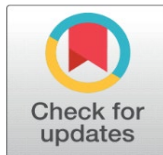# AN ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF CUSTOMERS' ATTRACTION TOWARDS SUPER MARKET: A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

A Supermarket, a large form of the traditional grocery store, is a self-service shop offering a wide variety of food and household products, organized into aisles. It is larger and has a wider selection than a traditional grocery store, but is smaller and more limited in the range of merchandise than a hypermarket or big-box market. Eastern market is one the famous supermarkets in Mysuru city. It is located in Rajiv Nagar, and established in December 2011. The Objective of this paper is to examine the factors attracting customers towards Eastern Market. The identified factors attracting customers towards Eastern Market are convenient location, ambience, efficient process and promotional facilities, value for money and value for time of Eastern Market. The manual method was adopted for data processing and data analysis is done with the help of SPSS software. Statistical techniques like Z test of proportions was used to test the impact of convenient location and ambience, chi-square test is used to test the impact of efficient process and promotional facilities, value for money and value for time of Eastern Market, and spearman's rank correlation (rho) is deployed to test whether there is a positive correlation between the opinions of customers regarding the factors which attract customers towards Eastern Market and the opinion of manager of Eastern Market, with these hypotheses tests it has become evident that the identified factors which attracts customers towards Eastern Market are significant and proved with 0.01% and 0.05% significance level.

Keywords: Eastern Market, Efficient Process and Promotional Facilities, Retail Market, Supermarket, Value for Money, Value for Time

1. INTRODUCTION

There has been a rapid transformation of the retail sector in India, in the beginning of 1990s. The growth has been driven by increasing affluence and the rise of a middle class; the entry of women into the workforce; with a consequent incentive to seek out easy-to-prepare foods; the growth in the use of refrigerators, making it possible to shop weekly instead of daily; and the growth in car ownership, facilitating journeys to distant stores and purchases of large quantities of goods. Retail is the second largest sector in the Indian economy after agriculture. It accounts for nearly 10% of the GDP and provides employment to approximately 7% population of the country. The entry of organized retail in India started early 2000s and since then it has shown a significant growth. The Indian Retail sector has come off age and has gone through major transformation over the last decade with a noticeable shift towards organized retailing. The growth of Supermarkets in India, in recent years has been quite heartening, with the economic liberalization, opening -up of Indian markets to foreign investments, and rising of the Indian service sector.

Retailing in India came with evolutionary patterns from Kirana Store to Super Market. Initially it was un-organized, and after that it is carried forward and now it is growing organized sector such as supermarket, hypermarket, malls etc. Traditionally, companies have relied only on differentiation of products and services to retain their customers and also to satisfy the consumers. However, times have changed, due to fierce competition from new players entering the market, imitation of new features and increase in number of new offers, customers have acquired new choices and they have also become more price sensitive, which has forced marketers to adapt differentiated and customer oriented strategies in order to enable them to stand out in the competition and gain a competitive edge. Nowadays some of the popular place for shopping is supermarkets; a supermarket is a large, departmentalized retail store that primarily sells food items. Currently people prefer to buy their goods from the supermarkets instead buying from provision stores or a grocer on the street because of offers, prices and the variety of goods in the supermarkets

1.1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1) **Consumer Theory:** Consumer theory studies how people decide what to spend their money on given their preferences and their budget constraints. Consumer theory shows how individuals make choices given their income and the prices of goods and services and helps us to understand how individuals' tastes and incomes influence the demand curve.

2) **Theory of Customer Service:** The theory of customer service is based on identifying and satisfying your customers' needs and exceeding their expectations. A company must be totally committed to delivering consistently high standards of service to gain and retain customer loyalty. Everyone from top management on down must be tuned into what the customer wants. Creating a customer service culture within a company can help build success. Customer satisfaction and loyalty are inextricably linked to the quality of customer service and, ultimately, to the company's profitability.

3) **Theory of Consumer Choice:** The theory of consumer choice is the branch of microeconomics that relates preferences to consumption expenditures and to consumer demand curves. It analyzes how consumers maximize the desirability of their consumption as measured by their preferences subject to limitations on their expenditures, by maximizing utility subject to a consumer budget constraint.

4) **Consumer as Sovereign Theory:** Conventional economic theory argues that our society is consumer-driven where the consumer is the ultimate determinate of his needs, wants and desires and is able to choose what he wants from a market place designed to serve his needs and satisfy his desires. Consequently, the consumer is the ultimate sovereign of the economy because he determines what goods and services will be produced.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The service industry and in particular, the retail market has been vital to the world economy and undergone the ever intensified competition under recent crisis and economic turn-down period. The modern retail industry is booming across the world. Therefore, it is essential for retailers to use strategies which focus on attracting current customers. Supermarkets and Hypermarkets have played an important role in food distribution since they appeared. For modern life, the existence of traditional markets has been gradually replaced by their descendent supermarkets and people depend on supermarkets for their basic grocery needs. Supermarkets offering comfortable shopping experience with wider variety of brands and products are driving the consumers away from traditional retailers, which reduces the sales of provision stores and their exit from the market. **Therefore, this study is sought to identify and analyze factors attracting customers towards Eastern Market.**

1.3. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study covers one supermarket that is 'Eastern Market' of Rajiv Nagar in Mysuru district.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1) **Shashikala R. & Ashwini Gangatkar J.** *"A Study on Comparative Analysis of Consumer Perception towards Supermarkets and Provision Stores in Bangalore"* this study was undertaken to comparatively analyze the

consumer perception of Supermarket and Provision Store. A survey was conducted among 100 respondents in Bangalore using a questionnaire. Results show that, consumers have better perception of supermarkets as compared to provision stores except price.

2) **Ms. Mallika Singh, Dr Deepak Shrivastava, Dr Yogendra Singh** *"Customer Preference Analysis towards Visual Merchandising"* The study is aimed to find out impact of visual merchandising on customer preference analysis in malls. Four hypotheses window display, design layouts, cleanliness `of market premises & promotional signage were tested for Z test. And found that window display, design layouts, cleanliness of market premises & promotional signage were significantly associated to Customer preference analysis.

3) **Ms. Monika Talreja and Dr. Dhiraj Jain (2013)** *"changing consumer perceptions towards organized retailing from unorganized retailing –an empirical analysis"* According to them both modern and traditional retailers will co-exist in India for some time to come, as both of them have their own competitive advantages. The Kirana stores have a low- cost structure, location advantage, and customer familiarity whereas organized retail offers a mixture of product width and depth and a better shopping experience. Organized retailing is becoming a destination shop for buying fresh fruit and vegetable.

4) **Dr. Sangeeta Mohanty (2012)** *"Drivers of retail shopping: an exploratory study"* this study focused more on consumer attitude towards big bazaar and shopping malls, has also studied the age wise preference to the said stores. This study also through some light on store choice behavior based on product offered and location conveniences on gender basis.

5) **Kamath (2009)** *"Consumers Preference of Retail Store Attributes: A Case Study of Mangalore"* attempted to analyze the consumer's preferences of the specific attributes of retail store in Mangalore city. Factor analysis had been used in identifying the main factors. These factors included shopping experience and ease, entertainment and gaming facilities, promotion, discounts and low prices, add-on facilities and services, variety of products, and other factors for shopping convenience.

6) **Awng Di (2008)** *"Consumer's perceptions toward retail stores comparing between superstores and family-run stores in Bangkok."* found that consumers are satisfied more with the product quality, product variety, and stable prices of superstores. They also prefer the store environment of superstores than that of family run stores.

2.1. RESEARCH GAP

It is true that a number of significant studies have been done on consumer perception towards supermarkets and provision stores, customer preference towards visual merchandising, changing consumer perceptions towards organized retailing from unorganized retailing, drivers of retail shopping, and consumers' preference of retail store attributes. But the question why customers are attracting towards supermarkets has rarely been considered. Thus this study focuses on the factors attracting customers towards supermarket and compares the opinions of customers and manager regarding the attracting factors. Therefore this study is an attempt to fill this gap in the present literature.

3. METHODOLOGY
3.1. DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This study is a descriptive, diagnostic and analytical study, because it drew a picture of the topic and describes the situation in its current state, namely customers' attraction. Besides it sought to identify relevant attributes of this phenomenon to answer the question why customers are attracting and it is concerned with testing hypothesis and specifying and interpreting relationship.

3.2. SOURCES OF DATA

Primary data has been collected through schedule, interview and with the help of photography. **Secondary data** is gathered from articles of journals, books and some important websites.

3.3. SAMPLING PLAN

Sampling unit is Rajiv Nagar of Mysore district. Size of the universe from which the sample was drawn is 31616 [Rajiv Nagar Population]. Sampling frame is customers of Eastern Market in Rajiv Nagar. Random sampling technique is used, to select respondents.

3.4. SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING PROCESS

A sample of 103 was selected from a population of 31616, through the approach based on precision rate and confidence level. Population is finite. N = 31616. Confidence level = 95%. Desired precision is ±3. e = .03(since the estimate to be within 3% of the true value). z = 1.96(as per table area under normal curve for the given confidence level 95%)

$$n = \frac{z^2 . p . q . N}{e^2(N - 1) + z^2 . p . q}$$

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2(0.50)(0.50)(31616)}{(0.03)^2(31616 - 1) + (1.96)^2(0.50)(0.50)}$$

$$n = \frac{(3.8416)(0.25)(31616)}{(0.0009)(31615) + (3.8416)(0.25)}$$

$$n = \frac{(0.9604)(31616)}{28.4544 + 0.96044}$$

$$n = \frac{30364.0064}{29.4148}$$

$$n = 1032.2696$$

n =1032

The sample size according to the approach based on precision rate and confidence level is 1032. Since the time frame to complete this study is limited the researcher opted to take a 10 % of the sample size (1032) that is 103.

4. DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Primary data has been collected from customers of eastern market using questionnaire schedule, from manager using interview technique in addition the information was also collected with the help of photography. The respondents were not asked to reveal their personnel information. **The core question emphasized 5 determinant dimensions which constitute attraction of customers under supermarket context. Those core dimensions included location, ambience, process and promotional facilities, correct competitive price/value for money and value for time.** Each dimension composed of few elements which described attributes of customer attraction in more details. **There were total 21 elements categorized into 5 dimensions**. For these five main dimensions (factors) respondents were asked to rank the importance of these factors in accordance with their attraction level by application of **5 point Likert scale** (5 means very important and 1 means not at all important). **Nominal** (yes/no) and **ordinal** (important/not important) scales were used to get answers for the remaining questions.

5. DEVELOPMENT OF THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

The theoretical framework theorizes the relationship among several factors relevant to the study. It is also known as the conceptual model. It is used to elaborate the relationships among variables, explain the logic underlying these relationships and describe the nature of the relationships. Theoretical framework for development of customer attraction is given in Figure 1. Five dimensions along with 21 relevant elements were developed to indentify attributes of customer attraction. Process and promotional facilities include 14 elements regarding clean trolleys and baskets, range of products, products of excellent quality, freshness of products, short ques at cashier, efficient personnel or staff, computerized billing system, accuracy of receipt, home delivery, special sales, money saving coupons, gift voucher,

lottery, discount offers. Value for time includes 4 elements which are availability of all products under one roof, signage, practical shelf layouts, and self service.

6. DATA PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS PLAN WITH STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES

The manual method was adopted for data processing. Data analysis is done with the help of SPSS software. Statistical techniques like Z test of proportions was used to test the impact of convenient location and ambience, chi-square test is used to test the impact of efficient process and promotional facilities, value for money and value for time of Eastern Market, and spearman's rank correlation (rho) is deployed to test whether there is a positive correlation between the opinions of customers regarding the factors which attract customers towards Eastern Market and the opinion of manager of Eastern Market, in order to analyze the data in a systematic manner. The data is then scrutinized and relevant interpretations are drawn.

7. RESULTS AND DISCUSSUON

Objective of this paper is to examine the factors attracting customers towards Eastern Market. The identified factors attracting customers towards Eastern Market are shown in the following table.

Table No 1 Factors and Elements Attracting Customers towards Eastern Market

HYPOTHESIS-1

Factors	Elements
Location	Convenient location
Ambience	Store ambience
Efficient Process and Promotional Facilities	Clean trolleys and baskets, Range of products, Products of excellent quality, Freshness of products, Short ques at cashier, Efficient personnel or staff, Computerized billing system, Accuracy of receipt, Home delivery, Special sales, Money saving coupons, Gift voucher, Lottery, Discount offers
Value for Money	Correct competitive price
Value for Time	Availability of all products under one roof, Signage, Practical shelf layouts, Self service

Ho: There is no impact of convenient location of Eastern Market on customers' preference of Eastern Market.

Ha: There is a positive impact of convenient location of Eastern Market on customers' preference of Eastern Market.

Location is one of the most influential considerations in customers' store choice decisions. Most of the customers like to shop at the supermarket closer to them. Earlier, the customers had to travel a longer distance to shop at any supermarket. But after the establishment of Eastern Market people started visiting Eastern Market, because the customers are influenced by the convenient location and low travel cost of shopping. Therefore, **convenient location is one of the factors attracting customers towards Eastern Market. This is analyzed by testing the first hypothesis using Z-test of proportions through SPSS.**

Table No 2 Binomial Z Test Statistics for the Convenient Location 0f Eastern Market

Element	Group	Category	N	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Location	Group 1	Important	100	.97	.50	.000a
	Group 2	Not Important	3	.03		
	Total		103	1.00		
a. Based on Z Approximation.						

Source: Tabulated from primary data.

INFERENCE

The computed value of Z is greater than the table value and hence null hypothesis H_o is not accepted, H_a is accepted at 1 percent significance level accordingly **it is inferred that there is a positive impact of convenient location of Eastern Market on customers' preference of Eastern Market.**

HYPOTHESIS-2

Ho: There is no influence of ambience of Eastern Market on customers' preference of Eastern Market.

Ha: There is an influence of ambience of Eastern Market on customers' preference of Eastern Market.

Ambience or atmosphere of the store is also an important determinant of customers' store choice. The Eastern Market provides excellent ambience, where the customers can enjoy their shopping. Thus **the ambience of Eastern Market also attracts customers. This is analyzed by testing the second hypothesis using Z-test of proportions through SPSS.**

Table No 3 Binomial Z Test Statistics for the Ambience of Eastern Market

Element	Group	Category	N	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Ambience	Group 1	Important	102	.99	.50	.000[a]
	Group 2	Not Important	1	.01		
	Total		103	1.00		
a. Based on Z Approximation.						

Source: Tabulated from primary data.

INFERENCE

The computed value of Z is greater than the table value and as such null hypothesis H_o is not accepted. Alternate hypothesis H_a is accepted at 1 percent significance level. Hence it is inferred that, **there is an influence of ambience of Eastern Market on customers' preference of Eastern Market.**

HYPOTHESIS-3

Ho: There is no impact of efficient process and promotional facilities of Eastern Market on customers' preference of Eastern Market.

Ha: There is an impact of efficient process and promotional facilities of Eastern Market on customers' preference of Eastern Market.

The **Eastern Market** provides efficient process like **clean trolleys and baskets, range of products, excellent quality, fresh products, short ques at cashier, efficient personnel or staff, computerized billing system, accuracy of receipt, home delivery** and use promotions like **special sales, money saving coupons, gift voucher, lottery and discount offers** to increase store traffic and stimulate purchase, which attracts customers towards Eastern Market. **This is analyzed by testing the hypothesis using chi-square test.**

Table No 4 Test Statistics for the Efficient Process and Promotional Facilities of Eastern Market

Factor elements	Clean trolleys and baskets	Range of products	Products of excellent quality	Freshness of products	Short ques at cashier	Efficient personnel or staff	Computerized billing system	Accuracy of receipt	Home delivery	Special sales	Money saving coupons	Gift voucher	Lottery	Discount offers
Chi-Square	51.738[a]	95.155[a]	80.398[a]	76.903[a]	23.311[a]	83.971[a]	87.621[a]	91.350[a]	2.806[a]	11.893[a]	4.282[a]	.010[a]	4.282[a]	38.534[a]
df	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Asymp. Sig.			.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.094	.001	.039	.922	.039	.000
Monte Carlo Sig.	**Sig.b**		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.155	.000	.068	1.000	.068	.000
	95% Confidence Interval	**Lower Bound**	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.085	.000	.019	.971	.019	.000
		Upper Bound	.029	.029	.029	.029	.029	.029	.029	.029	.225	.029	.117	1.000	.117	.029

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 51.5.
b. Based on 103 sampled tables with starting seed 2000000.

Source: Tabulated from primary data

INFERENCE

Comparing the calculated and table values of chi-square, it is inferred that out of 14 elements of efficient process and promotional facilities 9 elements like, Clean trolleys and baskets, Range of products, Products of excellent quality, Freshness of products, Short ques at cashier, Efficient personnel or staff, Computerized billing system, Accuracy of receipt, and Discount offers are significant at 5% level of significance for 1 degree of freedom. Proving its positive impact on customers' preference of Eastern Market. Whereas 5 elements like, Home delivery, Money saving coupons, Gift voucher, and Lottery are not significant at 5% significance level for 1 degree of freedom.

HYPOTHESIS-4

Ho: There is no influence of value for money/ correct competitive price of Eastern Market on customers' preference of Eastern Market.

Ha: There is an influence of value for money/ correct competitive price of Eastern Market on customers' preference of Eastern Market.

The **prices of goods** in provision stores are higher and they also charge different prices to different customers. But the same **goods are charged lower prices in Eastern Market, here the prices are fixed and there is no price discrimination among customers. Thus the customers are also influenced by the value for money/ correct competitive price of Eastern Market. This is analyzed by using the chi-square test.**

Table No 5 Chi-Square Test Statistics for value for money/ correct competitive price of Eastern Ma

Factor			Correct competitive price
Chi-Square			**54.612a**
df			1
Asymp. Sig.			**.000**
Monte Carlo Sig.	Sig.		.000b
	95% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	.000
		Upper Bound	.029

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 51.5. b. Based on 103 sampled tables with starting seed 726961337.

Source: Tabulated from primary data

INFERENCE

The chi-square value for 1 degree of freedom at 5 percent level of significance is statistically significant. The calculated value of chi-square is higher than the table value. Hence the null hypothesis H_o is not accepted. The result supports the alternate hypothesis H_a and therefore it is inferred that there is an influence of value for money/ correct competitive price of Eastern Market on customers' preference of supermarket.

HYPOTHESIS-5

Ho: There is no impact of relative importance value for time of Eastern Market on customers' preference of Eastern Market.

Ha: There is an impact of relative importance value for time of Eastern Market on customers' preference of Eastern Market.

The Eastern Market provide all products under one roof, the customers need not to go to different shops to buy different products. It also provide **practical shelf layouts, self-service , signs, labels, shelf tags, and other identification sign to provide direction, prices, or information on merchandise, which saves customers time and attracts them towards Eastern Market. This is analyzed by using the chi-square test.**

Table No 6 Chi-Square Test Statistics for Value for Time of Eastern Market

Factor Elements			Availability of all products under one roof	Signage	Practical shelf layouts	Self service
Chi-Square			95.155a	83.971a	99.039a	91.350a
df			1	1	1	1
Asymp. Sig.			.000	.000	.000	.000
Monte Carlo Sig.	Sig.		.000b	.000b	.000b	.000b
	95% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	.000	.000	.000	.000
		Upper Bound	.029	.029	.029	.029

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 51.5.b. Based on 103 sampled tables with starting seed 79654295.

Source: Tabulated from primary data.

INFERENCE

The chi-square value for 1 degree of freedom at 5 percent level of significance is statistically significant. The calculated values of chi-square are much higher than the table value which means that the calculated values cannot be said to have arisen just because of chance, it is statistically significant. Hence, the null hypothesis H_o is not accepted and alternate hypothesis **Ha is accepted which means that there is an impact of relative importance of value for time of Eastern Market on customers' preference of supermarket.**

HYPOTHESIS-6

Ho: There is no correlation (rho) between the opinions of customers and manager of Eastern Market regarding the factors attracting customers towards Eastern Market.

Ha: There is a positive correlation (rho) between the opinions of customers and manager of Eastern Market regarding the factors attracting customers towards Eastern Market.

If a manager is having a complete knowledge about the customers' preferences or the factors which attracts customers, the customers can be easily attracted. Hence the factors like, convenient location, ambience, efficient process and promotional facilities, value for money /correct competitive price, and value for time which are already been tested and proved from the customers point of view is to be compared with the manager's claim regarding the same. **Thus the**

last hypothesis is to test whether there is a positive correlation between the opinions of customers regarding the factors which attract customers towards Eastern Market and the opinion of manager of Eastern Market. Spearman's rank correlation (rho) is deployed to test this hypothesis.

Table No 7 Spearman's Rank Correlation (rho) for the Opinions of Customers and Manager of Eastern Market, Regarding the Attracting Factors of Eastern Market.

SL. NO.	Opinions of Customers and Manager	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Sig.(2-tailed)	N
1	Manager's opinion about convenient location			
2	Customers' opinion about convenient location	1.000	.000*	103
3	Manager's opinion about ambience			
4	Customers' opinion about ambience	1.000	.000*	103
5	Manager's opinion about efficient process and promotional facilities			
6	Customers' opinion about efficient process and promotional facilities	1. 000	.000*	103
7	Manager's opinion about value for money			
8	Customers' opinion about value for money	1. 000	.000*	103
9	Manager's opinion about value for time			
10	Customers' opinion about value for time	1. 000	.000*	103

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

INFERENCE

Spearman's rank correlation result shows that the coefficient of correlation (r) is equal to one. Since the calculated r =1, which suggests perfect positive correlation. Therefore the null hypothesis (H_0) of no correlation between the opinions of customers and manager of Eastern Market regarding the factors attracting customers towards Eastern Market is not accepted at 5% significance level and alternate hypothesis (H_a) is accepted. Hence it is inferred that, there is a perfect positive correlation between the opinions of customers and manager of Eastern Market regarding the factors attracting customers towards Eastern Market.

With these hypotheses tests it has become evident that the identified factors which attracts customers towards Eastern Market are significant and proved with 0.01% and 0.05% significance level.

8. SUGGESTIONS

Eastern Market should increase the rate of Discount Offers than other promotional facilities like, Home delivery, Money saving coupons, Gift voucher, and Lottery because it has insignificant impact on attracting customers towards Eastern Market.

According to the survey, customers have opined that the Prices of Products can still be Competitive.

Give importance for prompt and on time Home Delivery to attract more customers.

Receive orders on phones.

Extend parking area. or

Parking problem can be solved by home delivery.

9. CONCLUSION

From the present study it is clear that, local traditional provision stores took a beating due to its lack of space, ambience, efficient process and promotional facilities, value for money and value for time. These inefficiencies are covered by Eastern Market. No doubt, Eastern Market attracts customers through its convenient location, ambience,

efficient process, value for money and value for time. Therefore, it is the time for provision stores to redefine themselves and re-establish in the mind of consumers once again to survive and grow in the long run.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

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