencing buying behaviour
- To provide suggestions for retailers to improve consumer experience and enhance sales performance.

Review of Literature

Smith & Coleman (2010) [1] emphasized that store ambience, including lighting, music, and cleanliness, strongly affects customers’ emotions and their willingness to spend time inside a retail store. They concluded that a pleasant store environment increases impulse buying tendencies.

Raghavan (2012) [2] found that pricing strategies and discount promotions play a major role in shaping consumers’ purchase intentions. The study highlighted that value-conscious shoppers respond positively to clear price labels and attractive offers.

Martinez & Gomez (2014) [3] examined the importance of product availability and concluded that stockouts significantly reduce customer satisfaction. Their results showed that shoppers often switch brands or stores when preferred products are unavailable.

Johnson & Lee (2016) [4] explored customer service quality and found that friendly behaviour, prompt assistance, and staff knowledge strongly influence purchase decisions. Their research also revealed that positive staff interaction builds trust and loyalty.

Kapoor & Sharma (2018) [5] studied the influence of store layout and product display. They argued that an organized layout makes shopping easier and encourages customers to browse more products, leading to increased purchase likelihood.

Williams *et al.* (2020) [6] this study highlighted that personal factors such as lifestyle, income, personality, and brand preferences significantly shape buying behaviour. The authors concluded that retailers must segment customers carefully to meet varying needs.

Banerjee & Thomas (2022) [7] analysed the combined influence of promotions, packaging, and visual merchandising. Their findings showed that attractive displays, clear signage, and creative packaging capture customer attention and trigger impulsive purchases.

Ahmed & Priya (2023) [8] investigated post-pandemic changes in consumer behaviour. They found that consumers now prefer spacious stores, hygiene, and contactless billing options, which influence store choice and purchase patterns.

Research Methodology

The study adopts a descriptive research design using a structured questionnaire to examine the factors influencing consumer buying behaviour in retail stores. The target population consists of retail store customers, and a sample of 80 respondents was selected using a stratified purposive sampling technique to ensure representation across different age groups and store types. Primary data was collected through a self-administered questionnaire containing demographic questions and Likert-scale items related to store ambience, layout, pricing, promotions, product availability, personal preferences, and buying behaviour. Data was collected directly from shoppers with their consent, ensuring anonymity and ethical consideration. The collected responses were coded and analysed using descriptive statistics and inferential techniques such as correlation and regression to identify the influence of various retail factors on purchase intention and behaviour.

Data analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	38	47.5
	Female	42	52.5
Age Group	18–25	22	27.5
	26–35	26	32.5
	36–50	20	25.0
	Above 50	12	15.0
Type of Store Visited	Supermarket	36	45.0
	Department Store	24	30.0
	Local Retail Outlet	20	25.0

Interpretation

The demographic results show a balanced representation of male and female respondents. Most shoppers fall in the 18–35 age group, indicating higher retail store engagement among younger adults. Supermarkets were the most frequently visited, suggesting that modern retail formats attract a major portion of customers.

Table 2: Mean Scores of Store-Related Factors

Factor	No. of Items	Mean Score	Interpretation
Store Ambience	5	4.10	High satisfaction with cleanliness, lighting, and store atmosphere
Store Layout	4	3.95	Layout is well-organized and easy to navigate
Pricing	4	4.20	Customers are highly influenced by price fairness and affordability
Promotions	3	4.25	Discounts and offers strongly impact buying behaviour
Product Availability	4	4.05	Stock levels and variety meet customer expectations
Customer Service	4	4.18	Staff behaviour positively affects shopping satisfaction

Interpretation

All key store factors have mean scores above 3.9, showing strong positive perceptions from respondents. Promotions and pricing emerged as the highest-rated aspects, indicating that customers are highly price-sensitive and value discount-based incentives. Customer service also plays a crucial role in shaping positive shopping experiences.

Table 3: Correlation between Store Factors and Purchase Intention

Factor	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Relationship Strength
Store Ambience → Purchase Intention	0.62	Moderate–strong positive
Pricing → Purchase Intention	0.71	Strong positive
Promotions → Purchase Intention	0.74	Strong positive
Customer Service → Purchase Intention	0.68	Strong positive
Product Availability → Purchase Intention	0.59	Moderate positive

Interpretation

Correlation analysis shows that all store factors are positively associated with purchase intention. Promotions (r = 0.74) and pricing (r = 0.71) are the strongest predictors,

confirming that customers’ buying decisions are highly influenced by cost-saving opportunities. Customer service and ambience also significantly contribute to shaping purchase motivation.

Table 4: Regression Analysis — Factors Predicting Consumer Buying Behaviour

Predictor Variable	Beta (β)	t-value	Sig. (p-value)
Pricing	0.312	4.85	0.000
Promotions	0.340	5.10	0.000
Customer Service	0.228	3.92	0.001
Store Ambience	0.176	2.85	0.006
Product Availability	0.158	2.30	0.024
Model Summary	R ² = 0.61		

Interpretation

The regression model explains 61% of the variation in consumer purchase behaviour, showing a strong predictive value. Promotions (β = 0.340) and pricing (β = 0.312) are the most influential predictors, followed by customer service. Store ambience and product availability also have significant but comparatively lower effects. This indicates that customers are heavily motivated by value, deals, and service quality when making purchases in retail stores.

Table 5: Overall Consumer Buying Behaviour

Behaviour Construct	Mean Score	Interpretation
Purchase Intention	4.12	Customers generally intend to buy from the stores they visit
Impulse Buying	3.85	Moderate tendency toward unplanned purchases
Store Loyalty	4.00	Customers show high likelihood of returning

Interpretation

The overall buying behaviour indicators suggest that customers are satisfied with the shopping environment and are likely to return, showing strong purchase intention and store loyalty. Impulse buying is moderately high, influenced by ambience and promotional displays.

Findings

Demographic Distribution: The sample had a balanced representation of males (47.5%) and females (52.5%), with the majority of respondents (59.5%) falling in the 18–35 age group, indicating that younger adults are more engaged in retail shopping.

Preferred Store Type: Supermarkets were the most frequently visited (45%), followed by department stores (30%) and local retail outlets (25%), suggesting a preference for modern retail formats.

Store Ambience: Respondents rated store ambience highly (mean = 4.10), showing that cleanliness, lighting, and overall atmosphere positively influence the shopping experience.

Pricing and Promotions: Pricing (mean = 4.20) and promotions (mean = 4.25) emerged as the most influential factors, indicating that customers are highly motivated by competitive pricing and attractive discounts.

Customer Service and Product Availability: Customer service (mean = 4.18) and product availability (mean = 4.05) also received strong ratings, highlighting the importance of helpful staff and sufficient stock in shaping purchase behaviour.

Correlation with Purchase Intention: All store-related factors were positively correlated with purchase intention, with promotions (r = 0.74) and pricing (r = 0.71) showing the strongest relationships, confirming their key role in influencing buying decisions.

Regression Analysis & Overall Behaviour: The regression model explained 61% of the variation in consumer buying behaviour. Promotions and pricing were the most significant predictors, while overall consumer behaviour showed high purchase intention (4.12), strong store loyalty (4.00), and moderate impulse buying (3.85), indicating customer satisfaction and repeat purchase tendency.

Suggestions

Retailers can enhance consumer buying behaviour by focusing on key areas such as competitive pricing and attractive promotions, including discounts, bundle offers, and loyalty programs, to motivate purchases and encourage repeat visits. Improving customer service through friendly, knowledgeable, and responsive staff can increase satisfaction and store loyalty. Maintaining a pleasant store ambience with proper lighting, cleanliness, organized shelves, and appealing décor makes shopping more enjoyable, while an easy-to-navigate store layout and strategic product displays can guide customers effectively and highlight promotional or popular items. Ensuring consistent product availability prevents dissatisfaction, and placing impulse-buy items at key locations can boost spontaneous purchases. Additionally, collecting customer feedback and leveraging technology such as mobile apps, self-checkout, and data-driven promotional strategies can help retailers better understand consumer preferences and enhance the overall shopping experience.

Conclusion

The study concludes that consumer buying behaviour in retail stores is significantly influenced by factors such as promotions, pricing, customer service, store ambience, product availability, and store layout. Among these, promotions and pricing emerged as the most powerful drivers of purchase intention, while good customer service and a pleasant store environment enhance satisfaction and loyalty. Organized layouts and well-stocked products further contribute to a positive shopping experience. Overall, retailers who focus on offering value through competitive pricing and attractive deals, maintaining a comfortable and engaging store environment, providing excellent service, and ensuring product availability are more likely to satisfy customers, encourage repeat visits, and increase sales. This highlights the importance of balancing both functional and experiential aspects to influence modern consumer behaviour effectively.

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